

The Next decade of FL Teaching and Learning. Vistas?

Rudolf Reinelt

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これから十年の外国語教育の展望

contact address

Ehime University Institute for Education and Student Support
Center for General Education
790-8577 Matsuyama
<reinelt@iec.ehime-u.ac.jp>

愛媛大学 教育・学生支援機構
共通教育センター

790-8577 松山市文京町 3 T/F 0081-89-927-9359

Reinelt: The next decade of FL teaching and learning. Vistas?
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Abstract

There is a scenario every vista dreads: It may materialize. While this is laudable for the predictor, there is no guarantee things turn out favorably for those concerned. It is with the hope that only the advantageous parts of the following will have to be taken care of before any untoward developments come to bear that I will make some *comments on possible future developments in the areas addressed in the abstracts submitted to this conference*, disregarding whether they actually lead to a presentation or not.

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Abstract (2)

Since the totality of the proposal submissions to this conference gives a good overview of the variety of present FL learning and teaching issues, I will go through a representative number of all submitted presentation abstracts and view them as starting point for the next decade with comments aiming at instigating future research and concerted progress. I will also mention implications for foreign language teaching beyond English as this has been represented in only a few contributions to this mini-conference.

Reinelt: The next decade of FL teaching and learning. Vistas?
4thMatsu09 これから十年の外国語教育の展望 Re:
FU Identity and writing

The following questions arise in the context of identity and writing

- Do learners take on a different identity when writing in another language?
- Compare across social websites such as Facebooks pages in different languages by the same person, if there is such a thing
- As research, this offers the rare chance to observe where the subjects freely and in competition present themselves as research material. This is even meant as in the subjects' own interests
- Can these identities be the farther apart, the less related (in whatever sense) the languages are?
- Question: How many identities (here defined as presented in different languages) will we be able/need to present of ourselves in the future?

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4thMatsu09 これから十年の外国語教育の展望 Re:
MAROKO genre-based approach to thesis writing

Thesis writing will remain as difficult and problematic as it is already today, and this paper provides an important analytic approach as the author identifies the communicative value of rhetorical moves in 6 dissertations in Kenya.

There are difficulties of thesis writing which appear, very much beyond the contents, to be of a technical nature. They will probably not remain just that, leading to questions such as:

- how can we guarantee the originality of a paper?
 - how will papers in foreign languages be evaluated?
- and
- how will the moves change? or even
 - will there be new moves?

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4thMatsu09 これから十年の外国語教育の展望 Re:

CARLEY, IKEGASHIRA & Coll. English Education in Japan, CHAROENTAT E in Thailand

In Japan, English will soon start in elementary school (2 to 6y), go on through all of JH (3y) and HS (3y) and to the first two years of university education.

This will total up to a whopping 10 to 12 years of continuous English education. Anyone blessed with such a long time of instruction (in any subject) should be nearly perfect in the respective subject, whatever contents that would be.

In the case of English FL instruction this means that Japanese might have more formal instruction of the target language than most English native speakers have throughout their whole lifetime.

While the learners will probably welcome a different and interesting subject, we may suggest that much preparation will be necessary for those on the instructional side, such as teachers, coordinators, textbook writers and others such as administrators.

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English education in school contexts (2)

Such a long FL education may not even be necessary. As an education ministry official in Germany, where we will have a very similar situation, put it: Switch to another language after 6(!) years of English: If you haven't mastered it yet, you are not going to in the foreseeable future, and if you have mastered it, well, than you had enough anyway.

On the other hand, taking English education as it is presently in Japan, doubts about reaching such abilities are justified.

Overfeeding with English may result in more other foreign language learning: Already German and other FL teachers welcome scores of students disappointed about their first FL language learning.

The situation may be different in developing countries, where an exceptionally good FL knowledge or ability can be a valuable asset and a rewarding advantage over other students.

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4thMatsu09 これから十年の外国語教育の展望 Re:
ANIL KUMAR Rhyme

In FL learning we will, always be looking for easier ways to make the FL enter and remain available in the learners' memory. Rhyming may provide a strategy whose potential is probably not yet fully explored.

Some of the practical approaches of using rhyming in FL education are not yet off the table, and, especially in higher education, e.g. links to majors are still being tried. As the internet can fascinate even more, such approaches should also be explored and ways to prove them be tested.

The use of rhymes also demonstrates the importance of the teacher and his/her guidance. The teacher is to go away the last, if ever, in language classes, with unpredictability in contents, form and ideas one, if not the, most characteristic.

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YATSKO Computer systems in FL education

The role of computers in the FL context is supposed to change in two ways:

As much as computer programmers have struggled, no reasonably usable computer translation system has so far been made available (especially to be run automatically, as e.g. google etc. are). Human beings will still have their role in handling FIs, especially translations.

On the other hand, machines have already been helpful in enabling various ways of FL learning and use. Computer programs have already enabled ubiquitous outsourcing of parts of FL learning so that they can be acquired outside the face-to-face context, freeing time for speaking in the latter. In order to practically facilitate use, the final step may be the foldable screen and the foldable keyboard which would make computer application even more ubiquitous, independent and hence useful.

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4thMatsu09 これから十年の外国語教育の展望 Re:
REINELT Rater types

As FL teaching (but not necessarily learning) underlies practicality conditions, it is always necessary to explore unconventional ways of optimizing parts of the teaching and its evaluation processes.

Finding raters for oral exams is one example and in a follow-up to this presentation, rating has even been performed in the target language country using conventional internet options, thus getting rid of locality restrictions. This can further facilitate FL teaching beyond the limits of the classroom, and make it a completely different undertaking.

Seen from the points mentioned in this presentation, the future may be very bright. The limits may only be in the minds of the participants. The need for FL learning will not go away anyway as long as no reliable or satisfactory machine translation becomes widely available.

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4thMatsu09 これから十年の外国語教育の展望 Re:
KEIANIAN High school E learning anxiety

While learning a foreign language will always remain a process with a number of dreary experiences coming from personal as well as institutional factors, computers may in the future alleviate this to a certain degree by enabling more successful individual study. Nevertheless, as language always involves a human partner at some time, anxiety in whichever FL learning and use environment can only be reduced so far. As most learning subjects contain *angst* and other demotivating factors to a certain degree, the abolition of the second FL requirement as is the case in Japan is certainly not the solution. It deprives students of an introductory opportunity. Who would think of making vector analysis and binominals elective, only because some technical students may not like them.

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4thMatsu09 これから十年の外国語教育の展望 Re:

TABATABAEI & Coll.

Language and thought; time estimation

Any FL learning involves acquisition of a different time concept as no two languages will have exactly the same time concepts, and there may even be wide differences within one society. On the other hand, they may, however, share many similarities, even across wide areas e.g. the Indoeuropean language family, to which both Farsi and English belong. Another point is the fact that, despite our concepts having changed very little, the recent almost simultaneous communication possibilities over wide areas via Internet may cause changes in the way we talk to or about our partners.

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4thMatsu09 これから十年の外国語教育の展望 Re:
STAFFORD & HEFFERNAN Effective Criterion-referenced tests

Filtering out which criteria can be used in a FL test and which are attainable by students to a considerable degree is a task not to be taken easy. With English education required to fulfill various needs and requirements and students coming to classes with widely different pre-knowledge, it is not easy to bridge the differences.

The development of tests both appropriate to the learning and teaching environment while also fulfilling internationally comparable test criteria requires considerable innovation and may lead to results relevant for yet other FL teaching. On the other hand, cross-fertilization from already developed tests for other FLs may help optimize the development process even for English testing.

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4thMatsu09 これから十年の外国語教育の展望 Re:
HO Specific Learning Disabilities

FL learners share with learners with learning disabilities the characteristic that, even if only in theory, they will probably never be fully able to reach perfect integration and an envisaged perfect end state in the target language. Both FL learners and disabled persons can only approach the final goal as closely as possible.

Thus we may be able to mutually learn from remedy approaches. One proposal, networking, may also have positive effects for FL learning. Comparing the actions mentioned in this contribution reminds us of many FL teaching practices, and in the future developments may mutually benefit from both fields of research.

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4thMatsu09 これから十年の外国語教育の展望 Re:

SPIJKERBOSCH & LANDER 2-minute presentations

The need to integrate culturally ideosyncratic parts in FL teaching enables the teachers to provide their students with opportunities for international understanding. This is even more effective, if it is designed as an active part of test preparation.

The students' ability to present adds a welcome aspect to the otherwise little productive character of the TOEIC. Official test preparation in other languages may also have to be supplanted by similar parts.

Cross-fertilization in this respect may be a welcome short-cut, especially as universities are ever more striving to have their students measured and qualified (tested and testified) by "objective", institution independent, tests.

KLEIN Verbo-Tonal Correction (French), DABAGHI Correction on articles and past tense

As FL learning is always a process which requires corrections at some time and stage, looking for and developing effective methods for this becomes essential. While pronunciation and grammatical corrections were covered in these presentations, other aspects such as vocabulary, dialogicity, cultural adequacy and paralinguistic elements will also have to be taken into account. And since they are all different across individual languages and learners, there may be vast differences as to how corrections can be done effectively.

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The same points hold for languages other than English with their instruction time even more limited than that for English.

On the other hand, due to similarities in teaching circumstances, new findings may be relevant across such languages, as has been demonstrated in many JALT presentations.

With the pressure even stronger and the requirements even stricter for languages other than English, they may even outpace the latter in finding effective solutions. The oral examination for first German courses by the author can be taken as one example: Students there speak for up to ten minutes uninterruptedly in the new FL, more than probably any did in English before (except for speech contests).

In the end...

For a final word: The next decade

In whichever way the issues mentioned above and many more not even touched in this book may turn out, foreign language learning and teaching will continue as it is one of the few things that can not be completely digitalized.