

What matters in 21st century learning: From the surface to the deep structure of instructional quality in schools

Many international reports have been calling for a change in the way we organize learning in the 21st century. Both the digital revolution and the emerging research on growth mindset, formative assessment and learner engagement point to the need for a new mix of teacher-centered instruction and learner-centered co-construction in the design of learning in schools.

These new approaches raise a number of questions with regard to instructional quality and learning outcomes. In my talk, I will analyze current international developments in 21st century learning. I will argue that we need to strengthen the “deep structure” of innovative learning environments in order to develop in our students the cognitive, meta-cognitive and social-emotional competences that will equip learners with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to navigate their personal and professional lives in the 21st century.

Anne Sliwka is Professor of Education at the University of Heidelberg, Germany. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar. Her research focusses on school improvement and adolescent learning engagement. Anne Sliwka has co-authored studies on teacher professionalism, innovative learning environments and formative assessment for the European Union and the OECD.