

EDITORIALS

Redefining Teacher Development for the Next 50 Years

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The 51st Annual International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning & Educational Materials Exhibition (JALT 2025) convened from October 31 to November 2, 2025, at the National Olympics Memorial Youth Center Sports Building in Tokyo. Under the theme, “LanguageS: Learning, Teaching, Assessing: JALT 50 Years Challenges and Perspectives,” the event celebrated a half-century of progress. On November 1, various SIG events were held. Although I could not attend the Teacher Development (TD) SIG session this year, I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to the TD officers and all participants who contributed to its success.

As JALT enters its 51st year, our profession stands at a significant milestone. For decades, teachers and educators have sought the “best method” to solve teaching challenges. However, the future demands a shift from external solutions to internal inquiry. Redefining TD requires moving beyond the acquisition of new techniques to the deepening of reflective practice (RP).

While often reduced to solitary reflective journals or diaries, effective reflection must evolve to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world. Johnson and Golombek (2018) argue that increasing societal diversity and globalization necessitate a transformation in teacher preparation. Drawing on a Vygotskian sociocultural perspective, they propose redesigning pedagogy to address the inequitable and mobile nature of modern student populations. As a result, reflection ceases to be a merely personal experience and becomes a critical component of responsive teaching.

To be transformative, this reflection must be rigorous and grounded in reality. Yuan et al. (2020) highlight the efficacy of technology-enhanced reflection, particularly through video analysis. Their study of pre-service teachers reveals that recording and editing one's teaching is a complex and dynamic process rather than a simple technical task. Engaging with video data forces teachers to explore how their decisions and actions interact with the various elements within the classroom context, thereby bridging the gap between what they believe is true about teaching (their personal or internal beliefs), and the actual classroom environment in which they are teaching.

The process of reconciling these elements forces a critical inquiry into professional identity: specifically, who we are in the classroom. Teachers typically focus on how to deliver instructional content, using reflection as a mechanical tool to “fix” instruction. Farrell (2025) reiterates the stance he established a decade prior: “we are who we want to be and our actions should reflect who we are” (Farrell, 2015, p. 13). He advocates for a more holistic model that integrates teachers' inner lives (i.e., philosophical views, principles, and moral values) and the development of classroom instructional strategies. True RP requires examining oneself as a complete human being rather than a technician.

This holistic identity is inextricably linked to professional well-being. Hofstadler et al. (2021) reframe teacher well-being as an ecological concept rather than a solitary attribute. Their research on content and language integrated learning (CLIL) teachers demonstrates that well-being emerges from a dynamic network of interconnected factors, including national policies, social

feedback, student–teacher interactions, and personal convictions. Ignoring this ecological context undermines the ability to support both oneself and one’s students.

Looking toward the next fifty years, Farrell (2015) argues that teachers must use their RP to evolve beyond the consumption of new methods and to “become generators rather than consumers of knowledge” (p. 13). This agency is vital today. In an age increasingly defined by AI and automation, the uniquely human ability to reflect and think critically is the one skill that distinguishes human practice.

In this issue

Brief Summaries of the Articles

Roland Waller explores how task-based learning (TBL) and task repetition can enhance memory retention in Japanese university EFL classrooms. Drawing on cognitive psychology, particularly theories of working memory, distributed practice, and the production effect, he connects these concepts to classroom-based review activities. He also proposes three guiding principles: integrating multiple skills, making review interactive and meaningful, and using strategic repetition to design engaging, communicative tasks that promote long-term retention and bridge theory with practical teaching.

Daniel Hooper, Alexander Dodd, and Erik Tsuchiya discuss a teacher-led approach to continuous professional development (CPD) through data-driven, dialogic reflective practice. Alex and Erik, two in-service teachers, analyzed video recordings of their lessons using Walsh’s Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT) framework and engaged in peer discussions guided by Edge’s Continuing Cooperative Development principles. The process deepened their understanding of classroom interaction, enhanced confidence, and highlighted the emotional and collaborative dimensions of reflective practice in fostering teacher agency and professional growth.

Anthony Sellick and James Bury discuss the routes they took to obtain public works doctorates by distance learning, from initial application to final submission. Being based in the same tertiary institution in Japan and having a shared body of publications allows them to compare and contrast their doctoral journeys, highlighting their similarities and differences, and showing how each is distinct and unique. The presentation of their journeys allows readers to gain insights that can inform their own doctoral journeys.

Yuri Imamura and Ami Yamauchi explore how cross-institutional collaborative reflection supported two English language educators during career transitions in Japanese higher education. Using shared journals, Zoom meetings, and SNS messages, their collaboration created an emotionally safe space to discuss challenges and exchange perspectives. The process fostered openness across institutions and roles, enhanced reappraisal and emotional belonging, built new professional communities, and helped participants recognise emerging burnout.

Finally, Cam Hill shares notes and reflections on the experience of participating in the Teacher Development SIG Forum at PanSIG2025.

We welcome your contributions to our upcoming issue (Vol. 32, Issue 1). Please ensure your papers are submitted by June 30, 2026. Full submission guidelines are available on our website at <https://td.jalt.org/index.php/etdjournal/>. Feel free to email: [jalt.ted.ete.editor\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:jalt.ted.ete.editor[at]gmail.com) with any questions.

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