

Call for Abstracts for KONTEXTE 2/2027

Mentoring and Learning Support for Professional Development of German Language Teachers across International Contexts: Relationships, Practices, and Learning Spaces in the Field of German as a Foreign, Second, or Additional Language

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On behalf of the Editorial Board of KONTEXTE: Diana Feick

Thematic Focus

Mentoring and learning support are among the most influential factors in the professional development of German language teachers. They shape initial teaching experiences, facilitate transitions into the profession, and influence the development of professional dispositions throughout teachers' careers, including academic qualification. Their impact on the reflection of teaching practice, professional identity, and job satisfaction is often more enduring than formally transmitted theoretical knowledge alone (see, among others, Schnebel, 2019; Führer & Cramer, 2021; Hesse & Lütgert, 2020; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Despite their significance, mentoring and learning support continue to offer considerable potential for further development with regard to stronger theoretical foundations, more systematic structures, and clearer guidance for mentors and mentees (Sedláčková & Fořtová, 2025). At the same time, they have received only limited attention in empirical research. Particularly in the field of German as a Foreign, Second, or Additional Language, there is still a lack of systematic studies examining these processes from institutional, professional, and international perspectives (see, for example, Nunes, 2022; Walkington et al., 2025).

In this special issue, mentoring and learning support are understood as dialogic, relational, and context-sensitive processes that accompany professional learning and development. Rather than focusing solely on the transmission of expertise, they emphasize collaborative meaning-making, reciprocal learning, and the joint reflection on professional practice.

Accordingly, this special issue conceptualises mentoring and learning support as key spaces for professional development. It particularly welcomes empirical studies that explore dialogic, relational, and context-sensitive mentoring and learning support processes in which professional learning is collaboratively and reciprocally constructed through joint negotiation, shared inquiry, and collegial exchange.

The aim of this special issue is to create an international forum for dialogue, reflection, research, and networking on mentoring and learning support, thereby contributing to the further systematic development of this field of research and practice.

The special issue focuses on mentoring and learning support processes in pre-service, in-service, and continuing professional development for teachers of German, as well as in academic qualification within the field of German as a Foreign, Second, or Additional Language across diverse international contexts. Particular attention will be paid to:

(a) the support of teaching practice and practicum experiences in university-based teacher education and continuing professional learning;

(b) mentoring and learning support processes at the interface between universities and schools (e.g., through collaboration among pre-service teachers, school-based mentors, and teacher educators); and

(c) mentoring and learning support in academic qualification and research supervision within the field of German as a Foreign, Second, or Additional Language.

The guiding questions and educational perspectives of this special issue are deliberately conceived across institutional and international contexts.

Examples of Topics and Guiding Questions

I. Mentoring and Learning Support as Relationships, Educational Stances, and Spaces for Interaction

Guiding questions include:

1. How are mentoring and learning support processes enacted across different stages of teacher professional development—from initial teaching experiences and practicum placements to school–university partnerships and academic qualification within the discipline?
2. How do the actors involved understand their roles, responsibilities, and expectations? Which educational beliefs, professional orientations, and forms of preparation shape these processes?
3. To what extent are mentoring and learning support relationships shaped by power, dependency, and assessment, and how are tensions between collaboration, support, trust, and accountability negotiated?

II. Mentoring and Learning Support in Institutional and International Contexts

Guiding questions include:

1. How are mentoring and learning support processes organised and institutionally embedded across different settings, such as universities, schools, teacher education programmes, and international partnerships?
2. What role do institutional policies, educational programmes, and broader policy frameworks play in shaping mentoring and learning support processes?
3. To what extent do institutional structures enable or constrain dialogic, reciprocal, and context-sensitive mentoring and learning support, particularly from an international comparative perspective?

III. Mentoring and Learning Support as a Field of Practice, Research, and Professional Development

Guiding questions include:

1. How are mentoring and learning support processes designed, reflected upon, and further developed in practice—for example, in pre-service and continuing teacher education, school-based practice, or academic qualification?
2. What critically reflected experiences do novice teachers, mentors, and other participants gain through mentoring and learning support processes?
3. Which methodological approaches are particularly suitable for researching mentoring and learning support? How can empirical data be generated and analysed to investigate professional learning processes? How can professional competence development be operationalised, and how can the impact of mentoring and learning support be assessed?
4. Which experiences, projects, materials, or innovative formats contribute to making mentoring and learning support visible and to fostering their further development?

Types of Contributions

We welcome theoretical and conceptual papers as well as empirical studies that contribute to the consolidation and further development of this field of research. Practice-oriented contributions are equally encouraged, including workshop and project reports, reflective accounts of practice, materials-based contributions, and conceptual papers. Innovative formats (e.g., audiovisual contributions) are expressly welcome.

Research articles should comprise approximately **15 pages** (maximum **35,000 characters**), while practice-oriented contributions and workshop reports should comprise approximately **8 pages** (maximum **20,000 characters**).

Practice-oriented contributions may be submitted in languages other than German. In such cases, authors are kindly requested to include a German-language summary of approximately two pages.

Timeline for Authors

15 September 2026	Submission of abstracts (maximum 500 words)
15 November 2026	Notification of acceptance
15 March 2027	Submission of full manuscripts (Word document)
15 May 2027	Review feedback returned to authors
15 July 2027	Submission of revised manuscripts
October 2027	Publication of the special issue

Submission and Contact

Please submit your abstract (Word or RTF format) by e-mail to:

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