

# Call for Contribution

## Presentation Competence as a Future Skill: Interdisciplinary Impulses for Researching and Strengthening Students' Communicative Competence

**A conference hosted by the Presentation Competence Research Unit at Tübingen University and the educational initiative *Youth Presents (Jugend präsentiert)***

*March 25–27, 2026, Tübingen*

*[conference languages: German and English]*

The ability to curate knowledge in a way that fits specific target audiences, both linguistically and visually, and to present it effectively, is considered a key competence of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Fostering presentation abilities at an early stage means familiarizing learners with a central format of knowledge communication and equipping them with future-relevant skills – for instance, training critical thinking by evaluating sources and by preparing their contents for presentation. Also, empathy and creativity are required when establishing a connection with the target audience or when visualizing and describing content. In general, it is important to prepare students for new communication challenges in the age of generative AI.

Institutions such as the OECD and the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs [KMK] have long advocated for education systems to promote key future competences ['Future Skills', '21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills']. However, there are numerous concepts and models which offer different interpretations of these skills. Technological change and social transformation place new requirements on students, including digital competence and AI literacy. Besides, there is an ongoing debate about whether the strong focus on competences represents a departure from the ideals of neo-humanist education.

Presentation competence can be understood as an integral part of communicative competence altogether while also intersecting with other future skills. Although presentations are subject to assessment and grading in German schools, presentation competence is rarely treated as a competence on its own and is seldom fostered in conjunction with future skills.

The upcoming conference will explore theoretical and conceptual connections between presentation competence and future skills. The main question is how presentation competence is theoretically and empirically linked to future competences such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration or digital competence. The conference aims to develop a theoretical framework that positions presentation competence as a catalyst for future competences. We seek to enable an interdisciplinary exchange that brings together perspectives from rhetoric, education science, psychology, communication studies, media studies, didactics, and other related disciplines.

**Key questions:**

- Which theoretical models could link presentation competence and future skills?
- What empirical findings exist regarding the relationship between presentation competence and future competences, such as the 'Four Cs'?
- How does teaching presentation competence impact students' development of future skills?
- In what way can these skills be transferred to other contexts (e.g. promoting generic critical thinking, which is also beneficial in a broader context, e.g., for science communication)?
- How can teachers convey presentation competence in combination with other future skills in order to benefit learners effectively (i. e., without overwhelming them)?
- How can presentation competence and future skills be integrated in teachers' education?

Each talk should be 20 minutes long, followed by a ten-minute discussion. Panels with up to four contributions are also welcome. Panels may last up to 90 minutes.

Submission deadline: January 15, 2026

Abstract length: max. 300 words

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We look forward to your contributions and to an inspiring interdisciplinary exchange!