



EDITORIAL

New Formats for Old and New Ideas

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In a longitudinal study of research in geography education as reflected in the *Zeitschrift für Geographiedidaktik* | *Journal of Geography Education* (ZGD) (1973–2016), BAGOLY-SIMÓ and HEMMER (2017) noted a decade ago that one of the undesirable consequences of the empirical turn in geography education has been a decline in the diversity of contributions. For example, for more than two decades now, ZGD has received hardly any contributions aimed at developing theory within our field. Moreover, documented debates that bring together a diversity of perspectives on a common topic have also become increasingly rare. The unpublished findings of the follow-up study paint a similar picture.

To counteract this development, as a first step we have focused on *diversifying research articles*. After we implemented different evaluation criteria for empirical and theoretical/conceptual contributions, we actively reached out to colleagues to submit contributions of this kind. We now ask, once again, for your support in this endeavor.

With this editorial, we are taking a second step by introducing another type of contribution that has already been established internationally for some time. These are *position papers*, which are intended to further diversify our academic discourse and stimulate exchange. For ZGD, position papers are concise texts

whose core is a well-founded opinion, perspective, or recommendation on a current or historical topic. Unlike empirical articles, position papers do not present new empirical findings; rather, they adopt a new or different position in relation to existing knowledge and debates. For this reason, they also require a different form of peer review, which, in addition to identifying potential substantive and factual shortcomings, ensures that the well-founded opinion, perspective, or recommendation is appropriately articulated. Reviews are conducted on the basis of a separate set of criteria. Contributions discussing these position papers will likewise be published in this format.

A further step has focused on *research-practice contributions*, which are subject to editorial review only but are similarly important in terms of their thematic focus. Among other things, these contributions are intended to address and, where appropriate, controversially discuss the interaction between research and practice.

The new formats do not affect the established forms of contributions, such as reports on conferences or other events, or notices on selected topics (including reforms and association announcements). Reviews are also still very much welcome.



ZGD therefore now accepts the following types of contributions subject to *double-blind peer review*:

(1) **Empirical articles** are scholarly contributions with an empirical focus. As a rule, they follow the following structure: Introduction (including statement of the problem), state of research, methods and sample, results, discussion, and conclusion. Deviations from this structure are possible. The maximum length should not exceed 7,000 words, including figures and references.

(2) **Theoretical articles** are scholarly contributions with a theoretical/conceptual focus. Their structure is considerably more heterogeneous. The maximum length should not exceed 7,000 words, including figures and references.

(3) **Position papers** are concise texts whose core is a well-founded opinion, perspective, or recommendation on a current or historical topic. As a rule, a brief introduction is followed by an exposition of the argument, a discussion (including implications), and a conclusion. Here too, submissions should not exceed 7,000 words, including figures and references.

The following types of contributions are subject to *editorial review*:

(1) **Research-practice contributions** address, in no more than 2,000 words, among other things, the interaction between research and practice and may also discuss this relationship controversially. ZGD will, however, continue not to publish examples of classroom teaching.

(2) **Reports and communications** provide information on HGD's activities, national and international conferences, and developments of particular relevance to geography education and school geography. As a rule, reports and communications should not exceed a total length of 1,500 words.

(3) **Reviews** of relevant scholarly works and media of an analogue and/or digital nature are also published by ZGD, with a maximum length of 1,500 words.

These changes are already visible in several places:

(1) The new contribution types are listed on the ZGD website.

(2) The contribution type is indicated on the first page of every article (in the PDF file).

(3) Authors must select the contribution type when submitting their manuscript.

(4) Peer review is conducted according to a dedicated set of criteria (see the description of the individual contribution types on the journal's website).

We hope that these changes will provide our authors with new formats for communicating their findings and positions. At the same time, we would like to thank our reviewers for their flexibility in engaging with new review formats and, more generally, for their tireless support of ZGD.

We look forward to receiving your submissions in the various formats!

References

- BAGOLY-SIMÓ, P., & HEMMER, I. (2017). [Research in Geography Education in Light of ZGD 1973–2016](#). *Zeitschrift für Geographiedidaktik | Journal of Geography Education (ZGD)*, 45(4), 19–42.

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