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GEORG-AUGUST-UNIVERSITÄT  
GÖTTINGEN IN PUBLICA COMMODO  
SEIT 1737

32nd Congress of the  
'German Association for SLA Research'  
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Fremdsprachenforschung  
(DGFF)

28 September – 01 October 2027  
Georg-August-University Göttingen

***Future (of) Languages:  
Rethinking Teaching and Learning  
Contexts***

**Call for Papers**

From 28 September to 01 October 2027, the DGFF invites scholars, educators, and educational policymakers to Göttingen to explore the future (of) language learning. As researchers, teachers, and actors in educational planning, how do we envision future scenarios? How do we navigate uncertainty and multiple crises—such as threats to democracy, the rise of authoritarian systems or the erosion of progressive achievements in education—within our disciplines?

This reflection unfolds between dystopian and utopian visions: scenarios in which languages are manipulated, certain languages disappear, or language learning is marginalized in educational policy. At the same time, it embraces hopeful perspectives in which languages foster relationships and help create new, potentially better worlds.

Educational frameworks and processes—like language learning—are inherently future-oriented. Educational theories are grounded in assumptions about the future. In line with the vision of a more just, healthier, and peaceful global future, UNESCO has introduced *futures literacy* as a conceptual framework to support the Sustainable Development Goals. The ability to understand and co-create images and narratives of the future are, at their core, linguistic and cultural skills: it involves interpreting linguistic and other semiotic systems, interdisciplinary knowledge, and critically transformative practice.

At the same time, our lived realities are shaped by historical and cultural developments that define the contexts of language education—developments that might well have taken a different course. Critical perspectives from all disciplines engaged in shaping and researching language learning processes reveal structures of successful or obstructed participation and educational equity. They also open pathways toward alternative futures.

Thinking from the past toward the future leads us to critically examine the present of language learning: Which questions within our disciplines have intensified? What has receded into the background? And which new fields are emerging? Alongside the temporal dimension, the Congress will also emphasize the spatial dimension of language learning. By exploring perspectives from school-based, out-of-school, and profession-related learning, the Congress aims to provide a forum for rethinking current teaching and learning contexts. It will encourage understanding these contexts as shaped by temporal, spatial, and social conditions—and further developing them.

Learning contexts extend far beyond institutional spaces such as schools and universities. How can we identify, design, and understand (new) spaces—physical, digital, and hybrid—for language learning? Our focus will include material and digital environments, as well as the ways in which people communicate and learn within and through these spaces.

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The central aim of this Congress is to think about the future of language learning as a plurality of possible futures- encompassing the futures of learners, spaces, and institutions involved in the learning process.

The Congress invites contributions addressing the following **key questions and perspectives**:

- How to the futures of learning appear from the perspectives of students in traditional foreign language classroom, learners in out-of-school language education contexts (e.g., *German as an Additional Language*), and other target groups of language learning initiatives?

- Which conceptual priorities in language learning are emerging today and may become central in the future? In which spaces, with which media, and within which didactic-methodological settings can these priorities be realized?
- How are teachers transforming their practices in different teaching and learning contexts, and how can teacher professionalisation be further developed?
- What educational policy implications and strategic orientations for future research priorities can be derived from current societal, political, and climatic challenges?

### **Thematic Axes for Contributions**

#### **Axis A:** Language Theories and Theories of Language Acquisition

This axis welcomes sociocultural and interactionist theories of language acquisition, pragmatist and social constructivist perspectives that situate language within socio-historical contexts, complemented by recent cognitive-psychological approaches in acquisition research. Multilingualism is increasingly becoming the norm—both at the individual and societal level. How do we approach immediate questions about acquisition and learning processes, as well as broader, context-related questions about multilingual language use? How do these questions enter educational systems?

#### **Axis B:** Spaces and Contexts of Language Teaching and Learning

Rethinking school-based and out-of-school language learning challenges long-standing institutional traditions. This involves redefining boundaries across geographical, architectural, and (post-)digital spaces. How can communication in life-worlds—where the distinction between analogue and digital realms has already been transcended—be conceptually understood? How can language practices that integrate human and non-human elements be described, transformed, and researched? How do human bodies relate to and interact within these environments?

#### **Axis C:** Worlds of “As-If”: Simulations, Role-Plays, and Multimodal Creativity

Simulations, role-plays, literary and multimedia productions, artistic and performative works in visual arts, music, and performance can create alternative worlds that experiment with social utopias of cooperative living. How do different forms of expression and their media-specificity respond to uncertainty? How do these spaces materialize language, and how are new meanings of human communication generated within them? How do such scenarios relate to traditional classroom settings and the representation of out-of-classroom communication?

#### **Axis D:** Methodologies for Investigating Complex Acquisition Processes

Which empirically and theoretically grounded methods are appropriate for researching language learning in its complexity and within the diverse ecologies of acquisition processes? How are established research strategies and tools challenged by the necessity of thinking about uncertainty and futures? How can new methodological approaches expand our understanding? What roles do participatory and collaborative research formats play in future-oriented engagement with language learning?

## **Congress Formats**

### **1. Thematic Sessions**

Research projects and studies focusing on the presentation of results. Sessions will be formed based on submitted abstracts and will align with the central thematic axes, incorporating new accents and emerging priorities derived from the submissions.

### **2. Open Formats**

Collaborative exploration of emerging topics, networking, and cooperative discussions using methods from futures research – such as future workshops (*Zukunftswerkstätten*), real-world laboratory (*Reallabore*), action labs (*Aktionslabore*), or Future Thinking. Existing research networks and groups are invited to submit proposals for continued collaboration, as well as contributions proposing new forms of cooperation.

### **3. Posters**

Presentations of ongoing research projects that are thematically and methodologically innovative and will be discussed with preliminary findings during poster sessions.

## **Submission Guidelines for Abstracts**

- Include the author(s)' name(s) and a title
- Maximum 300 words (excluding references)
- Clearly relate to the conference theme and central questions
- Align with one of the four axes (A-D) or propose a new axis
- Specify the presentation format: Thematic Session, Open Format, or Poster

## **Review Criteria**

Abstracts will be evaluated in a double-blind peer review based on:

- Relevance to the conference theme and clarity of the research proposal
- Coherence and plausibility of the theoretical framework
- Alignment between research question, objectives, and methodology

- Clarity and quality of data and their analysis (for empirical studies)
- Clarity of argumentation and scientific contribution

Each author may submit a maximum of two abstracts—either as individual contributions or in group submissions. If two abstracts are submitted, they should represent two different formats.

We are seeking individuals willing to lead thematic sessions or open formats (existing or newly formed networks and research groups). You may indicate your willingness to take on such a role when submitting your abstract via ConfTool or by email: [dgff2027@uni-goettingen.de](mailto:dgff2027@uni-goettingen.de).

### **Timeline**

1 June – 15 September 2026:	Abstract submission via ConfTool
15 September – 15 December 2026:	Abstract review
15 December 2026:	Notification of acceptance
15 January 2027:	Submission revised abstracts
1 April 2027:	Early bird registration begins
1 June 2027:	Program announcement and regular registration opens (until 10 September 2027)

### **Conference Website:**

<https://kongress.dgff.de/32-kongress-fuer-fremdsprachendidaktik-der-deutschen-gesellschaft-fuer-fremdsprachenforschung-an-der-universitaet-goettingen/>

### **ConfTool Submission Platform:**

<https://www.conftool.pro/dgff2027/>

**Contact Email:** [dgff2027@uni-goettingen.de](mailto:dgff2027@uni-goettingen.de)