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Brüche

Call for Papers

Disruptions

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Disruptions allow and provide opportunities for new beginnings, fundamental reconsiderations, and the conceptualization of alternative directional approaches to education and training. They form a constitutive part of growing up, socialization, and education. The basic dialectical tone and the colorful metaphors used in the context of disruptions, upheavals, breakthroughs, collapses, or new departures point, not least, to the fundamental anthropological issue of a fragile existence. Not only does the notion of the human fragment testify to this, but so does the phenomenon of the breakthrough as an elementary gain of knowledge along the fault lines of experience. Both in individual life courses and in the context of organizational or societal developmental processes, rifts mark disruptive changes. The dynamics of such social and cultural transformations, technological innovations, political upheavals, or increasing diversifications of educational and professional careers require pedagogical actors to deal with such breaks, discontinuities, and transitions.

In educational theory formation and historiography, methodological perspectives, and pedagogical fields of action, disruptions may take on diverse forms. The topic of the 30th Congress of the German Educational Research Association thus allows for different approaches from all sections of educational science: for example, performative or institutional disruptions could be examined, or social inequalities and risk factors could be emphasized.

The vastness of the research field surrounding this topic is apparent in the variability in interpretations and the implicit evaluations of the term in the context of developmental and educational processes: educational careers rarely take a linear course; rather, they are marked by crisis-like upheavals, disruptions, or the breaking-out of institutionally pre-structured life course patterns. From the perspective of learning theories, one has to expect motivational disruptions and crises caused, for example, by factors of stress and insecurity, which, at the same time, provide special opportunities for learning and individual development.

Thus, from an educational perspective, disruptions not only pose inherent challenges but also point to a decidedly positive and – for pedagogical thinking – indispensable dimension. The evaluation of disruptions in this context always remains bound to actor-related perspectives that change over time. Essential new approaches in educational and pedagogical thinking, as well as ideological and institutional processes of change, are also to be seen as responses to historical challenges or problems that ought to be overcome through reform or visionary alternative concepts aimed at a better future. Disruption, as the detachment from what has been achieved so far, is also always the driving force behind every development. Individual developments are questioned due to crises and thus allow for the formation of new and “updated” identities.

With the topic of this congress, we aim not only to identify problems but also focus on necessary moments of transition which hold potential for innovation and the positive shaping of the future.

Possible topic areas

The 30th GERA Congress, to be held in Munich will examine “disruptions” in educational science from a multidisciplinary perspective. Possible research questions and topic areas include, but are not limited to:

1. **Educational biographies and their disruptions:** For individual development throughout the lifespan and the constitution of a personal identity, transitions, crises and the successful overcoming of such crises are essential constitutive factors. They provide opportunities for shaping one’s biography but also highlight structural limitations to the ability to shape one’s life course beyond what is considered to be a normal biography. What do biographical disruptions mean for individuals, and what are their implications for equality of opportunities and participation? How can they be examined empirically and compensated for through pedagogical intervention? In this context, the entire lifespan – from childhood through adolescence to old age – needs to be considered from an educational point of view, in order to improve educational chances and well-being across generations within the framework of inclusive and participatory approaches.
2. **Digital transformation and its consequences for the educational system:** In the digital age, the effects of digitalization on all areas of the educational system are often experienced as disruptions. Developments in artificial intelligence, in particular, challenge personal values, competences and qualifications, and aspirations – or even entire careers. To look at chances and risks of an often short-lived evolution in digitalization also means to become aware of one’s own situatedness as researchers, to constantly feel estranged from usually proven methods and concepts and to improve them, whenever possible, through digital media. Which perspectives open up through the digital transformation with regard to pedagogical acting? What does this mean for the shaping and organization of teaching-learning situations and interactions? How can individuals be prepared to engage effectively with technologies?
3. **Disruptions in pedagogical institutions and the professionalization of pedagogical experts:** The huge lack of experts in many areas of the educational system endangers the quality of professional action in at least two respects: on the one hand, pedagogical concepts may not be implemented according to required standards due to insufficient resources; on the other hand, de-professionalization in pedagogical organizations and institutions looms as qualitative requirements are not met. This becomes apparent in the current debate on the lack of teachers in our school system, in particular. Simultaneously, demands on qualified professionals increase continuously, for example due to increasing numbers of children learning German as a second language. What are the causes for this, and what could appropriate responses look like? What other disruptions will pedagogical professionals be confronted with in the context of their initial, advanced and further training? How can breaks and disruptions in the educational, but also the academic career (e.g. precarious conditions of employment during phases of qualification) be topicalized and softened from a basic theoretical, didactical, historical, education-political or school- and organization-pedagogical perspective? How are disruptions reflected in organizations working in child and youth welfare services?

4. **Education–philosophical, anthropological, and phenomenological dimensions:** Processes of education and training are inseparably linked to tensions and breaks because they unfold within an ever more complex and dynamic field of social change and contradictory expectations. How can possible obstacles, disruptions, or experiences of failure be reflected theoretically and made visible as important issues? Which links, new discoveries, or re-readings are made possible by a basically fractured and thus life-world-oriented reflection on education and training? Since breaks often point to socially constructed structures, attributions, or the normativity of theoretical assumptions and definitions, the question arises as to how these could be broken up or transcended within the framework of a post-structuralist approach or an approach that remains critical of ideologies. What can theories contribute to the pedagogical study of disruptions and what possible focal points might they entail?
5. **Sociopolitical dimension:** The consequences of global problems such as climate change, pandemics, or war and refugee migration entail ever more often political radicalization and the strengthening of authoritarian systems. These changes, which can also be experienced as disruptions, may have drastic effects also on the individual level. Educational institutions are directly affected by this and are at the same time being addressed as problem solvers. How do social disruptions and conflicts that arise through inequality, discrimination, or political division influence our perception of society and of the educational and scientific system? What can educational science contribute to the handling of current social challenges? Which approaches (e.g. intercultural education, research on migration, education for sustainable development, educational sociology) help provide answers to current sociopolitical questions and which education-political answers can be deduced from the diverse research results?
6. **Discipline politics and science studies:** Disruptions are a constant factor not only in individual biographies but also in the history of pedagogical ideas and theories – be it due to breaks in traditions of thought and research, changes in paradigms, disruptions in or the breaking out of research communities, the fragmented passing on of a body of methods and theories, or a fundamental re-orientation within the different disciplines. The handling of breaks in itself can also bring forth new frictions (e.g. a language sensitive to differences). How can such disruptions be assessed from the perspective of science history? Which present disruptions characterize the discipline (e.g. reclassifications and changes in denomination, the exodus of expert knowledge into other disciplines)?

In view of the discernibly large breadth of possible approaches and the interconnectedness of disruptions on diverse levels, we encourage members from all sections of the expert association to submit theoretical, historical, didactical, or empirical contributions. Interdisciplinary and international perspectives are especially welcome.

Submission period

February 1st to April 23rd, 2025

Contribution formats

Symposium (120 min)

A symposium must be directly linked to the topic of the conference and should encompass a maximum of four specialist lectures. At least one of these lectures needs to be given by an academic currently in their qualification phase.

Work group (90 min)

Work groups are free to choose their topic; however, a connection to the subject of the conference is desirable. A work group should include no more than three individual contributions. The participation of academics in their qualification phase, as well as international colleagues, is both desirable and welcome. Symposium (120 Min.)

Research and topics forum (90 min)

Research and topics forums can be freely designed in terms of content and form. They provide an opportunity for national and international research projects or research associations, as well as groups of academics in their qualification phase, to share expertise and exchange ideas.

Academics in their qualification phase may submit an individual contribution to a topic forum, which should, however, have an explicit connection to the conference subject.

International symposium (120 min)

The GERA aims to fund a symposium from low-GDP countries (see: [LOW GDP Countries](#)). A symposium that is formed by lecturers who are members of the World Education Research Association (WERA) and who come exclusively from low-GDP countries may be submitted by WERA members. Please tick the relevant box in ConfTool and send a budget plan (travel expenses) to the administrative office of the GERA by April 26th, 2025 (buero@dgfe.de).

If more than one symposium meeting the funding criteria is submitted and positively evaluated by the program committee, the executive board of the GERA will make the final funding decision.

Instructions on how to apply

- Contributions must be submitted on time via ConfTool ([LINK](#)) by Wednesday, April 23rd, 2025, 11:59 pm (GMT +1).
- For each symposium, work group, or research and topics forum, an encasing abstract must be submitted. This abstract should describe the concept linking the individual contributions within your format. A maximum of 4,000 characters (including blank spaces) is allowed for this abstract. The template can be downloaded from our congress homepage ([LINK](#)) and, once all details have been entered, should be uploaded as a PDF file via ConfTool.
- For the individual contributions to a symposium, work group, or research and topics forum a maximum of 1,500 characters (including blank spaces) is allowed for. This information may be entered directly via ConfTool.

- Anonymization of names, research titles, or similar data is not required. Instead, strict rules to avoid conflicts of interest are in place (see below).
- All lecturers must register as participants for the Congress and submit their contributions starting in October 2025.

Ban on double submissions

Only one contribution per person may be submitted. Double submissions are not permitted, neither for symposiums, work groups, or research and topics forums, nor for participation in submissions by other colleagues.

Exceptions:

- Acting as a moderator/chair or discussant.
- Invitations from the executive board to deliver parallel lectures.
- Individual contributions by academics in their qualification phase to topics forums. In such cases, one additional individual contribution may be submitted alongside participation in a symposium, work group, or research and topics forum.

In accordance with these rules, double appearances are prohibited.

A potential re-submission of a contribution that had been rejected in the form of a poster will not be regulated, i.e. will not be treated as a double submission.

Anonymization and conflict of interest

The contributions submitted should not be anonymized. Instead, there are rules in place to avoid conflict of interest, similar to the regulations installed by the GERA¹.

An exclusion is stipulated if the following circumstances are given:

1. Family relationship, parentage, marriage, civil partnership, cohabitation, close (academic) friendship, or conflicts and competitive relationships.
2. Dependent employment relationship or supervisory relationship (including the post-doc phase) for up to six years after the relationship has ended.
3. Affiliation with or envisioned/planned transfer to the same department/institute or the same extramural research institution.
4. Existing or planned close scientific cooperation, joint submission or joint publication (except for joint editing).

¹ GERA: Information with regard to conflicts of interest;
<https://www.dfg.de/resource/blob/167400/3e690aba0e5f065761c6581e44278f1e/10-201-de-data.pdf>;
Sept. 2nd, 2024

5. Close scientific cooperation during the past three years, e.g. within the framework of joint projects or joint publications (except for joint editing).

Selection process

The selection process and program organization are managed by a program committee appointed by the executive board of the GERA, which is supported by about 200 experts. For each contribution, two independent expert reports will be written. Based on these two reports, which in addition to written comments include scores, an average score will be calculated. Expert reports that differ strongly in their evaluation and which were submitted without any written feedback or for the formulation of which the general abstract had not been downloaded, will be re-examined separately by the program committee and an additional report will be written.

The criteria for evaluation can be accessed on the congress homepage ([LINK](#)). Those having submitted a contribution can look at the report given by the experts in text form by accessing their user profile on ConfTool. Notifications as to whether a contribution has been accepted or not will probably be sent out in August 2025.

Given the space available at the main building of the LMU Munich, we will be able to hold 35 parallel events, same as the years before. The program structure may also be found on the congress homepage ([LINK](#)).

Contact

If you have questions, feel free to contact our congress office any time (contact person: Sabrina Grunau). Please note that our office is only staffed half-days and it may possibly take some time to answer your question.

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