

Workshop series on 'Forward to (Common) Roots – Pedagogical Terminology in Different Languages'

6th workshop: Understanding 'Lehrplan' and 'Curriculum': A Comparative Analysis

Discussants: Daniel Castner (Bloomington) and Agnes Pfrang (Erfurt)

Time: January 23, 2025

- 4pm – 6pm GMT (German winter time)
- 45' presentation and 45' for dialogue

Exposé

Discussions in German-speaking countries regarding school content, when to teach it, and how to teach it make use of the term 'Lehrplan', while English-speaking countries use the term 'curriculum' to address these matters. It is essential to note that Lehrplan carries specific meanings that are similar to but not synonymous with English terms curriculum, curriculum guideline, course instruction, or course study. Lehrplan refers to a theory of Bildung, and defines "[...] that which matters in teaching and instruction" (Künzli 2009, 134), and should, therefore, be understood as the "[...] specifications set by educational authorities concerning both lesson content and learning objectives" (ibid.). Curriculum, a fundamental concept in Anglo-American educational research, recognizes ideas about what is being taught or should be taught are neither self-evident nor settled matters. Therefore, "[...] everything about curriculum, including its definition, is contested" (Walker, 2003, p. 11). As Horlacher (2018, p. 2) argues, "Lehrplan and curriculum are not merely two concepts indicating comparable subjects, but imply also a whole belief system about schooling". This paper seeks to explore the possibility of conducting comparative research in light of the close connection between language and concepts by focusing the theory of Lehrplan by Georg Kerschensteiner (1854-1932) and his theory of Bildung, and Decker Walker's 's (1942-) perspective on curriculum.

Daniel Castner is a professor of curriculum and instruction at Indiana University Bloomington. His research focuses on early childhood education and curriculum studies.

Agnes Pfrang is professor of primary school education at the university of Erfurt. Her research interests include among others International Comparative Teaching and Educational Research, inclusive Education, Higher Education Didactics.

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ZOOM-link: <https://stockholmuniversity.zoom.us/j/4589952717>.

