

Conference: From empirical research to foreign language classroom practice and vice-versa

6-7 September 2024 in Fribourg, Switzerland

Call for proposals

It is with great pleasure that the Expert Group for Language Teacher Education at the Zurich University of Teacher Education (PHZH) and the Centre for Foreign Language Teaching (CeDiLE) of the Fribourg University of Teacher Education (HEP Fribourg) hereby announce the conference, *From empirical research to foreign language classroom practice and vice-versa*. The conference will be held from 6-7 September 2024 in Fribourg, Switzerland.

Scope and intended audience

The conference aims to open a space of discourse that permits exchange and transfer of knowledge between teacher education, classroom practice, and research. Both second and foreign language education have developed in a dynamic environment that allows a certain flexibility when confronted with new challenges while, at the same time, the reception and diffusion of knowledge gained from research frequently progresses relatively slowly. Similarly, the questions and challenges teachers must face in their everyday practice take a long time to be investigated in research projects and, once this is achieved, the studies that are conducted often seem to be somewhat disconnected from local environments. In addition, empirical research must meet certain criteria if it is to become relevant for classroom practice. Nevertheless, the dialogue between the two domains remains extremely relevant in view of continuing efforts to improve second and foreign language education. Initiatives that encourage the building of networks between research knowledge and knowledge arising from classroom practice may contribute to such a dialogue.

The goal of the conference is to bring people from the following backgrounds together:

- research in the context of language teaching methodology, foreign or second language acquisition, and (applied) linguistics
- foreign and second language education, heritage language education, CLIL (content and language integrated learning), and immersion in non-linguistic subjects
- (language) teacher education
- anyone with an interest in the conference topic

The conference organisers encourage the cooperation between and across institutions. They particularly welcome contributions from early career researchers. Students in a later stage of their studies, doctoral candidates, and practising teachers are all invited to participate or to hand in an abstract. (A brief guide on how to write an abstract as well as a template for the creation of a poster will be at the participants' disposal on the conference website.)

Topics for proposals

To address both the common needs and opportunities in foreign language pedagogy, as well as the challenges associated with integrating knowledge gained from scientific and instructional domains,

this conference welcomes a wide range of contributions: These can be based on empirical research, with a focus on theoretical or methodological considerations. Alternatively, they can draw on experience gained in the foreign or second language classroom or during foreign language teacher education, emphasising subject-specific educational projects.

We call for contributions that fall under one of these four categories:

1. Research: its relevance and limitations for classroom practice
2. Teachers' perspectives: challenges and opportunities in classroom practice and research desiderata
3. Teacher education: blending practice orientation with scientific concepts
4. Cooperation: collaboration between practising teachers and researchers, including the inherent challenges

The organizers emphasize that these four categories cannot be neatly separated. The conference programme will allow discussion between different contributions across these thematic categories. We would be pleased to receive contributions that are relevant in the discussion of the link between the practice of foreign language instruction and the respective research, such as teaching and assessment of speaking, writing, vocabulary, or grammar, bilingual or immersive language teaching, plurilingual approaches, and any other form of foreign language instruction that may include the classroom application of machine translation, artificial intelligence, the CEFR and its companion volume, learners with special needs, the uses of literature in foreign language teaching, participatory research, or formats for the diffusion of research findings.

Researchers, teachers, and teacher educators may also offer contributions that do not just deal with completed projects and successful transfer. In order to spark in-depth discussions of these relevant issues, we also invite contributions which expose the problems and challenges that surface when researchers and practitioners cooperate.

Submission process and selection of contributions

Abstracts for contributions and posters may be submitted in German, English, French, or Italian. The deadline for submissions is 18 February 2024. Papers and posters can be submitted via the conference website: <https://rpflc24.dryfta.com/>. The following data is needed:

- title in the language of the abstract (max. 20 words)
- abstract and optional references (between 300 and 500 words)
- keywords (max. 5)

Every participant may appear only once as the main author (poster) or main speaker (presentation).

Presentations (20 minutes + 5 minutes of discussion) will be held in the language of the abstract submitted. We recommend that the slides for the presentation are also prepared in the language of the abstract.

Posters (Format A0) are ideally written in English, irrespective of the language of the abstract. This will assure that as many participants as possible can contribute to the discussions. Alternatively, posters may also be written in the same language as the abstract.

We welcome contributions for short symposia (60 minutes). The abstract must contain an overarching description and a short outline for each contribution (max. 300 words). This provides an opportunity to present a research project that was conducted in the classroom or in teacher education and include the perspectives of the different actors that were involved (e.g., teacher and researcher).

All abstracts are submitted to a double-blind peer reviewing process. For this reason, the abstract should not contain any information that discloses the identity of the author or their institution. The following criteria will be used for the evaluation of the abstracts: content quality, clarity, and relevance for the theme of the conference. In addition to this, symposia are required to be thematically coherent. The conference committee will make sure that the four strands are sufficiently represented on the final conference programme.

Conference format and fees

The conference will consist of presentations and posters that will be selected from the proposals submitted, two keynote presentations, a workshop session, and opportunities for informal exchange during coffee breaks and meals.

The conference fees will be announced early in 2024 with the hope of keeping them as low as possible (between CHF 25.00 and 40.00). To enable all conference delegates to participate in the social programme, the whole programme including the conference dinner, is included in the conference fees.

Conference committee

Isabelle Affolter, Audrey Bonvin, Flavia Giurastante, Anne-Laurence Jaunin, Susanne Obermayer, Michael Prusse, Anita Thomas.

Important deadlines

- 11 December 2023 – proposal submissions opens
- 18 February 2024 – final deadline for submissions
- 15 April 2024 – information for contributors about acceptance or rejection
- 1 April 2024 – conference registration opens
- any change in the deadlines will be announced on the conference website