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Bridging Research and Classroom Practice: Improving Writing in Diverse Primary Classrooms

Primary school lays the foundation for writing development, where teachers should help students acquire strategies to produce texts independently and foster confidence and motivation in their writing. However, many teachers feel underprepared to support children's writing beyond spelling, and evidence-based practices often fail to reach the classroom. At the same time, research has shown that many primary children—particularly boys and students whose family language differs from that of instruction—struggle with text production, and writing motivation tends to decline toward the end of primary school.

The keynote presents the project KommSchreib! ('Let's Write'), funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, which aimed to address these challenges by bringing evidence-based writing practices into upper primary schools (Grades 3-4). We conducted a two-group quasi-experimental study comparing a business-as-usual control group with an experimental group whose teachers participated in a multi-component professional learning intervention. The intervention focused on evidence-based writing instruction and included teaching materials designed to support student motivation and address diversity. In total, 58 teachers and their 1174 students participated. In addition to the teacher-led intervention in regular classes, project members conducted small-group afternoon writing workshops for at-risk writers with extra practice at tablets, embedded in activities connected to students' lives. We assessed writing and motivational outcomes, examined treatment fidelity measures, and conducted interviews with participating teachers.

The keynote will highlight key findings, including positive effects on students' writing, explore motivational trajectories, and discuss teacher-related and institutional factors influencing the implementation of evidence-based practices in classrooms.