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Recent discussions in the field of foreign language teaching and learning have concerned many new aspects: including the task-based definition of learning goals, the clear differentiation of competence levels, and the introduction of binding quality standards. These discussions have also pursued the goal of improving the efficiency and success of foreign language learning processes. However, the learning processes themselves have only been taken into consideration to a much lesser extent.

The aim of the 4th Bremen Symposium is to reflect more deeply on these learning processes. The conference will focus on the following questions: How do foreign and multilingual learning processes take place, what initiates them and keeps them going, which institutional, social and media-related frameworks are needed, and which classroom and/or autonomous learning arrangements are best for fostering these learning processes and can lead to desired results.

It is worth asking these questions because in order to answer them we are able to take advantage of the findings of research in the field of foreign language learning and teaching, as well as the work and the experience of the practitioners in the language centres. In their attempts to understand the complex interaction of the numerous aspects influencing foreign language learning processes, both researches and practitioners have generated a wealth of insights. This, on the other hand, entails an increasing need for orientation through selection, weighting and classification.

The 4th Bremen Symposium 2013 offers a platform that will bring together practical research results and reflected practice with regard to the organisation of foreign language learning processes in the institutional context of Higher Education. Against the background of this objective, all contributions are welcome that either give a duly reasoned guideline to the optimal organisation of learning processes from a research perspective, or that reflect the impacts and the success of classroom and/or autonomous learning arrangements from a practitioner’s perspective.