**Theme: Qualitative Research into Learner Development**

**Deadline: February 7th 2017**

As teachers and researchers, we endeavour to understand the complexities of our students’ learning processes from their perspectives. Qualitative research offers uniquely powerful ways to do so, and has become popular in studies exploring learner development. Approaches such as narrative inquiry, qualitative case study and ethnography provide frameworks for gathering data using interviews and focus groups, reflections and diaries, and class observations and field notes; and exploring them using a plethora of methods including qualitative, discourse and textual analysis. More deeply, the exploratory nature of qualitative research permits us to open up learning processes and investigate them together with participants, to develop our understanding of the experiences of our participants without pre-conceived expectations of what we will find. Despite these benefits, qualitative research into learner development itself raises many thorny issues that deserve investigation, discussion, and debate.

The second issue of *The Learner Development Journal*, due out in the spring of 2018, offers our research community a chance to explore and critically question the processes of how we do (and would like to do) qualitative research. You are warmly invited to submit proposals for this issue that address the following questions, or other issues related to the general theme of qualitative research into learner development:

How do we do qualitative research into learner development?

What are the practical concerns and issues we face in formulating research questions, in the approaches and methods that we use, in the settings that we choose to explore, and in how we gather and analyze ‘data’? What do we mean by ‘data’ and ‘analysis’ in qualitative research?

How do we negotiate the project with learners and other participants?

What are the roles, relationships and identities of the researcher(s) and participants? How do we include others in qualitative research?

How can we use technology in qualitative research into learner development issues?

What problems does the use of technology raise? How can these be addressed?

What ethical issues arise and who ‘owns’ the research?

What happens when ethical purity meets messy reality?

How do we write up qualitative research about learner development? Why?

In what ways do different genres of writing enable or constrain us in writing about qualitative research into learner development? Why?

What makes research into learner development ‘qualitative’?

What are the philosophical underpinnings of qualitative research? What are the philosophical ideas about knowledge and truth that we can draw on for our research?

Full articles should be between 5000 and 7000 words. We would also like to encourage book reviews, author interviews or annotated reading lists. We are looking for around four to five full articles and three to four other papers for this issue.

**Submission Schedule**

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| February 7th, 2017 | Deadline for submission of proposals |
| February 22nd, 2017 | Announcement of acceptance of proposals |
| March/April 2017 | Sharing research interests and plans with other contributors (possibly a one-day retreat in late March) |
| June/July 2017 | Talking through research development and analysis |
| September/October 2017 | Deadline for the first complete draft and peer feedback |
| November/December 2017 | Deadline for the final draft |
| February/March 2018 | Editing and finalization |
| April/May 2018 | Publication |

Initial inquiries and proposals should be directed to Masuko Miyahara at masukom.m58@gmail.com

**Please submit the following information in a Word document.**

**Name (s):**

**Institutional Affiliation (s):**

**E-mail:**

**Member of JALT LD SIG? Yes / No**

**Proposed Title:**

**Proposal: Approximately 400 to 600 words for a research article\*. 300 words for other texts.**

(\*For research articles, we also welcome manuscripts in Japanese. Proposals in Japanese should be approximately 500-750 words /500－750文字の英文要旨.)

 **Masuko Miyahara, Editor**

**Robert Croker, Co-Editor Patrick Kiernan, Co-Editor Chika Hayashi, Co-Editor**

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*The Learner Development Journal* (<http://ld-sig.org/ld-journal-concept/>) is the online, open-access journal of the JALT Learner Development SIG. Published once a year, the *Journal* is devoted to practitioner-driven research, reviews and interviews exploring learner development issues in second language education.The *Journal* represents a commitment to group-based professional development and shared exploration. It provides a forum to explore issues related to specific learner development themes in a collaborative and supportive environment. Each issue of the *Journal* contains five to seven papers of varying lengths related to the common theme, reviews of key texts, an interview with or a contribution from a key researcher in the field, and an introduction and conclusion written by the issue editor(s) to provide an overview and context to the whole collection of work. Contributors will work with each other to read and respond to one another’s work during the research and writing process. We are especially interested in practitioner research, student participatory research, and co-authored works.