# EDITORIALS

## Navigating Post-Pandemic Education: Rethinking Teacher Development

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While many schools have returned to traditional face-to-face instruction, some schools continue to keep hybrid learning approaches. The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed the structure of education and created unprecedented challenges and opportunities for teacher education. The sudden transition to online learning has revealed both advantages and limitations of existing education approaches. As education moves into the post-pandemic era, teacher education programs (TEPs) must adapt their methods to provide teachers with necessary skills and flexibility to meet the demands of the modern classroom environment.

During the pandemic period, one significant change was the widespread adoption of digital tools and online learning platforms. Many teachers had to make this transition without adequate preparation, which highlights gaps in digital literacy and online teaching methods (Trust & Whalen, 2020). Therefore, TEPs must now prioritize training that incorporates technology integration and hybrid teaching models. This training should help future teachers to use learning management systems (e.g., Moodle) and collaborative applications for interactive English language learning.

Moreover, effective digital teaching requires more than technical proficiency. Pre-service teachers need knowledge about creating engaging online learning environments that encourage student participation and communication in English. For instance, project-based learning approaches can be adapted for hybrid teaching to increase student engagement and agency. When TEPs incorporate these practices in their training, they can prepare teachers for a future where digital learning remains an integral component of English education.

The pandemic not only disrupted the learning process but also made educational inequities more visible. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds faced greater difficulties, such as limited access to technology and internet connectivity. Also, the pandemic's impact on mental health demonstrated that teachers must consider student well-being in their teaching methods (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Therefore, TEPs must include training about social-emotional learning (SEL) and culturally responsive pedagogy (Lim et al., 2024). SEL helps teachers to support students' mental health, build confidence in English communication, and develop a supportive classroom community.

Training in equity should prepare future teachers to address digital divides through practical solutions suited to learning environments. This includes developing flexible assignments that can be completed through various means, designing materials that work with or without technology, and maintaining equal access to learning activities for all students regardless of their home resources. When TEPs emphasize these aspects, they empower teachers to create inclusive learning environments that support all students and address educational disparities that have deepened due to pandemic and other factors.

In the post-pandemic period, TEPs have an important duty to prepare teachers with new educational skills, technology knowledge, and understanding of equity and student well-being. By adapting TEPs to address emerging challenges, we can support teachers in meeting diverse student needs and managing inclusive classrooms effectively. The success of these modifications requires collaboration among universities, policymakers and teachers. This cooperation is necessary to improve the education system so that it can function well even in challenging circumstances.

### In This Issue

This issue features a collection of seven papers distributed across four categories: Explorations, Research Articles, Reflections, and Perspectives.

Tosh Tachino examines the use of the passive voice in academic and scientific writing, highlighting its implications for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instructors. Tachino reviews common functions of the passive voice and discusses learner challenges, referencing recent corpus linguistics studies that indicate a shift towards more active constructions in some disciplines. The study aims to enhance EAP instructors' curriculum development and knowledge, addressing the evolving nature of academic discourse.

Mike Turner emphasizes the importance of focusing on the active skills of speaking and writing, which he identifies as the most challenging for Japanese students. He critiques the Japanese education system for leaving students with inadequate speaking and writing abilities. Turner suggests that listening and reading can be practiced independently outside of class, allowing for a more targeted approach during lessons. His methodology includes giving students individual test sections under exam conditions, although he does not conduct full mock tests. This approach aims to enhance students' active language skills while addressing the specific challenges they face.

Jon Thomas, Natalie Correia, and Amarathunga Sachini Anupama Perera investigate how integrating technology impacts student anxiety and L2 (second language) identity in Japanese EFL classrooms. Pre- and post-intervention surveys revealed that using technology led to decreased anxiety and increased confidence. Students found interactive tasks, online discussions, and feedback valuable. The research suggests a need to consider cultural factors when implementing technology to support language learning and reduce anxiety.

The article by Thomas Legge and Jaime Morrish explores key aspects of the IELTS test, focusing on effective teaching strategies and curriculum development. They emphasize the importance of understanding students' needs in academic writing and communication. The authors advocate for integrating practical skills with theoretical knowledge to enhance students' proficiency in English, particularly in academic contexts. Their insights aim to support IELTS instructors in creating more effective learning environments for their students.

Devon Arthurson's article reflects on her experience with taking up the challenge of teaching 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. Arthurson evaluates the reflection process using Desjarlais and Smith's ten steps, reporting positive outcomes and insights, and plans to analyze her journal entries further to identify common themes.

Richard Ingham's article reflects on his experience at the TBLT in Asia 2024 Conference. He highlights presentations emphasizing task-based language teaching (TBLT) in academic English contexts. Key insights include the importance of real-world task simulation, collaborative academic tasks, and designing effective pedagogical frameworks to improve learners'

communicative skills. His reflections underline the practical relevance of TBLT in language education.

Kazunori Shishikura and Mariko Yamada discuss the benefits of collaboration between part-time and full-time university teachers, focusing on a semester-long TOEIC vocabulary project in Japan. The project, involving the use of Quizlet for self-directed student learning, highlighted professional development, skill-sharing, and positive emotions among part-time teachers. Through data collection, analysis, reflections, and conference presentations, part-time teachers gained valuable experience and support, demonstrating how teacher collaboration can enhance career development and student outcomes.

## An Open Call for Papers

We are now accepting submissions for our upcoming issue (Volume 31, Issue 1), with a deadline of March 31, 2025. For submission guidelines and access to past issues, please visit our website at https://td.jalt.org/index.php/etdjournal/. If you have any questions regarding the publication process, please contact the editorial team at JALT.TED.ETE.editor@gmail.com.

Please be advised that your manuscript should be thoroughly proofread before submission, checking for spelling errors, punctuation, and grammatical accuracy. A well-proofread manuscript helps expedite the review process. All manuscripts must also follow the APA's *Publication Manual* (7th ed.) guidelines. If you are uncertain about citation formats or other APA requirements, please refer to the official APA website (https://apastyle.apa.org/) or reliable academic resources for guidance. Prior to peer-review, editors will conduct an initial screening of your manuscript. Papers with significant formatting issues or language errors will be returned to authors for revision before entering the review process.

## Acknowledgments and Gratitude

## References

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