

For citation:

Reinelt, Rudolf (2015) The FL speaking and teaching circle: German without Germans. In: Reinelt, R. (ed.) (2015) 4th JALT OLE SIG Conference 2015 Compendium compiled for OLE by Rudolf Reinelt Research Laboratory, Ehime University, Matsuyama, Japan, p. 17 – 33.

The FL speaking and teaching circle: German without Germans

Rudolf Reinelt (Ehime University)

1. Introduction

While the task of OLE within JALT was defined as follows:

“In a time when we can easily understand where and how other people live, there is still only one surefire way to find out what they think individually or as a culture: to learn their language. As every culture contains specific patterns of thought and mindsets which cannot always be put into English or translated easily from one language to another, learning its language opens the door to that culture and the countries using it. The OLE SIG was founded in 1996 in order to serve the special needs of such learners and teachers”, FLs other than English may increasingly face a dearth of native speakers, especially in paid positions at educational institutions.

On the other hand, the learners’ interest can be raised with/by any contact with a foreign language. If the early steps of their foreign language learning endeavor are successful, learners may long for more even in environments unwelcoming to second foreign languages. Successfully continuing their efforts may well lead to equaling their English abilities and surpassing them in yet another foreign language is not beyond imagination.

2. The first year course

In order to demonstrate how this may be possible, the author presents the

development of his courses as an example of OLE. Thus, this presentation first briefly demonstrates the author's first-year general education German courses as they are held at Ehime University in Matsuyama. This approach is different from many previous ones in that it includes

- short units (SU) of between five and twenty minutes, which become increasingly longer, first practiced by the learners;
 - very little "teaching" by the teacher;
 - introducing new contents by "spacing" over several weeks and delayed written representation;
 - no vocabulary learning as such;
 - little writing in class (but students still learn it);
 - very few explanations;
 - grammar being made explicit only rarely;
 - learners checking learners;
 - doing, especially speaking, before "learning";
 - a year-final oral exam on the A2-level where the learners speak spontaneously and without material with a native speaker;
- and has been proven successful so far with hundreds of learners, and has been demonstrated in many of the author's previous presentations.

A few backdrops, which can be construed as "disadvantages of this course," should be mentioned:

- There are few explanations given, if at all,
- The outsourcing of reading, writing and partially listening
- With very short, new units, little sleeping is possible
- Learners often solve problems themselves.
- Learners have to speak with ever changing new partners even within one lesson.

If this optimized course continues to produce "good" target language speakers, and teaching along this approach is continued, the process may become circular, and this virtuous circle may be one of the vistas for the future of vast parts of OLE.

3. Reasons for continuing

A few non-German-majoring students wanted to continue in the way they had learnt this language previously beyond the first year. With students usually busy with their majors from the second year on, this is certainly conspicuous. Revealing and exploring some of their positive reasons may also help us in designing better (and negative ones in improving) our first year courses. In the first-year-final questionnaire, comments and tendencies such as the following (table 1) surfaced:

Table 1 First year students' feedback

2015 9 19 10Matsu15 Reinelt The Virtuous Circle

•N Tabelle 1 Studentenfeedback Abschlussumfrage (1,2,4= WS 2014)

Nr.6	Japanisches Original	Deutsche Übersetzung des Verfassers	English by the presenter
1)	ライネルト先生が積極的に話しかけてくださる授業だったので、ドイツ語を話すことに抵抗がなくなりました。ペアを作ったりして、クラスの人とたくさん関わるのができてよかったです。1年間とても楽しかったです。	Weil es ein Unterricht war, wo Herr R uns positiv angesprochen hat, ist der Widerstand gegen das Sprechen auf Deutsch verschwunden. Die Paarbildungen und das Kennenlernen von vielen Leuten in der Klasse war sehr gut. Das Jahr hat mir sehr gut gefallen	because RR talked nicely to us, our resistance to speaking German vanished. Pair work and getting to know people was very good.
2)	ドイツ出身の人と話すのは緊張したけれど、1年間でここまで話せるようになり、うれしかった。	Ich war sehr nervös, als ich mit Deutschen sprechen musste, aber dass ich in einem Jahr soweit sprechen konnte, machte mich glücklich	• I was very nervous to when I had to speak with a German, but I was very happy, when I realized how far I had come in speaking within one year.
3) SS2015	最初のところは授業についていくのが大変だったけれど、テストの時にふつうにドイツ語で会話できたので驚いた。	Am Anfang war es schwer im Unterricht mitzukommen, aber als ich dann in der Prüfung ganz normal auf Deutsch gesprochen habe, bin ich erschrocken!	• At first I had a hard time to follow the class, but when I could speak German normally in the test, I was surprised!
4)	ドイツ語が英語よりもできるようになった気がします。	Mir scheint, dass ich jetzt Deutsch besser als Englisch kann	• It seems to me that I can do better now in German than in English
5)		"Gute Methode (sprechen können vor schreiben)"	(speaking before writing) is a good method/approach
6)		"Glücklich, soweit sprechen gelernt zu haben"	happy to have learnt speaking so far/much
7)		"(E-D Fortschrittsvergleichend vorgehen)... Vergleich war gut"	E-G comparison was good
8)		„Zum Fremdsprachlernen ist dies die beste Unterrichtsform“ (SS2015).	This is the best way of doing foreign language classes

reasons include

- emotions
- comparisons
- success

- a drive to communicate (Yashima 2013)

Such learners are also motivated to continue learning. Positive emotions (Dewaele 2015) play a crucial role in opinions 5 to 8 in table 1 above

- At least for some students the traditional order of “emotion leading to achievement” is uprooted and turned upside down: Recognizing that they can practice and USE (i.e. can speak) a (second) FL to a certain degree successfully leads to motivation to learn

- a reversal of the flow of motivation: Because I can do something I want to (continue to) learn, and the

- feeling of having learned something;

- reduced or no fear of speaking in the target language;

- success comparable to former FL learning English as can be seen in table 2 below:

Table 2: Length of speaking a foreign language

Speaking with a target language partner spontaneously without material, across 8 y's of FL learning 2008-2015

Abbrev: UDSZP uninterrupted dialogic speaking with a partner; LZ learning duration; D=German; E= English; KT course participants; MS (Target language) mother tongue speakers; KL course teacher; J=years, W=weeks
words: nebenan=person sitting next to you, abgebrochen=terminated by

LZ D	Start	2 W	8 W	13 W	Test (14W)(Ende SS)	28 W	Test (29W(ende WS)
Partner		KT nebenan	KT nebenan	andere KT	andere KT (SS2015 S)	andere KT	MS
UDS ZPD: Min.	0	1 Min.	5 Min.	10 bis 15 Min, Abgegeben vom KL	2-3Min	Etwa 20 Min., aber endlos, Abgegeben vom KL	3-4Min
LZ E	6 J	6 J	6 J	6,5 J	6,5J	7 J	7 J
UDS ZPE: Min	???	???	???	???	???	???	???

as well as

- getting to know people;
- fun;
- starting from speaking was successful;
- the class file was supportive.

Whether these factors indeed were the decisive reasons remains to be researched; they do however tell of the success of the courses.

4. Second year and above: features of the courses

As students kept coming (and returning!), successive and slightly advancing courses had to be built up consecutively. The general goal was to continue fun and learning while speaking a FL.

Such *facilitating factors* included

- a want for communication
- dialogicity

- pronunciation
- and others.

(administrative set-up)

At first, the courses were designed in DK(German Communication) /S1 (super course 1) as continual and expansion of the first year from A2, and in S2 and S3 (due to administrative difficulties as Ehime University officially called S2.2) as taking care of the remainders on the way to the target language learning completion in B1.

As the final stage has been reached in this (2015/6) winter term (before university graduation; there may be continuals afterwards), the following system has evolved for general education German courses after the first year:

(precondition: Passed RR oral (or equivalent A2) exam AND showed equivalent writing abilities).

(System)

(DK German communication previously existed as a once-a-week course for non-beginner German/ humanities students. This has been made a twice a week course).

S(uper course)1 (created for non-humanities students) in the second year.

S2 in the third year (for all continuing after DK or S1)

S3 for returnees after a stay in the target language country or for fourth year students at Ehime or Matsuyama universities.

All courses are conducted twice a week for free by the presenter (in addition to his obligatory first year courses). Some of the features include:

(Aims)

- The aims for DK/S1 are to re-get or retain A2 and progress in grammar and vocabulary as much as possible beyond the level reached in the first year as well as extending communicative abilities.
- S2 courses aim at B1: Speaking should take a huge step in that direction, while extending vocabulary and taking care of remaining final grammar

items are simultaneous goals.

- S3 courses aim at B2 and are open-ended (no unknown grammar, except for rare cases; in vocabulary: anything goes). Even Profile Deutsch mentions only a dictionary as vocabulary resource.

(skills)

- The courses are facilitated by the students' strong wish to speak and communicate in any way.

- Writing and grammar practice, except for starting points, are outsourced but monitored. On the wish of some of the participating S3 students, writing tasks were introduced, but have not yet been standardized.

(multidimensionality of short unit contents)

In contrast to the first year, where a somewhat linear progression, although with many convolutions as required by the learners' progress (see Reinelt (2016)), is required due to the possible order of learning items, in non-beginner courses this linearity is second order to the characteristics of each small unit. While not all have yet been determined, the following seems to be most decisive. As students in these courses are giving their free time, they will hardly show up again, if the courses do not fulfill these requirements.

(multidimensionality)

The main feature, besides the speaking requirement, is the multidimensionality of each unit. Ideally, the following dimensions should be taken care of in each and every small unit /part of a class:

- advance from the year before in grammar and vocabulary (areas);
- relate to the students everyday life in various ways (ex. media use);
- vocabulary develops from extension of known areas but can jump into any area;
- actual goings-on in politics, society, Japan vs Germany, etc.;
- communicative development: maintain talk, new subjects, guide one's interaction.

(teaching materials)

With these, and a few other requirements, very few original teaching materials have yet been developed.

(evaluations)

Also, evaluations in all directions have to be developed and are being screened. Eventually, research will have to answer to this situation and develop methods going beyond case studies.

Evaluations concern not only the course, the content, the way the course was done and what the students learned and why, but also how the progress can be researched at all. The following is one attempt at testing the students' progress on a larger scale, but more detailed tests will have to be developed as the courses proceed.

Table 3

TEST SS2015 for non-beginners DK and S1 Testteile: parts A) <i>Sprechen</i> mit Deutschen (ueber 5 Min., ein Thema etwas vorbereiten)	die Saetze. • Verpflegung c) Aus dem Protokoll bzw aus dem Unterricht SS15 DK Aus den Protokollen Was haben Sie da gelernt? April Wissen Sie, wo... das Wetter in X das haengt davon ab, ..., welcher ..., dass 4 bis 5 Leute Relay: Frage und Antwort dass er lernt/am Lernen ist Daten abfragen: Fragen machen fuer eine Berufsgruppe
Writing exam B) <i>schriftlich</i> : a) <i>vgl zu Englisch</i> Englischseite ergaenzen und auf Deutsch Übersetzung oder Äquivalenz angeben 10 Saetze auswaehlen (leichte) 1-20 b) B1 Auswahl RR B130 Aufgabe2, p. 145 ganz, p.156, 3 • Schreiben Aufgabe 2 • Welches Verb passt? Ergaenzen Sie	

Mai	keine Chance	viel zu leicht
Takeuchi Party - Besuch - Party	Probleme dieses Kurses:	
Schreiben Sie die Geschichte!	3) Was hat Ihnen besonders gefallen?	
Mai / Juni	-	
Welche Themen sind wo o.k.?	4) Was hat Ihnen nicht gefallen? Was sollte man weglassen?	
Juni	-	
Der Umzug (Kasus) als Comic	5) Was könnte/ sollte man noch in dem Kurs machen?	
Juni	-	
Die Reise in Matsuyama	6) Wie war die Betreuung?	
Juni	fantastisch unter aller Sau	
schoen: Viele verwendungen	7) Wie war der Einsatz von digitalen Medien?	
Juli	zu viel zu wenig	
Der Flohmarkt	Besser: _____	
d) Eigenes Thema: freies Schreiben	8) Waren die Protokolle zu viel/ zu wenig Arbeit?	
e) Selbst eine Aufgabe basteln für diesen Kurs	unschaffbar mit llinks	
f) was haben Sie noch in diesem Kurs gelernt	9) Wie oft haben Sie die Protokolle angesehen? jeden Tag nie	
g) Redewendungen	10) Waren die Protokolle hilfreich?	
C) Umfrage (anderes Blatt)	Zeitverschwendung mein Ein und Alles	
1) Warum sind Sie zu diesen Kurs gekommen?	11) Wie waren die Hausaufgaben?	
2) Was waren Ihre Ziele in diesem Kurs	Zu wenig zu viel	
Ziel X erreicht %	12) Empfehlungsgrad des Kurses in %	
3) Themen	Vielen Dank für Ihre Hilfe und Ihr Kommen!	
interessant langweilig		
4) Themenbehandlung		
zu ausfuehrlich zu hopsig		
5) Sprachlich		

An evaluation from the students' point of view is the feedback after the courses. The recommendation rate was over 80%. Students mention a few difficulties, but emphasize achievements and look forward to the next term.

(research)

Research issues include the fact that

- there are so far only recent courses, and
- not many students, which leaves open
- how to "do research" beyond case studies
- and which methods are available at all.

Examples from the courses will be made available in subsequent papers, including

- video recordings from the classes (in part with transcript);
- protocols as examples of outsourced skills;
- tests both oral and written (templates and answers); etc.

(cultural learning)

In order to locate the courses on a theoretical level, we can think of them as a new type of "cultural learning". We speak of cultural learning if individuals can

- - reflect on their present ways of ascribing meaning when dealing with texts (in a wide sense of available communication opportunities of all kinds) ,
- - adjust, restructure, change and further develop their thinking so that they fairly equal the cultural interpretations, which these texts use,
- - ascribe the texts an adequate sense,
- - and articulate their critical or affirmative position (Altmeyer 2006:55).

5. Views of future developments

The last parts considers how the courses described in the preceding parts can develop into the future of German teaching, and as such the future of

almost all OLEs.

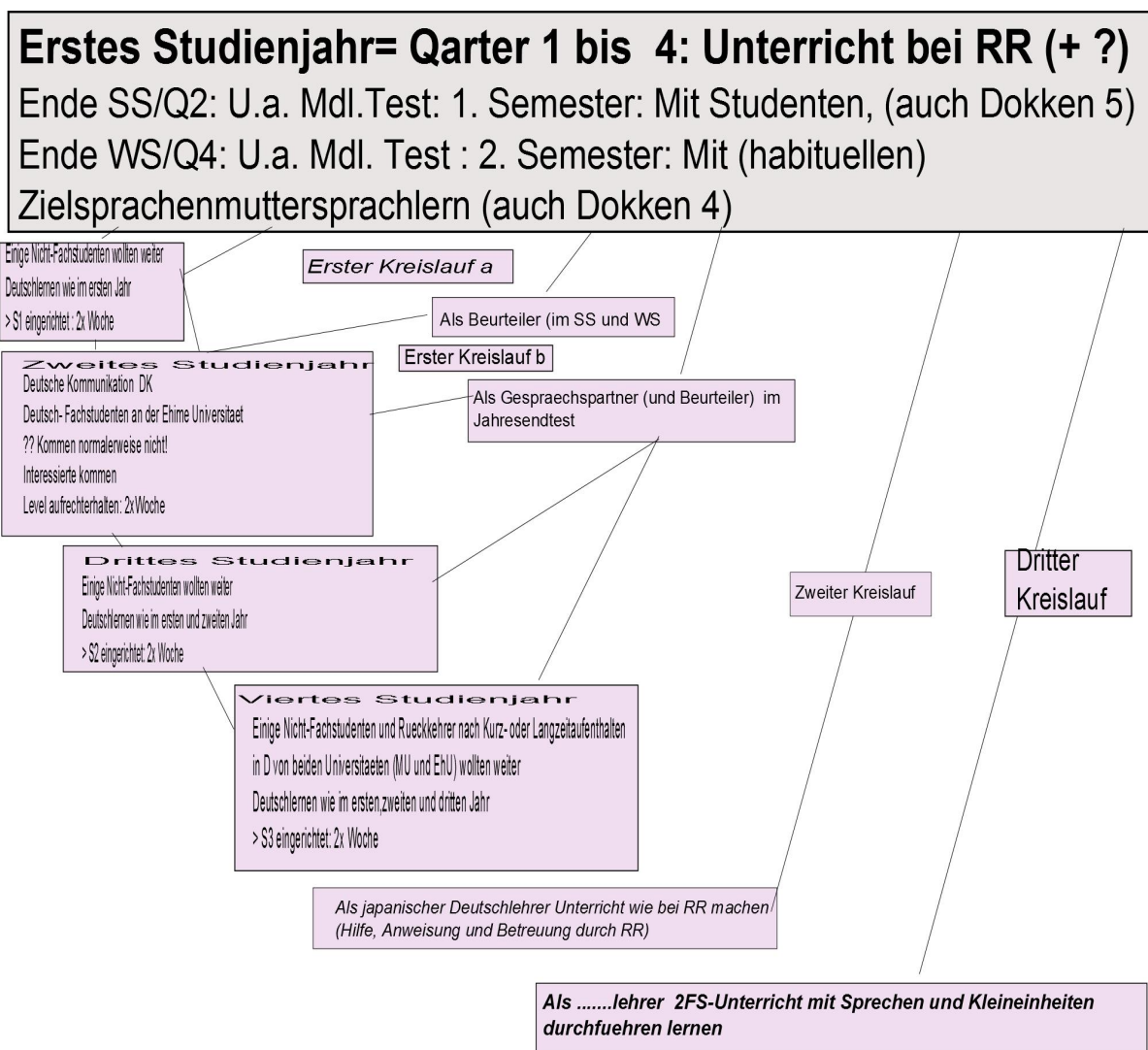
With the start and continuing with speaking supplanted by required but delayed writing as main (but not sufficient) condition for success, the following can happen:

- Courses have to be conducted on four levels (one per year), finally aiming at B1 as in Table 4:

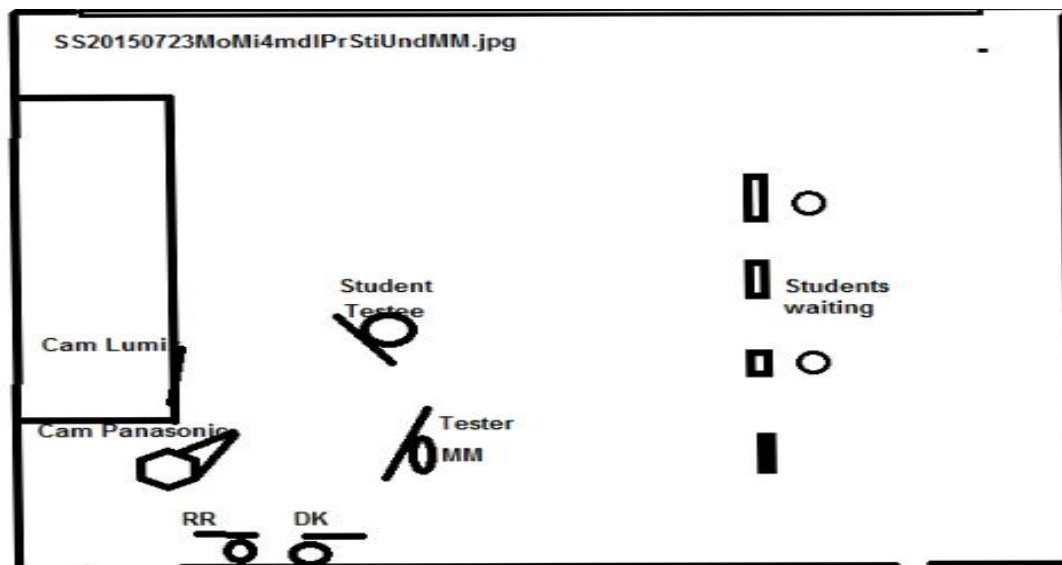
Table 4: Schedule as conducted in the winter term 2015

WS2015	Mo	Di	Mi	Do	Fr
1 8:30-10:00					
2 10:20-11:50	ドイツ語 II 205051 理 系 Muse24 18名		ドイツ語 II 205052 理 系 Muse24 18名		
3 12:40-14:10	S2no1(S3) 20943 M31 5名	ドイツ語 II208041 法文1(兒 玉)共講 13 10名		×	ドイツ語 II208012 法 文2(野上) 共講 43 26 名
4 14:30-16:00	S1チュートリ アル 20942 M31 4名	Office Hour		S2no2 20943 法文学部h 本館4F表 演4名	
5 16:20-17:50	ドイツ語コミ ュニケーショ ン (DK1) 215451 u 215453 法 文学部講義 棟402 4名		ドイツ語コミ ュニケーショ ン (DK2) 215451 u 215453 M33 4名	S1no1 20942 法文学部 本館4F表 象演習室 7名	S1no2 20942 M33 7名
6 18:00-19:30	S2no3(S3) 20943 M33 5名				ドイツ語 II 208422 夜間主(高 安)法講 3F 語学演 習室 17名
7 19:40-21:10					
8 21:20- 22:50					
9 23:00-0:30		S2no4(S3) 20943 M33 2名			

- The students in these courses can become “habitual target language speakers” as courses are usually conducted in the target language. Then, the learners in S2 and S3 can work as raters (and finally speaking partners, see the following) in first-year-final oral exams. This can be the first closing of the target language learning circle in case no target language speakers are available (circle one, table 5).



These learners can then be employed as speaking partners in oral exams:
 Table 6 “Habitual” German speaker as speaking partner in first term oral exam.



Mo4 Setting

RR Rudolf Reinelt

DK observing English Teacher

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- **S3 students as oral examination speaking partners**
- **video**
- **TS**



2015 9 19 10thMatsu15 Reinelt The Virtuous Circle

	S1		RR		MM
		1	Zeit:		
2	Guten Tag(0:8)			3	Guten Tag
4	Wie gehts?			5	Sehr gut, danke, und Ihnen?
6	Es gehtWie heissen Sie?			7	Ich heisse Lara, und Sie?
8	Ich heisse T.N.Woher kommen Sie?			9	Ich komme aus Freiburg...Und Sie?
10	Aus M...Hm, wo wohnen Sie?			11	Ich wohne in I-shi. Und Sie?
12	In T-choh.			13	Wo ist denn T-choh?
14	Hm, in mitter von M			15	Hm.

2015 9 19 10thMatsu15 Reinelt The Virtuous Circle

16	Was trinken Sie gern? (50)			17	Ich trinke gern Wein.
18	Wein.			19	Und Sie?
20	Hm, ich trinke gern Cola.			21	Hm.(1:00)
22	(1:04) Wie alt sind Sie?			23	Ich bin ein'und'zwanzig. Und Sie?
24	Ich bin...ich bin....achtzig.(1:18)				
25	(1:27) Wie gross sind Sie?			26	Ich bin ein Meter sechzig(1:30), und Sie?
27	Ich bin ein Meter sechzig.				
28	Haben Sie Telefon?			29	Ja!
30	Ihre Nummer bitte			31	acht, Null acht Null eins zwei drei drei drei vier fünf sechs. Und Sie?

2015 9 19 10thMatsu15 Reinelt The Virtuous Circle

32	Null neun Null, viert sieben fuenf eins zhi eben zwei eins zhib en.			33	HM! Danke schoen.
34	Bitte, bitte (2:04)				
35	Haben Sie Familie?			36	Ja! Ich habe eine . ei ne Mutter und Vate r und eine Schweste r. Und Sie?(2:15)
37	Zu ist vier			38	Hm(2:17)
39	Meine Vater, mein Mutter, Schwester (2:22)				
		40	(2:29) o.k.		

- The first-year courses have, even in part, proved widely successful, as the oral exams in the SS2015 have showed, where learners already spoke with such habitual native speakers of German, in this case the S3 students, after only 4 months. This may convince Japanese German teachers with very good speaking abilities to try and use the approach as it is outlined in part two above (circle two).

- If a teacher wants to learn how to teach the courses with the relevant scientific background in a faculty development course, he/she is welcome to make use of such courses already developed and offered by the presenter at reinelt.rudolf.my@ehime-u.ac.jp (circle three).

In the end, learning German can take place without Germans under the following conditions of success for the courses:

- Speaking (since most difficult and only skill only to be learned with a partner)

- other skills are outsourced but

-- as homework

-- part of the course! and also

-- monitored in tests in class and in the term-final examination.

A last caveat: If one, two, or even all three circles develop into an independent automatic circularity, which does not require target language native speakers anymore, one important task remains for native speakers: Since Japan can rarely keep up a good system for a long time, target language native speakers will have to see to that it is kept installed all the time. And that is certainly the more difficult task.

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