New assistant professor researches individualised learning for primary school children

Due to societal challenges such as inclusive education and immigration, the composition of primary school classes has become increasingly more diverse. More than ever before, teachers today are required to accommodate for different learning needs. The research center “Individual Development and Adaptive Education of Children at Risk” (IDeA) in Frankfurt am Main contributes to facing these challenges. The center is strengthening its engagement by appointing Dr. Garvin Brod to a professorship of Psychology focusing on individualised learning.

“My research focuses on developing instructional strategies that are tailored for individual children”, Professor Brod explains. “Such strategies encompass the assessment of children's learning abilities and the adaptation of instructional practices. In particular, I would like to research how innovative technologies can contribute to supporting children’s learning in a targeted way and how these technologies can be implemented in schools”, the psychologist adds. Brod has held the assistant professorship since January 2018. In a current project, Brod and his team investigate the use of a computer-based formative assessment tool in supplementary lessons for children with persistent reading difficulties.

The professorship is assigned to the German Institute for International Educational Research (DIPF) and Goethe University Frankfurt am Main. It is situated at the interdisciplinary IDeA Centre, where researchers from both institutions are studying learning development in children. Professor Marcus Hasselhorn, Executive Director of DIPF, said: “By appointing Garvin Brod, we are welcoming a knowledgeable expert in the field of individualised learning. His work will render an important contribution to optimising children’s learning opportunities.” Professor Birgitta Wolff, President of Goethe University, adds: “This new professorship is dedicated to an important area of educational research; it constitutes a relevant expansion to the cooperation between Goethe University and DIPF”.

Garvin Brod began his research career as an academic staff member at the Department of Developmental Psychology at the Max-Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin. For his doctoral thesis on age differences in the effects of prior knowledge on memory, Mr. Brod was awarded the Otto-Hahn Medal 2016. The Max-Planck Society honors excellent young researchers by awarding this medal. Most recently, Brod lead the learning support lab at the IDeA Center.

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About DIPF:
The German Institute for International Educational Research (Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung – DIPF) delivers empirical educational research, digital infrastructures and targeted knowledge transfer, thus contributing to coping with challenges in education. Knowledge for education is processed and documented by the Leibniz Institute to support science, politics and practice in education – to the benefit of society.
About the Goethe University Frankfurt:
The Goethe University is an institution with particularly strong research capabilities based in the European financial metropolis of Frankfurt. The university was founded in 1914 through private means. Many of the founding donors were of Jewish origin. Since then the pioneering services offered by the University have impacted the fields of social, societal and economic sciences, medicine, quantum physics, neurological research and labour law. Today, it is one of the universities that are most successful in obtaining external research funding with three centres of excellence in medicine, life sciences and humanities.

About the IDeA Center:
“Individual Development and Adaptive Education of Children at Risk” (IDeA) is a research center at DIPF and of Goethe University in cooperation with the Sigmund-Freud Institute. At the center in Frankfurt am Main, researchers from different disciplines are studying children’s development and learning processes in infancy, kindergarten and primary school age. A focus is placed on children who are experiencing learning difficulties for different reasons, and opportunities for targeted support.