

# JPLL



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## Editorial

We are pleased to present Volume 7, Issue 2 of the Journal for the Psychology of Language Learning. As always, the issue is comprised of a diverse set of open-access, peer-reviewed contributions that collectively illuminate various dimensions of the psychology of language learning and teaching across contexts and populations. The articles in this issue reflect the journal's ongoing commitment to advancing psychologically informed, theoretically grounded, and methodologically diverse research into the lived experiences of language learners and teachers.

The issue opens with **Goetze's** contribution, bringing much-needed theoretical and empirical precision to the study of language teacher emotions. Drawing on appraisal theory and an integrated appraisal–motivation framework, this study examines how teachers' dispositional appraisal styles—specifically, tendencies to perceive situations as challenges or threats—interact with situation-specific classroom stressors to shape coping expectations and emotional experiences. Using vignette-based scenarios, the study demonstrates that a challenge-oriented appraisal disposition consistently predicts higher coping potential and more pleasant emotional outcomes across contexts. By foregrounding the interaction between individual differences and situational variables, this work underscores the importance of moving beyond decontextualised accounts of teacher emotion and offers valuable implications for teacher education and professional development.

**Davydova's** article turns attention to adolescent language learners' affective engagement beyond the classroom, exploring how emotional involvement with English-language mass media relates to self-reported second-language (L2) proficiency among Austrian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. Based on survey data from over 600 secondary school students, the study shows that emotional engagement, frequency of exposure, and viewing practices in English significantly predict perceived proficiency. Framed through organismic integration theory and the concept of integrative orientation, the findings highlight the motivational and affective power of informal, digitally mediated language encounters, and invite educators to reconsider the porous boundaries between classroom learning and learners' everyday media practices.

The third article, by **Arai, Matsuura, Eguchi, and Suzuki**, contributes to the growing body of research on flow in L2 learning through a robust longitudinal design. Tracking Japanese university students' flow experiences across a semester-long EFL conversation course, the study reveals a U-shaped trajectory of flow over time and confirms the central role of perceived challenge–skill balance in sustaining optimal engagement. Importantly, the authors also demonstrate that flow experiences are positively associated with gains in oral proficiency, measured through an AI-based speaking assessment. This study not only provides empirical support for core claims of flow theory in an L2 context but also showcases the value of longitudinal, multilevel modelling approaches for capturing dynamic psychological processes.

**Gruber and Kletzenbauer** shift the focus to primary school foreign language education, offering an ecological perspective on teacher agency in the Austrian context. Drawing on in-depth interviews with primary school teachers, the study illustrates how agency is fluid, context-sensitive, and shaped by interactions among personal histories, classroom conditions, institutional structures, and national policy environments. While participants reported considerable autonomy in classroom-level decision-making, their agency was often constrained by limited time, insufficient training, and a lack of institutional recognition for foreign language teaching. The findings point to the need for more coherent systemic support if teachers' agency—and, by extension, the quality of early foreign language education—is to be meaningfully strengthened.

The issue concludes its research articles with **Pavelescu**'s richly detailed case study of two adult migrants learning English in the UK. Drawing on the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2009) and a person-in-context relational view (Ushioda, 2009), the study examines the interplay between enjoyment, anxiety, motivation, and willingness to communicate within and beyond the ESOL classroom. While both learners experienced enjoyment and strong motivation linked to visions of ideal L2 selves, their willingness to communicate outside the classroom remained uneven and context-dependent. The study compellingly illustrates the idiosyncratic and dynamic nature of learner psychology, reminding us that positive emotions and motivation do not automatically translate into communicative action across all settings.

Finally, this issue introduces a new section for the journal, *Dialogues*, which aims to create space for reflective, conversational engagements between early-career researchers and leading scholars in the field. We are delighted to inaugurate this section with an interview conducted by **Julia Aigner** with **Sarah Mercer**. In this wide-ranging dialogue, Mercer reflects on her intellectual journey into the psychology of language learning and teaching, discussing key themes such as learner and teacher agency, emotions, complex dynamic systems, and the practical relevance of psychologically informed research. Importantly, the conversation also touches upon Mercer's belief in qualitative research to offer more nuanced perspectives on the nitty-gritty lived experience of language learning and teaching. The Dialogues section is intended to complement empirical and theoretical articles by foregrounding scholarly voices, trajectories, and reflexivity, and we hope it will become a valued and distinctive feature of the journal.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the reviewers whose careful and constructive feedback has helped maintain the high quality of the journal, as well as our two fabulous Associate Editors (Carlos Murillo-Miranda and Nicholas Marx) for their outstanding work on getting the articles to look as beautiful as they do. We are also, naturally, grateful to all authors for their contributions and for choosing JPLL as a venue for their work. We warmly encourage future submissions, as we continue to develop the journal as a forum for innovative and psychologically grounded research in language learning and teaching.

***Richard Sampson, Richard Pinner, Dávid Smid, and Giulia Sulis***

## **References**

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