NUFS
名古屋外国語大学

Teacher Development SYMPOSIUM

2026 Invited Speakers

Curtis Hart KELLY

Curtis Kelly (EdD) is Professor Emeritus of English at Kansai University in Japan. As his life mission is to "relieve the suffering of the classroom," he has spent most of his life developing learner-centered approaches for "3L" English students, students with low ability, low confidence, and low motivation. He has written over 30 books, including Significant Scribbles (Longman), Active Skills for Communication (Cengage), and Writing from Within (Cambridge). He has also made over 400 presentations on neuroscience, adult education, motivation, and teaching writing at educational events. He is the founder of the JALT Mind, Brain, and Education Special Interest Group and produces the MindBrainEd Think Tank, a magazine connecting brain science to language teaching.

Martin LAMB

Martin Lamb is a Senior Lecturer in TESOL in the School of Education, University of Leeds, UK, having previously worked as a teacher or trainer in Sweden, Indonesia, Bulgaria and the Middle East. His main research interest has always been academic motivation, especially the learning of English, and he is the chief editor of The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning. In recent years his attention has turned to teachers' own professional motivation, and he is currently writing a book reflecting on how this can change over the course of a career.

Learning a Language from the Brain's Point of View

Learning a language involves much more than just knowing things about it, such as words, expressions, grammar rules, register, and so on. According to Badre, "...knowledge and action are distinct things to some degree. So, knowing is not enough. You have to be able to bridge from what you want to do to how you behave. And that gap is not trivial. It's not easy. You actually need a class of functions in the brain to bridge it. And that's what cognitive control is all about" (Brain Science Podcast, 2021).

In other words, from the brain's perspective, it is a massive task to take something we know and turn it into goals and actions. *Knowing* is only half of what learning is. The other half is *doing*, something we do spend time on in the classroom, but tend to undervalue. Let us look at the neuroscience behind this perspective, including the role of play, tasks, and automaticity, and review approaches that maximize both halves of learning: knowing and doing!

Teacher Development and Motivation Across the Career Span

I have always had a fascination for what motivates people to learn but in this talk I will describe an ongoing auto-ethnographic project about my own motivation as a teacher. The trigger for the project was an awareness of a subtle change, downward, in my motivation for work. I recognized myself as a Category 2 late-career teacher in Babic et al.'s (2022) study, viz. 'loved being a teacher [and researcher] but mentally preparing for retirement'. Before I entirely left the field to 'new generations', however, I realized that stored in my attic was a dataset that might yet contribute to our growing understanding of language teacher motivation over the life-span. This was a chest of personal diaries which covered the first 21 years of my teaching career, from 1982 to 2003. Although not written specifically to document my working life, they frequently record thoughts and feelings about personally significant teaching events and so offer a means, combined with memory and sometimes photos and letters, to reconstruct the evolution of my professional motivation and learning. So far my analysis has reached the mid-1980s when I worked as an EFL teacher in Sweden and Indonesia. Although this is another age, both personally and in the wider world of English language education, it has generated some insights about early career teachers' emotions and identity-formation which may have relevance for teacher development in the mid-2020s.

Brianna COSENZA

Brianna Cosenza is an EFL lecturer at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies. Her interests include critical thinking instruction, literacy, and material development.

Language, Bias, and Belief: A Media Literacy Project in a Japanese University

As we are living in the Age of Information, media literacy has been gaining rapid recognition across the world. It is regarded as a "21st-century skill," for which there is no single definition but is described as “the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to be competitive in the twenty-first-century workforce” (Scott, 2015). As students now use the internet as their primary source of information, it is crucial that they know how to evaluate credible sources and information. Students in an English communication course at a Japanese university researched, analyzed, and examined the language of various English news sources to determine bias and credibility. This presentation will explain how students were instructed to analyze the language of fact and opinion, recognize manipulated images, and detect the motives behind an author’s writing. It will also answer three questions: How much media literacy do university students have? Will students become more aware of the information presented online by the end of the course? Additionally, do students care?

Susan Laura SULLIVAN

Susan Laura Sullivan enjoys learning students’ mnemonic nicknames. She co-edited the award winning, Women of a Certain Age (Fremantle Press, 2018). Research areas include creativity, student autonomy, cultural studies, gender, and intercultural communication. She is an assistant editor for the GALE Journal and currently teaches at Tokai University.

Establishing Peer Rapport Through the Use of Mnemonics

U.S. research (Cooper et al., 2017) and research conducted by the presenter have shown the benefits in students knowing one another’s names. Teachers have a variety of methods to remember their students’ names, but it is equally, if not more important, for students to also remember. Two methods were used in my classes, both of which incorporate the use of mnemonics. The first is memorization, and the second, for large classes, is name-tents. Reinforcement in the form of tag questions allows students to confirm names without embarrassment.
Since 2011, memorisation techniques incorporating mnemonics for remembering students’ names have been used in the presenter’s classes. The use of name tents has been incorporated into larger classes since 2021. Student feedback implies that memorisation is more effective at establishing a good atmosphere and cementing awareness of names. The use of name-tents also works, but with less apparent group cohesion, and names are not as well-remembered. This might also be attributed to the make-up of large classes. This presentation will highlight both methods, discuss the benefits and drawbacks of using either, discuss student feedback, and illustrate how the use of tag questions can cement students’ recognition of one another, resulting in comfortable classroom atmospheres, and mastery of tag questions.

Vivian TURK

Vivian Turk is an EFL teacher in Japan and conducts classroom-based research. She is interested in how pedagogy, identity, and student engagement intersect, using qualitative approaches to understand students’ experiences and their implications for everyday teaching practice.

Teaching the Room: How Seating Shapes Emotion, Participation, and Learning

Seating and grouping arrangements are often treated as minor logistical details of teaching, yet they exert a powerful influence on classroom interaction. While previous studies have typically measured the effects of seating on achievement or attention, less is known about the lived experiences of learners within different spatial configurations. This qualitative study explores how seating shapes participation, belonging, and perceived learning in college-level English communication classes in Japan. Drawing on classroom observations, student reflections, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and teacher-researcher diaries, the research examines four arrangements—rows, small clusters, full circles, and speed-dating rotations—through thick description and narrative vignettes. Findings reveal that seating arrangements act as affective spaces that produce contrasting emotional experiences, which in turn shape participation and perceptions of learning. A conceptual model (arrangement → emotion → participation → perceived learning) is proposed to explain this process. The study contributes theoretically by highlighting the affective and identity dimensions of classroom space, and practically by offering principles for aligning seating choices with pedagogical goals while attending to student diversity.

Taylor MEIZLISH & Chris ZIFFO

Taylor Meizlish is an EFL lecturer and researcher with an MA in Linguistics at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies. His work focuses on teaching pragmatics through corpus linguistics, and he has received two institutional grants to develop parallel learner and native speaker corpora. He has presented and published on pragmatics and corpus linguistics in academic journals and edited book chapters.

Chris Ziffo is an EFL lecturer at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies (NUFS) with over 20 years of teaching experience. His current research focuses on pragmatics and the use of a corpus, funded by the WLA Department at NUFS.

Developing Pragmatic Competence Through Corpus-Informed Instruction: Complaints and Apologies

Pragmatic competence, the ability to use language appropriately in context, is as crucial as grammatical competence. Learners may acquire grammar and vocabulary but still struggle to use this knowledge in socially appropriate ways due to L1 pragmatic transfer or limited awareness of L2 norms, which can cause unintended offense or prevent speakers from conveying their intended meaning. Moreover, determining which pragmatic features should be prioritized for instruction and how they should be evaluated remains challenging, since assessments of appropriacy often rely on native-speaker judgments rather than quantifiable language features (Roever, 2005; Ishihara & Cohen, 2010; Roever & Kasper, 2018). This study demonstrates how corpus data can make the teaching and assessment of pragmatic strategies more systematic and reliable in the case of complaints and apologies. We analyzed two parallel corpora, one consisting of responses from English learners and the other from native English instructors, to identify systematic gaps in the use of discourse strategies. Corpus evidence provided an objective basis for selecting strategies most in need of instructional attention. These strategies were then explicitly taught to Japanese university students across three year levels. Learners' performance was assessed through written Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) to measure improvement in strategy production and to identify strategies that remained difficult. In this presentation, audience members will see how corpus analysis informed the teaching of complaints and apologies and offered a more reliable means of assessing pragmatic development.

Daniel HOOPER

Daniel Hooper is an associate professor in the Department of English Communication at Tokyo Kasei University, Japan. He has been teaching in Japan for 18 years in numerous contexts including primary/secondary schools, conversation schools, and universities. His research interests include communities of practice, self-access language learning, learner identity, narrative inquiry, and reflective practice.

Using Appreciative Inquiry as an Approach to Continuing Professional Development of English Teachers in Iran

Language teaching is emotionally demanding, shaped by institutional, personal, and sociocultural challenges. While teacher wellbeing has become a growing concern in response to burnout and attrition, continuing professional development (CPD) initiatives often adopt deficit-based models that overlook teachers' existing strengths. This presentation outlines a study exploring the potential of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as a strengths-based, reflective approach to CPD. Drawing on AI's 4-D cycle—discovery, dream, design, and destiny—we conducted dialogic reflective sessions with nine Iranian secondary school English teachers. Data were collected from recorded group sessions, classroom artifacts, and post-session reflections, and analyzed using inductive thematic analysis. Our findings suggest that AI fosters teacher agency, optimism, and resilience, positioning wellbeing not as an endpoint but as an integrated part of reflective professional growth. The study also highlights how teachers, through AI, reframed their practice in more empowered and constructive terms. These insights are especially relevant in contexts like Japan, where teachers similarly face emotional labor and professional precarity. By shifting the focus from fixing weaknesses to amplifying strengths, AI offers a sustainable model for teacher development. This presentation contributes to ongoing discussions on teacher wellbeing by advocating for CPD that is not only reflective but also affirming, hopeful, and empowering.

Reiko KATSUTA

Marjorie Resuello is a full-time lecturer at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies. She completed her PhD at Nagoya University and has a multi-disciplinary background in development communication and international development. Her recent academic works include integrating Sustainable Development Goals in English classrooms in Japan.

Perception and Recognition of Dark /l/

The multiple and simultaneous challenges affecting the world call for transformation in education system to promote action towards sustainable development. Japan has made significant efforts to integrate Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into its educational policy. However, while English is mandatory in all Japanese universities, students are not often exposed to sustainability concepts unless they take sustainable development-related courses (Jodoin, 2019). To address this gap, this practice-oriented presentation explores the effectiveness of using Visual Thinking Strategies, an inquiry-based teaching method through observation, in integrating ESD into content-based language learning among selected freshmen at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies. The instructional materials, classroom management, and students' reflections on class activities will be discussed. The overall aim of the presentation is to provide practical insights on how global issues and sustainable development can be weaved into the English language learning curriculum for students to embrace the power of English in fostering linguistic competence, developing critical thinking skills, and honing their communication skills to act towards a sustainable future.

Branden KIRCHMEYER, Alison KOGA, Rachel MATSUSHITA, & Timothy James HULL

Branden Carl Kirchmeyer is an Associate Professor at Sojo University in Kumamoto. With expertise in communications and curriculum design, he aims to foster student and educator growth, cross-cultural understanding, and innovative teaching practices in higher education. Over a decade-long career in higher education, he has received awards for courseware development, educational technology design, and student satisfaction.

Alison Koga is a Senior Assistant Professor and Learning Advisor at Sojo University in Kumamoto. She holds an MA in Education for Multilingual Learners and has taught in Japan for 18 years, working with learners of all ages. Her research focuses on translanguaging, learner accommodations, and equity. She is dedicated to supporting student well-being, motivation, and meaningful communication beyond the classroom.

Rachel Matsushita is a Senior Assistant Professor at Sojo University in Kumamoto. She has an MSc in Applied Linguistics. Her main research interests are studying communication strategies and intercultural communication. The current president of the NanKyu Chapter of JALT, Rachel has long been a key organizer of the Sojo University Teaching and Learning Forum, which brings together teachers and learners to share pedagogy and research in central Kyushu.

Timothy James Hull is a Senior Assistant Professor at Sojo University in Kumamoto with an MA in TESOL. He has been teaching in Kumamoto, Japan, for over ten years in both High School and University settings. Currently, his main research interests are exploring language assessment and testing. He is also an active member in the NanKyu Chapter of JALT and the JALTCALL SIG.

Student Surveys for Determining and Evaluating Professional Development Plans among University Teachers

This action research project aimed to improve teacher performance using course-final student surveys as key performance indicators (KPIs). A volunteer team of four course instructors formed both a professional learning community (PLC) and a research team. The team members investigated the extent to which student survey data were helpful in setting professional development goals and measuring the effectiveness of professional development plans. Student survey data from previous semesters were compiled and used by team members to individually analyse their own past performances, and to set targets for improvement via self-determined PD plans (PDPs). The team met several times to discuss and share their data and goals, check in on PDP implementation, and jointly evaluate their PD based on post-intervention data gathered through subsequent student surveys. Participants reported increased motivation and mindfulness regarding reflective practice, reduced feelings of self-criticism, and identified the structured schedule of analysis and discussion as an important mechanism for change. Practical and generalizable implications of this research include specific recommendations regarding the structure and sequence of critical analysis in temporary, goal-oriented PLCs. This session briefly outlines the research design, results, and personal experiences of each team member before focusing on the practical takeaways.

Naoya SHIBATA & Vivian TURK

Naoya SHIBATA (Ed.D in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, TESOL) is a specially appointed associate professor at Osaka Kyoiku University. He also teaches part-time at Kindai University and the MA in TESOL course, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies.

Vivian Turk is an EFL teacher at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies. Her teaching and research explore classroom pedagogy, learner identity, and student engagement, as well as the evolving relationship between AI and language learning. She uses exploratory approaches to investigate how technology, classroom design, and teaching practice shape students' learning experiences and performance.

The Relationship Between GenAI-Writerism and English Writing Self-Efficacy in a Japanese University Context

Because of the noticeable development of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in second language writing, many researchers have examined the relationship between GenAI use and student writing self-efficacy (e.g., Feng et al., 2025; Shen & Wang, 2024) and highlighted the importance of AI literacy, defined as "a newly emerged but critical aspect of literacy skills that is necessary for L2 writers to effectively navigate and integrate AI technologies into their writing tasks" (Warschauer et al., 2023, p. 4). However, few studies investigate GenAI-Writerism, conceptualised as the belief that GenAI text and feedback are appropriate for efficiently producing extended writing without errors in vocabulary and grammar (Shibata, 2025). The relationship between GenAI-Writerism and student writing self-efficacy, therefore, remains underexplored. Drawing on quantitative data collected from 6-point Likert scale closed-ended questions and qualitative data from open-ended responses, this presentation examines correlations between GenAI-Writerism and writing self-efficacy among Japanese university students majoring in English and other languages. The study also considers pedagogical implications for preventing overreliance on GenAI use and for supporting students in building balanced GenAI-Writerism alongside stronger writing self-efficacy.

Arzu Ekoç ÖZÇELIK

Dr. Arzu Ekoç-Özçelik is an Associate Professor at the School of Foreign Languages, Yildiz Technical University in Istanbul, Türkiye. She earned her BA in Translation Studies from Boğaziçi University and her MA and PhD in ELT from Istanbul University. Her research focuses on learner identity, teacher development, EMI, metadiscourse, and writing.

Walking in Their Shoes: Exploring Empathy Among English Language Teachers

Empathy is often described as an important part of good teaching, but there is limited research on how English language teachers understand and use it in their work. This study aims to explore how six English language teachers think about empathy and how they experience it in their classrooms. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, where teachers shared examples from their teaching and reflected on their actions. An interpretative phenomenological approach was used to analyze the interviews and to understand how teachers make sense of empathy in their practice. The results show that teachers see empathy not only as recognizing students' feelings but also as listening carefully, showing patience, and adapting their teaching to students' needs. Teachers described empathy as a way to build trust, create a supportive classroom atmosphere, and motivate learners. For instance, a teacher explained that after noticing some students' disengagement, she invited them to write anonymous reflections about what made learning difficult. Reviewing these reflections helped her modify her approach and create more inclusive lesson plans, demonstrating empathy as a reflective and practical classroom tool. At the same time, they identified challenges, such as large classes, time pressure, and strict curriculum demands, which sometimes made it difficult to act empathetically in consistent ways. The study concludes that empathy is shaped by both personal beliefs and teaching conditions. It suggests that teacher education and professional development should include reflection on empathy as a practical skill that supports learning and creates positive classroom relationships.

Misa FUJINUMA

Misa Fujinuma is a lecturer and researcher at CLED, focusing on internationalization, multicultural education, and DEI, exploring identity development and transformative learning in study-abroad contexts.

AI in the Advanced Writing Classroom: Experiment and Insights

This presentation offers insights from the integration of AI tools into an Advanced Writing course, outlining the instructional framework, ethical standards, and student responses across two semesters in 2025. Grounded in transformative learning and self-authorship theory, the approach centers on the responsible and effective use of AI in brainstorming, drafting, and peer feedback to promote content-focused writing and student agency. As learners engaged with these tools, they developed greater confidence, rapid writing strategies, and critical awareness, supported by assessment criteria that recognize growth and thoughtful technology use. The presentation aims to provide practical, evidence-based guidance for ethical and impactful AI implementation in higher education writing instruction. The findings are based on survey responses and written reflections from 32 third-year students in the Department of British and American Studies at NUFS.

Ginny DEL ROSARIO

Ginny Del Rosario is the English Area Academic Supervisor at Immaculate Conception Academy in the Philippines, where she has taught for over three decades. A cum laude graduate of the University of the Philippines–Diliman, she also earned graduate units in Reading Education and a master's degree in Teaching English from De La Salle University. Her work focuses on literature-based language learning, reading development, character formation, and research on English teaching practices.

Simple Stories, Strong Impact: Building Language and Values through Storytelling in the EFL Classroom

This workshop will present a literature-based approach that uses values-rich stories to enhance both language acquisition and holistic student development. While many language curricula focus on grammar and vocabulary, this lesson shows how compelling narratives can be a powerful tool for teaching core communication skills while simultaneously fostering values for personal growth. The presenter will model a complete lesson using the parable, "The Eagle and the Chicken," demonstrating how to use a structured framework: motivation, vocabulary, storytelling, comprehension, and reflection. The presenter will guide participants through this process, from using a simple quote for motivation, to unlocking vocabulary with actions and visuals, to comprehension activities like role-play and read-alouds, showing how to make language learning personally meaningful by integrating discussions on values such as courage, self-worth, and resilience. The second part of the workshop will be hands-on, guiding attendees to adapt this framework to a different story by Filipino author Bo Sanchez, "How Much Are You Worth?". This collaborative practice is designed to equip teachers with a replicable model they can immediately use to make language learning more engaging and values-oriented. This approach aligns with promoting global citizenship and offers a practical toolkit for any EFL educator.

Marissa ODA

Marissa Oda is a full-time EFL Lecturer at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies. She is dedicated to fostering students' skills, confidence, and critical thinking to support their growth as independent and autonomous learners.

Teaching Opinion Writing Using the Eiken Framework

MEXT (2013) have emphasized the importance of developing students' ability "to think, make decisions, and express one's own ideas." However, Japanese learners continue to struggle with opinion writing, partly due to limited exposure to structured guidance on how to organize and present arguments persuasively (Yasuda, 2006; Uemi, 2024). As Mulvey (2016) notes, there is a need to provide explicit instruction in essay-writing conventions such as introductions, conclusions, paragraphing, and the effective use of quotations. Recent research by Yasuda (2024) suggests that English learners improve their writing skills more effectively by focusing on constructing strong arguments rather than by attempting to master complex grammar and vocabulary. One practical way to build opinion writing skills is through the Eiken writing framework, which requires learners to take a position, provide supporting reasons, and conclude logically. While some critics argue that the Eiken style can be overly formulaic, this presentation will demonstrate how teachers can use it as a scaffolded starting point and then guide students beyond the template towards more flexible and authentic opinion writing.
Classroom activities and strategies, such as brainstorming arguments and supporting opinions with examples, will be shared to illustrate how Eiken tasks can foster confidence, clarity, and critical thinking in student writing across different educational and proficiency levels.

Japanese Classroom Culture and 'Student Silence': Investigating its Causes and Exploring Solutions

Callum HUMPHRIES

Callum returned to English teaching quite late after a 10 year career in international development and health charities. He has been teaching in Japan for just over 2 years, currently at Kanagawa University and some evenings for Waseda University. His research interests include classroom culture and peer feedback. Feel free to contact Callum at callumdhumphries @outlook.com or on LinkedIn.

'Student silence' can incite emotional reactions from EFL teachers in Japan (Schachter, 2025; Korst, 1997). Although there have been changes in policy and methodologies (Tahira 2012) (Harumi, 2001), traditional methods (Humphries et al. 2020), and consequent shyness (Doyon, 2000) and reluctance to seek help (Nakane, 2006 in Marchand, 2011) persist. This small-scale study explores the use of classroom activities to better understand silence in university EMI Speaking & Listening classes for pre-intermediate to advanced students. Using mixed-methods data, I explore the causes and emotional underpinnings of silence. I will discuss my methodology and its efficacy, along with initial analysis which evidences findings of previous studies, while providing further insights on classroom culture. I will explore the efficacy of interventions tested– including the use of micro-teaching, consensus, managed turn-taking, and challenging beliefs around mistakes. I hope to resource colleagues who want to explore this issue with their students and provide some ideas for remedying the problem.