The planned research study discussed in this chapter aims at the development of an empirically based indicator model of students’ writing skills in the German school system. Factors that influence writing achievements of the pupils at different levels of the instruction system are considered systematically. Methodically it concerns the triangulation of different research conceptions to develop a general model for effective writing instruction and support.

In the research on school effectiveness both teachers and scientists refer to multilevel output models, as set up by Weinert and Helmke for the instruction effectiveness. Meta analyses on school effectiveness (Bosker & Scheerens, 1997) thereby show temporally unstable effects, even within a class: effects for combined achievement tests are larger than those for single and for underprivileged and weak learners; and the effects vary between subjects. So it must be proceeded from a differential effectiveness term, which does (still) not appear in the above mentioned input–output models. So far Helmke and Klieme (2008) have adapted such a model for the linguistic instruction in order to be able to interpret results of the DESI study. Since the problem of the instruction reality for the total abilities in German and English (by means of a global factor) was modeled in the DESI study, within the planned research framework we want to examine more specifically which factors of influence have a large effect on the acquired writing abilities.

Figure 1 points out investigation possibilities in this framework concept. In this figure possibilities for testing the indicated components are listed in ellipses. Relations between them are to be tested in the project systematically.

In some of the indicated components and their correlations we can refer to those large research traditions of reading literacy, reading socialization and reading...
support (Garbe, Holle & Jesch, 2009) which have the advantage in relation to writing research to be able to examine receptive abilities with rather closed item formats. In contrast writing research must measure the text quality in open formats with more objective coding procedures. These formats have to integrate the partially strongly out-differentiated developmental and processing concepts from a didactical perspective of the last years (Fix, 2006; Weinhold, 2009) and empirical indicators of the instruction reality at different levels. Therefore still basic work has to be done, both on the level of the instruments and coding and on the analysis of multi-level structure models.

Despite the rather unsatisfactory starting situation from a language-didactical point of view it can be expected from the empirical-educational review that writing ability is acquired more strongly than reading ability in school framework. However intensity and quality, and particularly motivation to use and perfect writing ability, depend on the primary socialization instance family and competent handling on class level and this more clearly than on school and contextual conditions.

In the project quantitative and qualitative procedures for the estimation of writing achievement and different indicators of their development in the school context are to be developed. This way we want to use triangulation for description of an indicator model. Beyond that a multilevel structure model of the school writing (inclusive of first parameter estimations) is to be computed.

First the national and international literature on written composition and support and already existing materials and data from different schools are to be

Figure 1: Adapted model of writing instruction effectiveness, following the model described by Helmke and Klieme (2008).