

Teachers' Intention to Teach Writing Skills to Students With and Without Learning Disabilities: From a Theory of Planned Behavior Perspective

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Abstract

Guided by the theory of planned behavior (TPB), this qualitative study explored how teachers articulate attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control when teaching writing to students with and without learning disabilities (LD) in three German school contexts (special education, primary, and comprehensive schools). Semi-structured interviews with 29 teachers were analyzed using deductive TPB coding and inductive category development. Across contexts, teachers valued writing and described its motivational benefits for students. However, their intentions were shaped by uneven normative support and feasibility constraints. In addition, teachers at special education schools reported weak curricular and collegial expectations, as well as strong concerns about their students' limited prior skills, low motivation, and insufficient support at home. Yet overall, perceived behavioral control, specifically time for feedback and revision, access to materials, and opportunities to develop writing pedagogy, emerged as relevant factors. These findings highlight the need for professional development, paired with school-level routines and resources, that facilitate process-oriented writing instruction, especially for students with LD.

Keywords: Writing instruction, teacher intention, theory of planned behavior, qualitative study, Germany, students with learning disabilities

Introduction

Writing is a complex and multidimensional skill. Indeed, it is widely considered one of the most demanding language activities taught in schools because it requires coordination of transcription and language skills with idea generation, planning, translating ideas into text, and monitoring and revising while drawing on executive control, working memory, and content knowledge (Graham & Aitken, 2025; Kim & Graham, 2022; Myhill et al., 2023). Writing is also foundational for academic participation and learning across subjects. A meta-analysis of 56 experimental and quasi-experimental studies found that writing about subject-mat-

ter content reliably enhanced students' learning in science, social studies, and mathematics (Graham et al., 2020). Beyond formal schooling, writing remains important for civic, social, and vocational participation (Bazerman, 2016).

Despite this centrality of writing, research continues to report concerns about students' level of writing achievement and the consistency with which effective writing instruction is implemented. This is of particular concern for students with LD, who frequently experience difficulties across multiple dimensions of writing, including transcription, sentence construction, text organization, planning, and revision, and whose writing difficulties may persist across grade levels (Gillespie Rouse, 2026; Graham et al., 2017; Young et al., 2022).

Thus, students with significant and persistent difficulties in writing may meet diagnostic criteria for a developmental learning disorder with impairment in written expression (ICD-11, 6A03.1; World Health Organization, 2025). However, population-based evidence from a U.S.-born cohort suggests that estimates of written-language disorders vary substantially depending on operational criteria (Katusic et al., 2009).

In this article, we use the term *LD* in a broad educational sense to refer both to students with formally diagnosed LD as well as to students who, despite not having a formal diagnosis, experience substantial and persistent difficulties in learning to write. We acknowledge that definitions of LD vary across national, professional, and diagnostic traditions (Grünke & Morrison Cavendish, 2016). Yet, many students without a diagnosis still experience significant challenges in writing that hinder their educational participation and achievement (Ahmed et al., 2022). Even when basic transcription improves, producing coherent and high-quality texts can remain challenging throughout schooling (Grünke & Knaak, 2020; Grünke & Leonard-Zabel, 2015; Harris et al., 2013).

As written language does not develop “on its own” but must be systematically taught and practiced (Graham, 2019; Harris et al., 2013), teachers play an important role in students’ writing development. For example, Busse et al. (2026) demonstrated that teacher-delivered, evidence-based writing instruction can improve the quality of narrative writing in primary classrooms following professional learning for regular classroom teachers. However, effective writing instruction is not consistently implemented, and substantial variation exists in how writing is taught.

Observations of 226 lessons in classrooms serving students with LD showed that incidental approaches were used more often than explicit writing instruction (Ciullo et al., 2025). This variation is particularly consequential because current syntheses support explicit instruction in foundational writing skills and strategies, scaffolded practice across the writing process, and goal setting, feedback, and peer support (Graham, Collins, et al., 2024; Graham et al., 2025). For students with LD, multicomponent strategy instruction incorporating self-regulation appears particularly promising (Kokkali & Antoniou, 2024). Specifically, interventions based on Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) – a structured instructional approach combining explicit writing strategy instruction and self-regulation techniques – have improved writing outcomes in inclusive elementary classrooms and among high school students with or at risk for LD (Ray et al., 2023, 2025). However, despite the effectiveness of available

approaches, writing remains marginalized in many educational contexts (Graham, 2019), while important gaps persist in the intervention literature, particularly for older students with LD (Young et al., 2022).

In Germany, these challenges are situated within a school system shaped by the implementation of inclusive education following the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 24; United Nations, 2006). Inclusive schooling has expanded teachers’ responsibility for supporting heterogeneous learners across school types characterized by different organizational conditions and professional roles (Döbert et al., 2017). For example, in North Rhine-Westphalia, where the current study took place, primary education comprises four years, after which students transition to one of several secondary school types. The shift towards inclusion has not replaced the existing system of special education schools. Consequently, Germany now has a dual system in which students with disabilities can either remain in separate special education schools or attend inclusive schools (Döbert et al., 2017).

For students with LD, this dual structure is relevant because support for persistent writing-related learning barriers may be distributed across special education schools and inclusive general education settings. These contextual differences, in turn, are likely to shape how writing instruction is valued, the expectations surrounding it, and how feasible it is considered to be in everyday practice. Moreover, large-scale monitoring in German has emphasized domains such as reading, listening, and orthography rather than extended text production, potentially providing comparatively weaker system-level signals regarding writing as composition (Stanat et al., 2023). Therefore, understanding teachers’ instructional behavior must entail examinations of not only what teachers know, but also how they construct their intentions to engage in writing instruction in everyday school contexts (Troia et al., 2011).

Theory of Planned Behavior

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) provides a well-established framework for explaining human behavior through intention formation that has been applied across various domains, including educational research (Bosnjak et al., 2020). According to the TPB, behavioral intentions may be predicted by (a) attitudes toward the target behavior, (b) subjective norms, and (c) perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 2011, 2015, 2020; Ajzen & Kruglanski, 2019). In educational research, the TPB is increasingly being used to examine teachers’ intentions to implement inclusive practices

or instructional innovations, highlighting that intention formation is shaped not only by individual beliefs but also by perceived expectations and feasibility constraints (Opoku et al., 2021; Urton et al., 2023).

Attitudes

In relation to writing instruction, attitudes toward the behavior include teachers' beliefs about teaching writing (e.g., perceived value, manageability, and anticipated student benefit). Current research suggests that teachers value writing but also report uncertainty about teaching complex composing processes and supporting weaker writers. Accordingly, primary teachers in England, for example, reported valuing writing, and yet described rarely paying attention to planning, reviewing, and revising, as well as insecurity about supporting weaker writers (Dockrell et al., 2016). Furthermore, the findings from a large survey of teachers teaching Grades 1 to 3 in Taiwan found that teachers' attitudes toward writing were systematically related to their reported practices (Hsiang et al., 2020).

Attitudes may also differ by professional role. In a survey of general and special education teachers who taught writing to students receiving special education services, including students with LD, general educators reported stronger preparation for teaching writing, more positive attitudes toward writing instruction, and stronger beliefs that writing develops through effort and process than special educators (Graham et al., 2023), suggesting that role-specific experiences and responsibilities shape the evaluative foundations for teaching writing.

Subjective Norms

Subjective norms refer to perceived expectations from relevant others and institutions, such as colleagues, school leadership, curricula, and assessment systems. In accountability contexts, research has shown that policy and testing regimes can end up narrowing the curriculum and shift instructional emphasis toward tested domains; in fact, writing instruction is often affected by these pressures (McCarthy, 2008). Consistent with this, national survey evidence from U.S. elementary teachers indicates there is limited instructional time for writing and widespread reports of eclectic, fragmented approaches; that is, patterns that plausibly reflect weak institutional reinforcement for sustained writing instruction (Cutler & Graham, 2008). Further, longitudinal classroom evidence, based on interviews and video records, demonstrates that writing instruction can decline over time across grade bands, reinforcing concerns that writing is not consistently positioned as a central instructional priority (Alston & Eagle, 2024).

In Germany, system-level normative signals may be comparatively weaker because national trend monitoring of German has primarily assessed reading, listening, and orthography rather than text production (Stanat et al., 2023). Furthermore, inclusive schooling can introduce competing expectations such as differentiation, accommodation, and curricular coverage. Finally, TPB-based evidence from Germany indicates that the perceived social expectations of colleagues and leadership are a meaningful component of teacher intention formation for inclusive practices (Urton et al., 2023). This underscores the importance of examining how local school cultures and institutional priorities shape intentions to teach writing.

Perceived Behavioral Control

Perceived behavioral control captures teachers' perceptions of whether they have the knowledge, efficacy, time, and support to enact writing instruction as intended. For students with LD, this dimension is particularly relevant because effective writing interventions depend on teachers' capacity to provide explicit strategy instruction, goal setting, planning, revising, supported practice, and gradual movement toward independent strategy use (Gillespie & Graham, 2014; Gillespie Rouse & Kiuahara, 2017; Harris et al., 2013). However, in various studies, teachers have often reported limited preparation for writing teaching and restricted access to sustained professional learning, especially for teaching higher-order processes, such as planning and revising, and supporting students with LD and persistent writing difficulties (Cutler & Graham, 2008; Dockrell et al., 2016; Gilbert & Graham, 2010; Gillespie Rouse & Kiuahara, 2017). Such control beliefs matter because perceived preparedness and efficacy are associated with instructional decisions and, in some contexts, with student writing outcomes (De Smedt et al., 2016; Hsiang et al., 2020).

Observational evidence further suggests that incidental approaches to writing instruction may occur more frequently than explicit instruction, raising questions about the feasibility and enactment of evidence-based practices in everyday classrooms (Ciullo et al., 2025). Role and context also appear relevant. Specifically, differences between general and special educators' reported preparedness and beliefs suggest that training pathways and instructional responsibilities may shape perceived behavioral control profiles within schools (Graham et al., 2023; Graham, Ciullo, et al., 2024).

Yet, despite its growing use in educational research, the TPB has rarely been applied to the domain of writing instruction. In particular, little is known

about how teachers' intentions to teach writing are shaped across different school contexts within a single education system, or how institutional expectations and resource conditions interact with teachers' beliefs in shaping these intentions. Rather than testing relationships among TPB components or making claims about representativeness, this study aimed to generate an in-depth, contextualized understanding of teacher intention formation within their everyday professional realities. By extending the application of the TPB to writing instruction across school contexts, this study offers a novel, theory-informed contribution to research on writing instruction and provides insight relevant to teacher education, school development, and the design of instructional environments that support writing for all learners.

Against this backdrop, this qualitative study explored how teachers across three school contexts in Germany (special education, primary, and comprehensive schools) articulate attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control when teaching writing skills to students with and without LD.

Methods

Participants and Setting

Twenty-nine teachers from North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, participated in semi-structured interviews conducted between August 2021 and April 2022. Participants were grouped by school con-

text and training background into special education schools ($n = 11$), primary schools ($n = 10$), and comprehensive schools ($n = 8$) (see Table 1). One participant working in a comprehensive school had completed special education teacher training but described her role and experiences primarily from the perspective of a comprehensive school teacher. Therefore, she was retained in the comprehensive school group to reflect her current instructional context.

We interviewed teachers who currently and regularly teach German as a subject to students between the first and tenth years of school, including students with LD. Participants were recruited using purposive and snowball sampling. School principals circulated an invitation to teachers in their schools, and additional participants were recruited through professional contacts and referrals (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981; Palinkas et al., 2015). This strategy was used to include teachers from different school contexts who had current experience teaching writing to heterogeneous learners, including students with LD. Sampling was information-oriented and designed to capture variation across school contexts. Accordingly, the findings provide contextualized insight rather than statistical representativeness.

Materials and Procedure

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews based on a thematic-centered interview approach (Flick, 2022; Magaldi & Berler, 2020). The interview guide, which was informed by the TPB,

Table 1
Sample Description

Teachers ($N = 29$)	Age	Sex f ($n = 28$) m ($n = 1$)	Work experience in years	German studies ^a	Teacher training – German ^b	Further training ^c
Special education school ($n = 11$)	$M = 30.82$ min = 26 max = 46	$n_f = 11$	$M = 5.18$ min = 1 max = 18	$n_{yes} = 6$ $n_{no} = 5$	$n_{yes} = 11$	$n_{no} = 11$
Primary school ($n = 10$)	$M = 41.60$ min = 27 max = 58	$n_f = 9$ $n_m = 1$	$M = 8.40$ min = 1 max = 20	$n_{yes} = 9$ $n_{no} = 1$	$n_{yes} = 10$	$n_{yes} = 5$ $n_{no} = 5$
Comprehensive school ($n = 8$)	$M = 47.75$ min = 28 max = 62	$n_f = 8$	$M = 19.38$ min = 1 max = 37	$n_{yes} = 7$ $n_{no} = 1$	$n_{yes} = 6$ $n_{no} = 2$	$n_{yes} = 4$ $n_{no} = 4$

Note. M = mean; min = minimum; max = maximum; f = female; m = male.

^aStudied German as a subject at university.

^bWas trained in teaching German during their teacher training.

^cHad attended further training courses on teaching students who have reading, spelling, and writing difficulties

covered attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control over teaching writing, with prompts addressing students both with and without LD. The guide had been pretested to improve clarity and wording, and the revised version was used for all interviews.

To ensure a shared reference point, participants received a brief working definition at the outset: Writing skills can be defined as the ability to clearly and effectively communicate thoughts and information in written form, while adhering to linguistic conventions and text structure norms (adapted from Graham, 2019; Grünke & Knaak, 2020; MacArthur & Graham, 2016). After an open-ended introductory question, teachers were asked about their expectations and values in terms of attitudes toward the behavior, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms (see Supplement A). If the interviewee's response did not mention students with LD, further questions were asked on this theme. To ensure consistency, the same question sequence and wording were used across all interviews. Interviews were conducted by the first author, either via Zoom or on site at the interviewee's school, lasted approximately 10–30 minutes, and were audio-recorded.

Ethics

Prior to participating, teachers received written information about the study's aims, procedures, and data handling and provided informed consent. Participation was voluntary, and teachers could skip questions or withdraw at any time without negative consequences. The interviewer was aware of her role in the research process and reflected on her positioning during data collection and analysis, contributing to a transparent and traceable analytic process (Nowell et al., 2017). Given the professional sensitivity of reporting on teaching practices, confidentiality was emphasized, identifying information was removed during transcription, and pseudonyms were used for excerpts. Audio files and transcripts were stored on password-protected servers with restricted access.

Analyses

Responses from the interviews were analyzed using a deductive-inductive qualitative content analysis approach, guided by the TPB. Specifically, the audio recordings were transcribed (Dresing & Pehl, 2018) using *f4transkript*, linguistically smoothed, and checked for accuracy by a second person (Flick, 2022). Data were analyzed in MAXQDA using structured qualitative content analysis (Kuckartz

& Rädiker, 2022), which combined deductive and inductive category development. Four researchers analyzed the audio recordings and transcriptions simultaneously, ensuring full coverage of the material by conducting trial coding.

Coding proceeded in iterative cycles of team calibration. Discrepancies were discussed in analytic meetings and resolved through consensus, resulting in shared defined categories. Initially, a deductive code system was developed based on the TPB. After intensive exchange, however, the research team revised and expanded the category system to include both deductive and inductive categories, which enabled comprehensive analysis of the data. The final category system consisted of three main categories and their respective subcategories: (a) attitudes toward teaching writing skills (behavior, affect, and cognition); (b) subjective norms (personal, intra-school and extra-school expectations); and (c) perceived behavioral control (student, structural, and individual resources). (See Supplement B for more information.) The complete dataset was independently double-coded, with all four researchers participating in the coding process. Each interview transcript was coded by two researchers. Inter-coder agreement was calculated separately for each interview in MAXQDA Plus 2020 as percentage agreement based on code occurrence. The mean percentage agreement across all interviews was 89%. This exceeds the 80% threshold that is typically considered to be indicative of good agreement (Guest et al., 2012). This descriptive measure was used to monitor coding consistency and complemented the consensus-based resolution of coding discrepancies.

Given the heterogeneity of teachers' perspectives in terms of focus and level of detail, the analysis was directed toward identifying patterns shared across participants rather than providing an exhaustive account of individual positions (Braun & Clarke, 2021). To balance thematic prevalence with attention to meaningful variation, we prioritized categories that appeared across multiple participants within each school context, while also noting salient counterexamples when they informed interpretation (Guest et al., 2012). A tabular presentation of the results with additional information may be found in Supplement B.

Results

Results are presented in the following according to the TPB constructs: (a) attitudes toward teaching writing, (b) subjective norms toward teaching writing, and (c) perceived behavioral control toward

teaching writing. For each category, the corresponding results are described and the subcategories are italicized. When applicable, differences among school contexts and patterns specifically concerning students with LD are highlighted.

Attitudes Toward Teaching Writing

Teachers' attitudes toward teaching writing skills were conceptualized as comprising cognitive, affective, and behavioral components (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). The cognitive component captures teachers' beliefs, knowledge, and appraisals regarding writing instruction, including perceived value, demands, and prerequisites. The affective component refers to emotional responses associated with writing and teaching writing (e.g., enjoyment, pride, stress, anxiety), as described for both teachers and students. Finally, the behavioral component reflects teachers' intended approaches to writing instruction and their reported plans for implementing writing-related practices in their classrooms.

Cognitive Component

Nearly all teachers ($n = 28$) affirmed the general *importance of writing* for students, particularly in terms of fostering expressiveness, communication, and creativity. Writing supports the development of language skills, promotes self-confidence, and prepares students for future challenges in all areas of life. However, some comprehensive school teachers said that the *importance of writing skills is the same* for all students but that there are different approaches to and expectations for students based on their individual backgrounds and abilities. Furthermore, some teachers at special education schools rated writing skills as *less important* for students with difficulties: "For me, it's even more important that they can read well, writing is actually rather secondary" (B_02, special education school).

Legitimation also played a role. Thus, 21 teachers emphasized the need to connect writing tasks to students' lives, commenting, for example, "Well, I think it has to do with practical life or closeness to life, as I said before. It has to be clear to them, somehow, why they are doing this. Otherwise, you can turn yourself inside out, and there will simply be no motivation to do it" (B_03, special education school). Some primary and comprehensive school teachers emphasized the importance of writing on digital devices and digital communication in general. Yet, some teachers at comprehensive schools noted a lack of perceived purpose: "Only very few really recognize the benefits

for their free time or for their personal experience" (B_13, comprehensive school); "Well, I think that the reality of life, to some extent, contradicts that a bit. And of course, young people adapt to that very quickly. If it's only really demanded in school and nowhere else, then I think school tends to lose some of its credibility" (B_25, comprehensive school).

Regarding the writing process, 16 teachers described the high-performance requirements writing places on students, for example, in terms of spelling, structure, and creativity. Further, 22 teachers mentioned competence differences, noting that students vary widely in their motivation, ability, and interest. In addition, some pointed out that the importance of writing is perceived differently depending on students' abilities, noting that, "The weaker ones, they don't need it so much in everyday life" (B_11, special education school). Other teachers, in particular from primary schools, mainly reported on the importance of providing individual feedback as part of writing instruction. Although providing such feedback requires time-consuming reviews of students' texts, the teachers described it as a valuable investment in their students' learning progress.

Nineteen participants reported having lower expectations of students with LD: "Of course, my expectations are not as high as the expectations of a student who is very, very, strong" (B_18, primary school). Seven teachers at special education schools expressed that they have minimal requirements and focus on functional writing skills (e.g., WhatsApp messages, recipes): "So that they can write a birthday card on their own. That sort of thing" (B_02, special education school). No teachers at primary or comprehensive schools commented on this.

Affective Component

The affective component of attitudes was also prominent. Eleven teachers described moments when students experienced *pride* and success through writing, especially when presenting their own texts: "Yes, it generates pride, it generates self-confidence, if I can write a text like that myself, that's great for a child" (B_18, primary school).

Teachers at special education schools ($n = 5$) highlighted that both students and teachers have *anxiety* and stress around writing. To ease this, they tried to reduce students' fear of making mistakes and highlighted the value of writing, while avoiding focusing on negative past experiences. The varying levels of student ability also cause stress, which teachers attempted to relieve by encouraging writing rather than correctness.

In addition, some teachers at comprehensive schools also reported that students often feel *anxious* about writing. This was mainly attributed to fear of not meeting language expectations or fear of expressing themselves publicly. To counter this, teachers reported simplifying writing tasks and attempting to make the process stress-free by focusing, instead, on supporting students and encouraging them to express themselves and build confidence: "Writing is stressful for them. (...) My goal is always to make the writing process go very easily or naturally in the end" (B_29, comprehensive school).

Behavioral Component

A central component of teachers' attitudes toward teaching writing was their commitment to *differentiated instruction*. Twenty of the 29 participating teachers interviewed described how they adapted their instruction to meet the diverse needs of their students. Strategies used include adjusting the difficulty level of tasks, offering additional materials, and providing individual support. Especially for students with LD or language barriers, this differentiation was considered a prerequisite for effective teaching.

The emphasis on *scaffolding* is closely connected to this issue: "Students who find it difficult need a fairly predetermined framework that they can stick to" (B_19, primary school). Twenty-five teachers also described providing structured support, such as sentence starters, word cards, or model texts, to give students a reliable framework and support them, step by step, in their development.

In addition, 19 teachers reported using *motivational strategies* to awaken and maintain students' interest in writing. These include imaginative writing prompts, picture books, and themed writing corners, and are designed to tap into students' individual interests in order to foster intrinsic motivation for writing. For example, one primary school teacher reflected on the motivational effect of revisiting students' earlier work: "They laugh to themselves about what they wrote in the first or second school year" (B_21, primary school).

Subjective Norms Toward Teaching Writing

Teachers perceived both intra- and extra-school expectations and expressed awareness of the expectations they had of themselves.

Intra-School Expectations

For expectations within the school environment, *students'* expectations were reported by 19 teachers across all school types. These teachers noted that

many students want to write and express themselves, often with strong creative impulses: "They're really keen to write their own texts. Even made-up texts" (B_28, comprehensive school).

However, *school principals* were generally not perceived as a driving force. Ten teachers explicitly reported *no expectations* from school leadership regarding the promotion of writing skills: "No, they [the school principals] don't really have any expectations" (B_15, primary school). In addition, teachers at special education and primary schools reported no expectations from *colleagues*. In contrast, teachers at comprehensive schools ($n = 6$) more frequently experienced explicit *collegial* expectations, which sometimes created pressure. As one teacher explained, "Sometimes it gets a bit overloaded" because teachers "don't just work with language, but also with content" (B_13, comprehensive school).

Extra-School Expectations

Teachers at primary and comprehensive schools reported explicit *curricular* expectations. They cited curriculum guidelines as a reason for including writing instruction, even though they acknowledged significant performance differences among students: "It's in the curriculum, so, of course, the ministry wants me to cover it in class. It's in the curriculum, we have to do it" (B_20, primary school). In contrast, teachers at special education schools described the absence of concrete *curricular* demands, which leads to instructional gaps: "You just have a lot of freedom. If you're not in the mood, to put it bluntly, you're more likely to play again. To put it bluntly. Instead of ... that's also exhausting. The students might not be up for it at first. Then I think that happens very quickly at the special education school. Yes. That you might not do it" (B_01, special education school).

In contrast, teachers reported that *parents* have expectations about their children's writing: "Some parents, for example, say, 'I want my child to learn this so that they can cope in everyday life'" (B_03, special education school). Parents want their children to become competent in and enjoy a range of writing skills. Indeed, 16 teachers described parents' *unrealistic expectations*. Some teachers perceived some parents as having very high expectations of their children's writing skills: "They expect me as a teacher to teach the children this and that, um, at the end of the second school year, the student can then write stories or retellings independently" (B_23, primary school). Others were more concerned about LD. For the teachers, this meant that they had to mediate between the unrealistic expectations of the

parents and the abilities of the students: “Um and then to act more as a mediator and then perhaps explain at the parents’ meeting why it’s already great that, I don’t know, Karl-Heinz has already written a whole sentence about the picture and that it’s not so bad that he doesn’t fill two pages like his brother, who is three years younger” (B_14, special education school).

Conversely, some teachers at comprehensive schools ($n = 3$) reported a *lack of parental expectations*: “In my experience, there’s not much coming from parents” (B_13, comprehensive school).

Personal Expectations

Seven teachers described being expected to be able to teach students writing skills and actually doing so. They took responsibility for teaching writing skills regardless of external demands: “I also see it as my job. So, to teach them that” (B_22, primary school). Additionally, seven teachers mentioned the expectation that they would *motivate their students*: “Well, I think the greatest expectation I have of myself is that I will manage to motivate the students at all” (B_26, comprehensive school).

By comparison, nine teachers at special education schools reported expecting students to demonstrate a certain level of *output* within their writing capabilities, even if minimal. They emphasized fostering growth rather than attaining fixed standards: “What the expectations are of you, um ... Ultimately, I think the most important thing for me is that I see a little progress, even if it’s only minimal, in the students” (B_14, special education school).

Perceived Behavioral Control Toward Teaching Writing

Teachers’ perceived behavioral control regarding teaching writing was shaped by various internal and external factors. These included student-related prerequisites, structural resources, and individual resources.

Student Resources

Twelve teachers across all school types described the central importance of students’ *intrinsic motivation* when teaching writing. Lack of student motivation was reported as a significant obstacle. Some teachers attributed this lack of motivation to their students being in puberty. At the same time, many emphasized their own responsibility to awaken students’ interest through relatable content and stress-free environments.

However, a major limiting factor reported by sixteen teachers was the *lack of precursor skills* among students. Teachers noted that many students lacked prior knowledge and basic competencies, such as knowledge of letters, vocabulary, and other language limitations (especially students with an immigration background),

as well as motor difficulties. The absence of these prerequisites affects students’ ability to engage meaningfully with writing: “Um, because they just find it so difficult to write texts in terms of motor skills that they can’t really write more than three or four sentences” (B_28, comprehensive school). Additionally, some teachers at comprehensive schools pointed to *insufficient support at home*, particularly in relation to exposure to written language: “Well, I do see a connection with (...) the family. Um, because they simply know less writing. They’re more familiar with the internet, comments, WhatsApp” (B_13, comprehensive school).

Structural Resources

Insufficient time emerged as a central barrier. Fifteen teachers reported that teaching writing effectively, especially when it involves feedback and differentiation, requires a *high time commitment* and more time than is typically available: “Time. So, a lot of time. To then repeat again. (...) So/ and there’s a lack of/ so there usually has to be a double lesson when you start writing texts. So that it doesn’t come to nothing” (B_28, comprehensive school).

A related issue reported by teachers at special education and comprehensive schools was the desire for *flexibility* in organizational structures, teaching expectations, and the ability to adapt content and expectations. Some teachers at special education schools expressed the wish for *interdisciplinary collaboration* to develop consistent approaches and share strategies: “That I have an exchange with colleagues. That you say: ok, at least the idea is standardized” (B_06, special education school).

The availability and quality of teaching *materials and tools* also played a key role in supporting students’ writing. Fourteen teachers across all school types reported using aids such as visualized word banks, digital devices, or speech recognition apps to support their students: “Do it via the tablet or the computer (...) to get them into the flow of writing” (B_14, special education school). However, teachers from comprehensive schools, in particular, described a *lack of suitable materials* for students with LD, including basic supplies like pens and writing paper: “So, it often starts with material. (...) Then they write with something. The something often doesn’t write properly. It can’t be erased/ so then they just cross things out and, um, then they don’t like it themselves. (...) And rather than delivering rubbish, they’d rather not deliver at all” (B_26, comprehensive school).

Individual Resources

Teachers also reflected on their own resources for teaching writing to students, including the per-

sonal skills, knowledge, experience, and other attributes that they bring to the job. Thirteen teachers valued ongoing development of methodological and didactic *knowledge* in order to make lessons more attractive and better meet student needs. They also actively sought new strategies and materials: "You're always rethinking your teaching, and that's how it should be in general, I think" (B_18, primary school). Finally, some teachers pointed to the need for good *ideas* ($n = 7$) and *patience* ($n = 7$) as essential traits for guiding students in the writing process.

Discussion

This qualitative study explored how teachers across three German school contexts construct intentions to teach writing skills to students with and without LD by articulating attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control through the lens of the TPB (Ajzen, 1991). Teachers generally valued writing as a means of communication, participation, and self-expression, but they reported that they did not always experience sustained writing instruction as institutionally reinforced or practically feasible.

Attitudes Toward Teaching Writing

Teachers' attitudes toward writing instruction were predominantly positive but conditional. That is, writing was valued for its relevance to students' present and future participation, and successful writing experiences were associated with pride and confidence. At the same time, teachers regarded writing as cognitively and emotionally demanding, especially for students with LD. This combination suggests that valuing writing does not automatically translate into an equally strong orientation toward all aspects of writing instruction. Instead, attitudes appear to reflect teachers' judgments about both the value of writing and the likelihood that particular students can engage successfully in it.

Perceived relevance was central to these judgments. Teachers considered writing tasks to be more instructionally viable when students could recognize an authentic purpose, such as those related to everyday and digital communication. Conversely, tasks that were perceived as distant from students' lives were associated with lower anticipated engagement, particularly in comprehensive schools. These findings refine the broader observation that teachers generally value writing (Graham, 2019): Their attitudes toward teaching appear to depend on whether they believe they can make writing meaningful

and motivating for their students. Thus, anticipated student engagement may connect teachers' evaluations of writing with their willingness to invest in sustained instruction.

The school contexts differed most clearly in how teachers framed appropriate writing goals for students with LD. For example, teachers at special education schools more often emphasized functional outcomes, such as producing short everyday texts, and sometimes prioritized reading over writing. This focus should not necessarily be interpreted as limited commitment. It may instead represent an adaptation to students' perceived prerequisite skills, emotional responses, and the resources available for instruction. Functional writing can promote autonomy and participation. However, it may also narrow students' opportunities if it replaces, rather than scaffolds, access to planning, text construction, and revision. This is an important distinction because students with LD often require explicit and sustained support to develop these higher-order composing processes (Graham et al., 2017; Malpique et al., 2024).

Teachers' emphasis on differentiation, scaffolding, and motivational support also pointed toward perceived behavioral control, as these desirable but resource-intensive practices reportedly were constrained by insufficient time, materials, and professional support.

Subjective Norms Toward Teaching Writing

Writing-related norms appeared uneven across and within school contexts. School leadership was rarely perceived as an active source of expectations, while collegial expectations were more visible in comprehensive schools than in primary or special education schools.

Curricular expectations provided a clearer normative signal in primary and comprehensive schools. Teachers in these settings referred to the curriculum as legitimizing writing instruction even when student performance was highly heterogeneous. By contrast, teachers at special education schools frequently reported an absence of concrete curricular demands, which enabled them to avoid the most demanding aspects of writing instruction. Thus, institutional norms can either enable or constrain practice. Flexibility allows for adaptation to students' needs, but weak or ambiguous expectations may reduce the priority given to sustained composition instruction. This is particularly important for students with LD, whose progress often depends on coordinated and repeated support. More broadly, this finding aligns

with research indicating that writing receives less time and emphasis when curricular or systemic expectations are vague (Alston & Eagle, 2024; Cutler & Graham, 2008).

Teachers' reports of a stronger emphasis on reading and orthography than on producing texts are consistent with the domains emphasized in large-scale German assessments (Stanat et al., 2023). The comparatively weak normative signals for composition may be especially consequential for students with LD, whose progress often requires sustained and coordinated support. Teachers may receive little reinforcement for implementing the explicit and repeated instruction that students with LD often need if writing is treated as optional or secondary.

Parents represented a further, but ambivalent, normative influence. Some teachers experienced parental expectations as exceeding students' current capabilities, whereas others, particularly in comprehensive schools, perceived little parental involvement. These contrasting experiences may create a mismatch between injunctive expectations (what parents think should be done) in the absence of corresponding descriptive support (what parents actually do). Rather than consistently strengthening intentions, such normative ambiguity may increase pressure while leaving teachers to negotiate expectations individually (Manning, 2009; McEachan et al., 2016).

Perceived Behavioral Control Toward Teaching Writing

Perceived behavioral control was the most consistent constraint across school contexts. Teachers valued feedback, revision, differentiation, and individual scaffolding but considered the time available for these practices insufficient. This corresponds with survey evidence indicating that writing often receives limited instructional time and fragmented practice (Cutler & Graham, 2008; Gilbert & Graham, 2010).

Material conditions further shaped perceived feasibility. Teachers described both the potential benefits of digital tools and visual supports and, particularly in comprehensive schools, the absence of suitable or even basic materials for students with LD. This issue raises equity concerns because equitable participation requires access to materials suited to students' learning needs. Without such materials, students with LD may face barriers to fully participating in and benefiting from writing instruction. Teachers' references to limited home exposure to written language and to students' missing precursor skills further indicate that perceived control reflects

an interaction between instructional resources and the needs teachers encounter in their classrooms (Ng & Graham, 2026).

Teachers from all three school types described the need for instructional knowledge, methodological repertoire, and patience. Their desire for additional professional learning focused on higher-order writing processes suggests that some teachers feel unprepared to teach writing (Gillespie Rouse & Kiu-hara, 2017). Professional learning alone, however, is unlikely to be sufficient if teachers lack the time and organizational conditions necessary to apply what they learn. Effective support should connect pedagogical knowledge with opportunities for implementation, collaboration, and reflection.

The composition of the sample of our study suggests an additional interpretive layer. That is, the teachers working at special education schools were, on average, younger and less experienced than the participants from the primary and comprehensive schools. According to research on teacher efficacy, novice teachers' efficacy beliefs may be more sensitive to external resources and support, which can further amplify TPB constraints during the early stages of a teacher's career (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007).

These accounts may help explain why incidental practices are sometimes observed more frequently than explicit writing instruction in classrooms for students with LD (Ciullo et al., 2025). Although the interviews cannot establish practice frequencies, they point to conditions that may impede sustained process instruction. This intention-practice distinction is particularly consequential because evidence-based instruction for students with LD requires modeling, guided practice, strategy instruction, goal setting, and repeated opportunities to plan and revise (Gillespie Rouse & Kiu-hara, 2017; Harris et al., 2013).

TPB Components Across Contexts

The findings indicate that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control did not operate independently. Their combination varied across school settings, creating different conditions under which intentions to teach writing could develop. These patterns should not be interpreted as "teacher types" or as causal differences among school forms. Rather, they illustrate how institutional conditions may shape the relative weight of the TPB components.

In special education schools, positive attitudes toward supporting students coexisted with functional writing goals, relatively weak external expectations,

and substantial barriers related to time and students' perceived prerequisites. This combination may support individualized scaffolding while reducing the priority assigned to broader composing processes. Functional goals can be appropriate and participation-oriented, but they should ideally provide access to, rather than replace, the continued development of planning, text construction, and revision.

In primary schools, positive attitudes were reinforced by clearer curricular expectations, but limited time for feedback, revision, and differentiation constrained process-oriented instruction. This corresponds with international evidence that planning, reviewing, and revising receive comparatively limited attention and that writing instruction is often "squeezed in" among competing demands (Alston & Eagle, 2024; Cutler & Graham, 2008; Dockrell et al., 2016). This suggests that in primary schools, perceived behavioral control may prevent teachers from consistently translating positive attitudes and curricular norms into writing cycles, especially for students with LD.

In comprehensive schools, teachers viewed writing as important for students' participation and associated successful writing with positive emotional outcomes. However, explicit collegial expectations and curricular pressures coexisted with limited materials and organizational flexibility. This combination is particularly consequential in inclusive secondary settings, where students with LD face subject-related writing demands and teachers may perceive that they have insufficient control over the necessary resources and conditions to support these students. Teachers also expressed concern that adolescents primarily viewed writing as a school requirement, which could reduce their engagement (Troia et al., 2012). These accounts are consistent with previous research suggesting that institutional pressures can shape instructional priorities while competing curricular demands may impede sustained work on composing processes (Graham, 2019). From a TPB perspective, perceived norms may increase pressure without strengthening perceived behavioral control when feasibility remains limited.

Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations must be considered. Data collection occurred during the pandemic, which may have influenced teachers' perceptions of distance learning and digital tools. Although interview modes varied, potential mode effects were not examined. Additionally, the regional focus and targeted and snowball sampling methods limit the transferability of the findings (Adeoye, 2023; Flick, 2022). While partici-

pants referenced concepts such as differentiation, motivation, and scaffolding, a thorough theoretical analysis of these concepts was beyond the scope of the study (see Supplement B).

Future research could address these limitations by triangulating teacher intention formation with classroom observations and instructional artifacts, such as writing tasks, scaffolds, and feedback samples, in order to examine how reported intentions and constraints translate into enacted classroom practice. In addition, comparative studies, either across German federal states or between inclusive and separate settings, would clarify how curricular specificity, assessment signals, and resources shape subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. Longitudinal designs would also allow researchers to investigate changes in teachers' intentions and the intention-behavior gap over time (Ajzen, 2015). Such studies could also incorporate motivational and habitual aspects of instructional decision-making that are not fully represented in traditional TPB models. Finally, intervention studies could examine whether combining writing-focused professional learning with structural support, such as time, materials, and collegial exchange, facilitates sustained instruction for diverse learners.

Conclusion and Implications

Overall, this study adds to the body of TPB-informed research on writing instruction by demonstrating how teachers' intentions reflect their attitudes, perceived expectations, and perceived behavioral control within the constraints of everyday school life. Teachers valued writing across contexts and reported positive student experiences. However, they described process-oriented instruction as difficult to sustain when time for feedback and revision, appropriate materials, and opportunities to develop pedagogical knowledge of writing were limited. These findings are consistent with existing evidence indicating that writing instruction often lacks focus and attention to writing processes (Dockrell et al., 2016; Graham, 2019).

Efforts to improve writing instruction for students with LD may benefit from professional learning that translates higher-order processes, such as planning, revising, and self-regulation, into differentiated, manageable classroom routines (Gillespie Rouse & Kiuhaara, 2017). However, teacher learning alone is unlikely to be sufficient. Teachers' reports of inconsistent expectations among colleagues and limited leadership involvement point to a gap between recommended whole-school approaches and perceived school practice (Merga et al., 2021). Implementing shared expect-

tations, coordinating feedback and revision routines, allocating sufficient time and resources, and providing structured opportunities for collegial exchange can support the implementation of instructional expertise and facilitate its diffusion (Ciullo et al., 2025; Sun et al., 2013). Together, these supports may help translate teachers' positive attitudes toward writing into sustained, process-oriented instruction.

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Author Notes

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the first author. The data are not publicly available as they contain information that could compromise the privacy of research participants.

SH and KU conceptualized and designed the study. SH and KU conceptualized and wrote the manuscript. SH planned and organized the data collection and conducted the interviews. SH, LD and KU analyzed the data. All authors contributed to the article.

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Supplement to the Study

"Teachers' Intention to Teach Writing Skills to Students With and Without Learning Disabilities: From a Theory of Planned Behavior Perspective"

A – Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Introduction

1. Make sure that the interviewee has received the information sheet and the consent form, and that they understand the purpose of the project as well as their role in it.
2. Ensure the interviewee understands the definition of the writing skills referred to: Writing skills can be defined as the ability to clearly and effectively communicate thoughts and information in written form, while adhering to linguistic conventions and text structure norms. This includes mastery of lower-level transcription skills.

Table 1

Thematic-Centered Interview Questions and Initial Coding of Responses.

Thematic-Centered-Interview	Initial Coding
– What do you think about teaching students (with LD) writing skills?	
– When you think about teaching students (with LD) to write, what expectations do you have of yourself?	Attitude toward the behavior
– What is the importance of teaching students (with LD) writing skills?	
– What is the importance of being able to have writing skills for students (with LD)?	
– What do you need to teach students (with LD) writing skills?	Perceived behavioral control
– Is there anything that makes teaching writing skills (to students with LD) difficult?	
– When you think about teaching writing skills (to students with LD), what expectations do you perceive others have of you?	Subjective norm
– What do these expectations mean to you?	
– Is there anything else you would like to mention about teaching writing skills (to students with LD)?	

B – Code System

Category ¹	Description & Quote	Teachers (<i>n</i>) Special Education School (<i>n_s</i>) Primary School (<i>n_p</i>) Comprehensive School (<i>n_c</i>)	Theoretical Foundation
1. Attitudes toward teaching writing skills ²	Teachers' attitudes toward teaching writing skills. Behavioral beliefs, representing the perceived likelihood of a behavior leading to certain outcomes like their impact on students		Ajzen, 2011, 2014, 2020; Ajzen & Kruglanski, 2019
1.1. Behavior	Known as the behavioral or action component, it refers to the way in which a person intends to act or acts towards the object of the attitude. This includes any kind of action tendency, from public expression of the attitude to actual behavior.		Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Poppe & Gampfer, 2022
1.1.1. Differentiated Instruction	Teachers describe the differentiated approach to education that is necessary to meet the different needs and abilities of students. They emphasize that students require different levels of support. This ranges from adapting the difficulty of tasks to the provision of special aids and individual support. Especially for students with LD or language barriers, it is important to adapt teaching methods and expectations to suit each child and provide them with the best possible support. Teachers see it as their task to meet each child where they are and to support them according to their individual abilities. "Ms. X, you come into the class and there are 27 children and somehow, yes, there are ten different activities going on. (...) So it's great, um, if everyone could do it like that, we'd be further along." (B_27_Comprehensive school teacher: 2)	<i>n</i> = 20 <i>n_s</i> = 8 <i>n_p</i> = 7 <i>n_c</i> = 5	"Differentiated instruction is internal to the class. It refers to all teaching practices that aim to organize student learning by considering their individual differences (abilities, needs, etc.), while pursuing ambitious objectives common to all." (Dierendonck et al., 2024, p. 2).
1.1.2. Scaffolding	Teachers emphasize the need to support students through targeted scaffolding, i.e. the provision of structures and tools. This includes offering writing prompts, structuring aids such as sentence starters or word cards and providing sample texts to give students a framework within which they can develop their skills and encourage them step by step. "Yes, definitely! So, children who find it difficult need a fairly predetermined framework that they can stick to. And my expectation would be that they stick to it and not that they make it up themselves in their heads, this basic framework." (B_19_Primary school teacher: 30)	<i>n</i> = 25 <i>n_s</i> = 10 <i>n_p</i> = 8 <i>n_c</i> = 7	In the pedagogical-psychological context, scaffolding means supporting a learning process by providing an initial complete orientation basis in the form of instructions, thinking aids and other assistance (Stangl, 2025).

¹ Grey shaded fields are deductively formed categories.

² Because our analyses indicated that we needed a more detailed theory to describe and organize the statements that make up attitudes, we used the ABC model (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). This model conceptualizes attitudes as a construct consisting of three components: affect (emotion), behavior (tendencies to behave) and cognition (thought processes). Behavior: Known as the behavioral or action component, it refers to the way in which a person intends to act or acts towards the object of the attitude. This includes any kind of action tendency, from public expression of the attitude to actual behavior. Affect: The affective component comprises the emotional reactions or feelings that a person has in relation to the attitude object. This component is important because emotions are a powerful force behind our attitudes and associated behaviors. Cognition: This component refers to the thoughts, beliefs and knowledge a person has about an attitude object. It is what the person knows or believes about the object of the attitude. It includes factual knowledge, opinions and beliefs about the object (Poppe & Gampfer, 2022). The three-component model provides a comprehensive understanding of the structure of attitudes (Kroeber-Riel & Gröppel-Klein 2019), while the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) shows how attitudes, in conjunction with other factors, predict behavior. Of particular importance is the relationship between the conative component of the three-component model (behavioral tendencies) and the concept of behavioral intention in the TPB. Both models emphasize that the intention to engage in a particular behavior is a critical predictor of actual behavior.

1.1.3.	Motivating rewards	Teachers report that they use various motivational activities in the classroom to encourage and maintain students' interest in writing. Teachers create creative and stimulating writing opportunities through the use of picture books, class storybooks, themed corners in the classroom and other inspirational materials that stimulate students' imaginations and aim to encourage motivation. Teachers see it as their task to motivate students to write by creating suitable conditions and taking their individual interests into account. "And then we already have books from the first school year. And when, like now in the writing workshop, they also have these old ones in between, when they're idle, and then of course they laugh to themselves about what they wrote in the first or second school year." (B_21_Primary school teacher: 20)	$n = 19$ $n_s = 8$ $n_p = 6$ $n_c = 5$
1.1.4.	Feedback	Teachers from primary school report individual feedback and time-consuming revision of students' texts, which they see as a valuable investment in their learning progress. "I draw the children's attention to certain mistakes, I do it differently. (...) So it's really totally individual." (B_18_Primary school teacher: 57-62)	$n = 6$ $n_s = 1$ $n_p = 4$ $n_c = 1$
1.2.	Affect (emotion)	The affective component comprises the emotional reactions or feelings that a person has in relation to the attitude object. This component is important because emotions are a powerful force behind our attitudes and associated behaviors.	Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Poppe & Gampfer, 2022
1.2.1.	Anxiety	The teachers at the special school report that both students and teachers are confronted with anxiety and stress in relation to writing texts. Teachers endeavor to reduce the students' fear of making mistakes and to make them aware of the meaningfulness of writing. In doing so, it is important to avoid negative experiences from the past, such as bad experiences with error corrections. Teachers themselves experience stress when teaching text writing, especially because of the heterogeneous performance level of their students and the different requirements. They try to take the pressure off both themselves and the students by emphasizing that it is not just a matter of error-free writing, but rather that students write texts at all. "Um yes, the first thing I have to think about is my class and how writing texts works there, especially hesitantly and with a lot of fear. I think about that because there are simply many sources of error lurking there and the students can fall into them again and again. That's the kind of thing." (B_02_Special educational teacher: 6) Comprehensive school teachers describe that students are often confronted with anxiety and stress when writing texts. They assume that these fears stem from worries about not being able to meet linguistic requirements and express themselves in front of others. Teachers try to reduce these fears through various strategies, such as simplifying the introduction to text production. A key aim is to make the writing process as stress-free as possible for students and to help them express their thoughts and feelings freely. Teachers strive to reduce the pressure and meet students where they are in order to boost their self-confidence in dealing with texts. "Well, I would say right now with our current fifth-graders. Um, writing is stressful for them. And in the moment when writing is stressful for me, I can't write well about my feelings. Yes, because then there's somehow a meta-level that gets in the way. My goal in the classroom is always to make the writing process go very easily or naturally in the end. Um, once you've achieved that, I think the students can put their own thoughts and feelings down on paper very well." (B_29_Comprehensive school teacher: 6)	$n = 9$ $n_s = 5$ $n_p = 1$ $n_c = 3$

1.2.2. Pride	Teachers describe that the child experiences self-efficacy, success, pride through the competence of writing; e.g., by being allowed to present their results. Primary school teachers report that the students experience pride in relation to their written work or their growth in competence. It is therefore crucial to acknowledge the children's results and have them present them, for example. "Yes, it generates pride, it generates self-confidence, if I can write a text like that myself, that's great for a child, of course. When the child grows like that. When they write their little texts in the first year of school." (B_18_Primary school teacher: 78) However, comprehensive school teachers also report that overcoming fear and experiencing successful writing (success) is associated with a sense of pride for the students and that they can experience writing as something positive. "And I believe that tasks like this, again the success, that tasks like this also change the attitude towards the process. So if they write beautifully and keep it in a fond memory and then keep the confrontation with reading in a fond memory, um, then that helps a lot for all other learning and reading and writing afterwards. So for me this, the children have to experience writing as something beautiful so that they can at least get an idea of what people like you and me probably like about writing. Because otherwise it's completely unimaginable for the children why you do something like that voluntarily if you only ever do it in a school context and with a red pen and you have to now and have you done your homework and why not?" (B_29_Comprehensive school teacher: 28)	$n = 11$ $n_s = 3$ $n_p = 5$ $n_c = 3$
1.3. Cognition	This component refers to the thoughts, beliefs and knowledge a person has about an attitude object. It is what the person knows or believes about the object of the attitude. It includes factual knowledge, opinions and beliefs about the object.	Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Poppe & Gampfer, 2022
1.3.1. Competence differences	Students have different abilities and interests and teachers adjust their expectations accordingly. "The other simply has no interest in writing. For him, arithmetic is simply the be-all and end-all." (B_21_Primary school teacher: 24)	$n = 22$ $n_s = 10$ $n_p = 8$ $n_c = 4$
1.3.2. High performance requirements	Writing skills are very demanding for students and therefore often involve difficulties in areas such as planning, structure, spelling and creativity. "Exactly, so that's the first thing that comes to my mind, that I think it's definitely super important that they don't just learn to just copy, but also to write something themselves, but that for many it is already associated with great difficulties." (B_04_Special education teacher: 13)	$n = 16$ $n_s = 7$ $n_p = 5$ $n_c = 4$
1.3.3. Minimum requirements	Special education teachers report minimal requirements. For example, it is only about the content or that a sentence is understandable at all. The aim is to be able to write a birthday card, a recipe, a WhatsApp message or a short sentence. "So those are my first, basic thoughts. I think it's generally important that they learn this. So that they can write a birthday card on their own. That sort of thing. Um, so the basics. It's not so important to me that they can somehow write a diary entry from somewhere else. But a few basic things or writing down a sentence for a recipe or something like that. I think that's quite good." (B_02_Special education teacher: 8)	$n = 7$ $n_s = 7$ $n_p = 0$ $n_c = 0$

1.3.4. Legitimation	Teachers report the importance of writing that is purposeful and relevant to students' lives. The topics chosen should be related to the students' world and everyday life. "So, I have the expectation that I choose topics or at least specify aspects that are also (um) related to the real world." (B_28_ comprehensive school teacher: 6) Primary and comprehensive school teachers in particular mention that writing on digital devices is particularly important for digital communication such as WhatsApp and emails. "Simply so that everyone has the chance to write texts. So maybe some people write, well, nowadays a lot of people write on WhatsApp, they're very short texts, short, they're actually just individual sentences." (B_15_Primary school teacher: 22) However, comprehensive school teachers in particular also report that there is often a lack of legitimacy for writing and that this is problematic for students. "But only very few really recognize the benefits for their free time or for their personal experience, and of course the question is whether they should or must recognize the benefits." (B_13_ Comprehensive school teacher: 14)	$n = 21$ $n_s = 9$ $n_p = 7$ $n_c = 5$
1.3.5. Importance for students	Teachers report that the importance of writing skills in academic and personal contexts is high. Writing is essential for expressiveness, communication and creativity. It supports the development of language skills, promotes self-confidence and prepares students for future challenges in all areas of life. "Okay, I think that's definitely very important. That's also the first experience children have of writing texts. (um) Writing down their own feelings or (um) their own experiences in the form of (um) the Monday storybook. So when the children talk about the weekend, they might start writing (um) letters to friends or something. Writing postcards from their holidays. (um) And simply their, yes, that it's the way to communicate their own experiences and feelings (um)." (B_17_Primary school teacher: 4) They report that the importance varies by competence of the students. Some students have an intrinsic interest and enjoyment in text writing and produce detailed texts, while others have difficulty formulating simple sentences. "So the weaker ones, they don't need it so much in everyday life. They manage quite well like this. Even without written language. (Um) Yes, and the others, of course, they write something down from time to time and the importance is much, much greater. So I think the weaker they are, the less important it is for them and the older they get I think." (B_11_Special education teacher: 16) Some special education teachers rate the importance of writing skills in students with LD as less important compared to other written language skills. "Well, I have to say I think it's even more important that they can read well so that they can simply cope with their everyday life, so when I compare reading and writing now, writing is actually rather secondary for me, but that doesn't make it completely unimportant." (B_02_Special education teacher: 18) Some comprehensive school teachers say that the importance of writing skills is the same for all students, but there are different approaches and expectations for students based on their individual backgrounds and abilities. "Yes [same meaning]. Well, I can't think of any exceptions right now. So I think that some will never (um) have to write a five-page text. (um) But just basically write a short text. And if it's good, then that's all right." (B_28_Comprehensive school teacher: 11-12)	$n = 28$ $n_s = 12$ $n_p = 9$ $n_c = 7$

1.3.6.	Lower expectations for students with LD	Teachers report lower expectations for students with LD. They adapt their expectations for students with LD in reading and writing: less emphasis on spelling, acceptance of simpler, shorter texts. The adaptation of expectations varies according to the individual abilities of the students, with a focus on accessibility and comprehensibility. "Other expectations, um of course my expectations are not as high as the expectation of a student who is very, very, strong." (B_18_Primary school teacher: 72)	$n = 19$ $n_s = 6$ $n_p = 8$ $n_c = 5$
2.	Subjective norms	Perception of social expectations. Normative beliefs, encompassing the perceived encouragement or execution of a behavior by important others like colleagues, shape teachers' subjective norm – the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform a behavior. This subjective norm is formed by these beliefs, each weighted by the referent's significance to the individual.	Ajzen, 2011, 2014, 2020; Ajzen & Kruglanski, 2019
2.1.	Personal expectations	Expectations of oneself in the role of a teacher are reported.	
2.1.1.	Students output	The students should have a certain output at the end. Most of the special educational school and comprehensive school teachers report that they expect students to show a certain level of output within their capabilities. "What the expectations are of you, um. Ultimately, I think the most important thing for me is that I see a little progress, even if it's only minimal, in the student." (B_14_Special education teacher: 41-44)	$n = 14$ $n_s = 9$ $n_p = 2$ $n_c = 3$
2.1.2.	Standard	Teachers report that they are expected to be able to teach students writing skills and to do so. "I also see it as my job. So (um) to teach them that (um). [...] But even, I'll say, the expectations of me don't necessarily change my behavior at school. I still try to teach them to read and write (um)." (B_22_Primary school teacher: 30)	$n = 7$ $n_s = 2$ $n_p = 3$ $n_c = 2$
2.1.3.	Motivating students	The teachers at the comprehensive school report the expectation that they will succeed in motivating the students. "Well, I think the greatest expectation I have of myself is (um) that I manage (um) to motivate the students at all." (B_26_Comprehensive school teacher: 8)	$n = 7$ $n_s = 2$ $n_p = 2$ $n_c = 3$
2.2.	Intra-school	The expectations of the people within the school are reported. These include the school principals, colleagues and students.	
2.2.1.	School principals	No expectations from the principal were reported. "No, they [the school principal] don't really have any expectations." (B_15_Primary school teacher: 61-62)	$n = 10$ $n_s = 4$ $n_p = 4$ $n_c = 2$
2.2.2.	Colleagues	Primary and special education school teachers report that their colleagues have no expectations of them with regard to the teaching of writing skills. "Mhm. Do you have any expectations of your colleagues? B_03: No, I don't think so." (B_03_Special education teacher: 71-72) Comprehensive school teachers report that they do have perceived explicit expectations. These expectations are important to them and sometimes lead to pressure. "From colleagues in that case. Sometimes it gets a bit overloaded. Because we don't just work with language, but also with content, like the crime story or whatever. That's often a bit difficult." (B_13_Comprehensive school teacher: 20-22)	$n = 26$ $n_s = 12$ $n_p = 8$ $n_c = 6$
2.2.3.	Students	Teachers report that the students want to learn writing skills, for example to express themselves. "So a lot of them have really great ideas (um) and also want to write. So they're also/ maybe it's because of the mobile phone culture, because they've always written a lot (um) they're really keen to write their own texts. Even made-up texts." (B_28_Comprehensive school teacher: 2)	$n = 19$ $n_s = 7$ $n_p = 6$ $n_c = 6$
2.3.	Extra-school	The expectations of other people outside the school, such as parents, society and politics, as well as external requirements such as the curriculum, are reported.	

2.3.1. Parents	Teachers report that parents have a variety of expectations with regard to their children's text production. During parent-teacher conferences and other contacts, parents express the desire for their children to enjoy writing and become competent in text production. These expectations concern all aspects of the writing process, from joyful engagement to correct spelling. "But there are some parents, for example, who say: I want my child to learn this later so that they can cope in everyday life, for example. When it comes to simple words or sentences. There is always the question of what the parents' own expectations of the child's development are and this is then transferred to the teacher. To implement that." (B_03_Special education teacher: 66) However, many teachers, especially special educational school teachers report unrealistic expectations from the parents. While they perceive that some parents have very high expectations of their children's text skills, others are concerned about LD. This means that they have to mediate between the unrealistic expectations of the parents and the abilities of the students. "But of course, um the parents' expectations are very, very high. They expect me as a teacher to um teach the children this and that um at the end of the second school year, the children can then write stories or retellings independently." (B_23_Primary school teacher: 40) "Um and then to act more as a mediator and then perhaps explain at the parents' meeting why it's already great that, I don't know, Karl-Heinz has already written a whole sentence about the picture and that it's not so bad that he doesn't fill two pages like his brother, who is three years younger." (B_14_Special educational school teacher: 44) Comprehensive school teachers report that parents have no expectations with regard to their children's writing skills. "In my experience, there's not much coming from parents, so to speak." (B_13_Comprehensive school teacher: 22)	$n = 26$ $n_s = 12$ $n_p = 8$ $n_c = 6$
2.3.2. Curriculum	Concrete expectations – guidelines and curricula specify what should be covered in class. Many of the teachers report that they then also teach writing skills as a result. Some teachers perceive this as pressure, especially when it comes to assigning grades for creative texts, as students' results and abilities can vary greatly. Nevertheless, teachers report that they strive to meet these curricular expectations while considering students' individual performance levels and trying to prepare them for their future school careers. "It's in the curriculum, so of course the ministry wants me to cover it in class. It's in the curriculum, we have to do it." (B_20_Primary school teacher: 28) Only special education school teachers report that there are no curricular requirements due to the differentiated schooling. In some cases, this freedom is perceived as too great and, as a result, strenuous work such as writing texts tends to be avoided. "Although this is still possible in KmE now, but because of that. You just have a lot of freedom. If you're not in the mood, to put it bluntly, you're more likely to play again. To put it bluntly. Instead of that's also exhausting. The children might not be up for it at first. Then I think that happens very quickly at the special school. Yes. That you might not do it." (B_01_Special educational teacher: 76)	$n = 19$ $n_s = 8$ $n_p = 8$ $n_c = 3$
3. Perceived behavioral control	Perceived control over instructional factors. Control beliefs, concerning perceptions of the factors that can facilitate or hinder a behavior, together with the perceived efficacy of these factors, shape teachers perceived behavioral control. This perception emerges from evaluating the presence and impact of control factors.	Ajzen, 2011, 2014, 2020; Ajzen & Kruglanski, 2019
3.1. Student resources	When it is reported that students have certain prerequisites that must be met in order to be able to teach writing skills. These include, for example, a lack of prior skills, insufficient support at home or motivation.	

3.1.1.	Lack of prerequisite skills	The teachers see the development of writing skills as challenging, particularly due to a lack of prior knowledge and skills among students with LD. Challenges include insufficient knowledge of letters and words, limited vocabulary, lack of experience in reading and reading aloud, language limitations in children with an immigrant background and motor difficulties. These deficits affect students' ability to write texts and express their thoughts effectively. Teachers often need to develop basic skills such as letter recognition and sentence structure before they can introduce advanced writing activities. "Yes, I think the children find it really difficult to write sensible sentences in terms of spelling and grammar. And what a lot of them have is handwriting. (um) Because they just find it so difficult to write texts in terms of motor skills that they can't really write more than three or four sentences." (B_28_Comprehensive school teacher: 20)	$n = 16$ $n_s = 5$ $n_p = 5$ $n_c = 6$
3.1.2.	Insufficient support at home	Comprehensive school teachers emphasize that support at home is important but often not provided. This is sometimes perceived as parents handing over responsibility to the school in terms of teaching skills. "Well, I do see a connection with reading aloud and reading in the family. (um) Because they simply know less writing. They're more familiar with the internet, comments, WhatsApp. And it's just a different language that you read than a children's book or a novel!" (B_13_Comprehensive school teacher: 12)	$n = 7$ $n_s = 1$ $n_p = 3$ $n_c = 3$
3.1.3.	Motivation	The teachers emphasize the central importance of motivation for students' writing. They consider it necessary for students to be motivated in order to start the writing process. In some cases, they report a lack of motivation on the part of the students and in others the lack of motivation is also attributed externally in relation to puberty. As a result, they see their primary role as motivating students through appropriate didactic and methodological approaches. To this end, students should be given freedom, not corrected for every little mistake, and the task should have a connection to the real world. "So, what I notice is/it's easier if the topic is tangible for the students and close to the students. In any case, to arouse interest." (B_12_Comprehensive school teacher: 14)	$n = 12$ $n_s = 5$ $n_p = 3$ $n_c = 4$
3.2.	Structural resources	Structural resources comprise the organizational, physical and technological infrastructures required to carry out activities and achieve goals. These include, for example, buildings, equipment, media and organizational structures.	
3.2.1.	Materials/tools	The teachers emphasize the importance of various tools and materials to support writing. These include writing tools, visual materials such as visualized word collections, criteria lists, digital devices such as iPads for speech recognition and apps, and pedagogical materials such as cubes for creative writing tasks. "Then you can just see if you can somehow do it via the um tablet or the computer that if it's just motor um things that you can make it easier for them to get into the flow of writing and that they might somehow get into more positive thoughts." (B_14_Special education teacher: 28)	$n = 14$ $n_s = 7$ $n_p = 4$ $n_c = 3$
3.2.2.	Lack of suitable materials	Especially comprehensive school teachers report a lack of suitable materials for students with LD. "So, it often starts with material. That has actually become quite difficult again after corona or with corona. (um) Material management. So that students would come to school with (um) complete (um) material. With pens. (um) Then they write with something. The something often doesn't write properly. It can't be erased/ so then they just cross things out and (um) then they don't like it themselves. [...] And before they deliver rubbish, they'd rather not deliver at all. That's (um) and then: 'Nah, that's stupid. Nah, I'm not going to read that. Nope.' Um, like that. So, material is very important." (B_26_Comprehensive school teacher: 18)	

3.2.3.	Flexibility	Special education and comprehensive school teachers report the desire for flexibility in the structures and expectations of teaching. "So there's just a bit more flexibility, isn't there? Yes." (B_05_Special education teacher: 24)	$n = 13$ $n_s = 6$ $n_p = 2$ $n_c = 5$
3.2.4.	High time commitment	Teachers emphasize the need for sufficient time for effective learning and feedback in class, especially in the preparation, implementation and debriefing of writing exercises. They describe the amount of time required as considerable and often insufficient to address the individual needs of each student and ensure the quality of the educational experience. "Time. So, a lot of time. To then repeat again. To perhaps also be able to give the students individual feedback in the writing process. So that's reading through a text briefly and saying: 'Ah look, that's great' or 'maybe you could do this and that even better' or they always have lots of questions. They always want to get everything right, don't they? So/ and there's a lack of/ so there usually has to be a double lesson when you start writing texts. So that it doesn't come to nothing." (B_28_Comprehensive school teacher: 16)	$n = 15$ $n_s = 7$ $n_p = 5$ $n_c = 3$
3.3.	Individual resources	These refer to the personal skills, knowledge, experience and attributes that an individual brings to the job. Individual resources can include emotional intelligence, problem-solving skills, creativity, self-motivation and other personal strengths that contribute to personal performance and well-being.	The distinction between personnel and individual resources can sometimes be somewhat indistinct, as both involve human elements. The main difference is that "personnel resources" refer to the collective skills and potential of the workforce as a whole, while "individual resources" emphasise the unique contributions and skills of individuals.
3.3.1.	Knowledge	The teachers emphasize the importance of methodological and didactic knowledge in order to make lessons more attractive and better meet the needs of the students. They actively search for new ideas in articles, teachers' handbooks and on the Internet. Experience in dealing with different age groups and text types as well as knowledge of the individual abilities of the students are crucial. "You also have constant further training. You're always rethinking your teaching, and that's how it should be in general, I think." (B_18_Primary school teacher: 94)	$n = 13$ $n_s = 6$ $n_p = 5$ $n_c = 2$
3.3.2.	Idea	Primary school teachers in particular report that you need a good idea for writing and also for teaching writing skills. "Um yes, actually exactly the same right? (sighs). If I don't have a... for example, if I were to make up a story myself or something like that, then I have to have an idea and of course the idea may not come to me automatically and I think that's the case for most people right?" (B_18_Primary school teacher: 20)	$n = 7$ $n_s = 3$ $n_p = 3$ $n_c = 1$

3.3.3. Patience	Primary school teachers in particular say they need peace, patience, care and leisure to teach students writing skills. "So of course, I need (um) to be able to teach the children to write texts (um), of course I also need the peace and quiet to do so." (B_22_Primary school teacher: 18)	$n = 7$ $n_s = 2$ $n_p = 3$ $n_c = 2$
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