

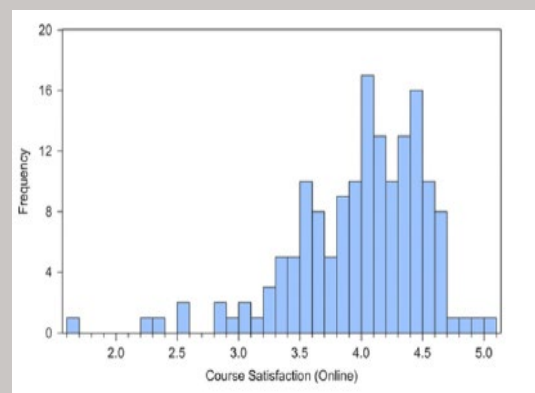
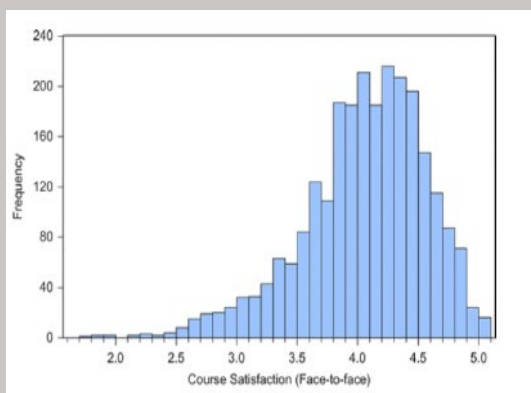
The Future of English Teaching

Kelly Hart
September 20, 2018

Asian countries have a problem. There are not enough native English speaking teachers to meet the demand. For this reason, Cindy Mi started a company called VIPKid in 2011 through which native English speakers could have online video-call based teaching sessions (Lunden). The demand was so great another company with the same premise began in 2013, founded by Hui Zhi (Jones). While these companies are filling the need for native English speakers in their countries, studies have yet to consider what the lack of the in-person human interaction

element does to English teaching. For learning the ways of English grammar and spelling, a non-classroom based setting may be able to fill those requirements, but when it comes to actually learning English, as with any language, immersion is key. One simply cannot get immersion in a language from an hour a day video-call with a native speaker. While some may claim there is little difference between an hour-a-day video-call lesson and an hour-a-day in-person lesson, I argue there is a tremendous difference. The classroom setting, versus a video-call setting, engages students in a conversational manner that online video-calls cannot replicate.

In a study on course satisfaction in face-to-face instruction versus online instruction, data indicate students feel more satisfied with face-to-face instruction versus online instruction and that, "online teaching is less well received by students" (Guest, Rohde, Selvanathan, Soesmanto np). The following graphs display the data and indicate each responding student's satisfaction with both instructional methods:




So, why are students displeased? What is it about online instruction versus face-to-face instruction that leaves a student dissatisfied with their experiences? The level of human engagement in a social setting is lacking from online instruction. Video-call teaching and tutoring tends to be one-on-one, but the social aspect of learning in language is valuable and lost in these video calls. Being able to immersively study a language with peers, using the language amongst those studying with you, is invaluable.

Recently, Japan has been designing artificial intelligences to teach English in its classrooms. A robot would be the instructor of the class. Details regarding the breadth of knowledge this technology would be teaching has yet to be revealed, but one may suspect that applications such

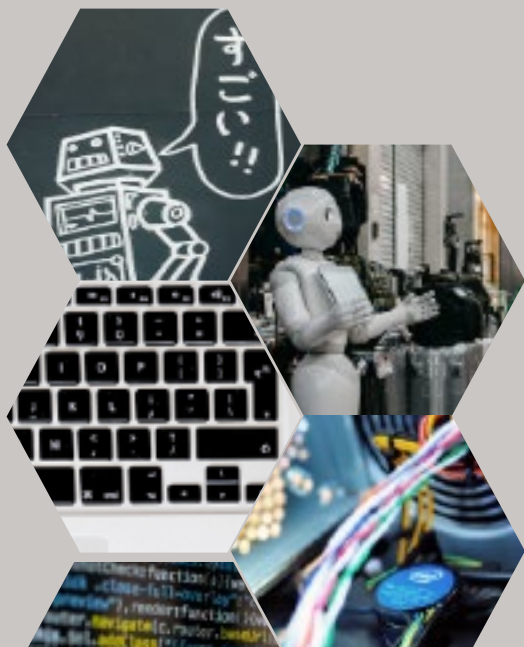


A collage of images related to artificial intelligence and robotics. The images are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with some overlapping. The images include: a person pointing their finger, a robot head with a screen for a face, a circuit board, a person's neck, a green digital background, a robot face, a person's mouth, and a person in a virtual environment.

A collage of five hexagonal images arranged in a circular pattern. The images include: a close-up of a human eye, the Matrix digital rain effect, a computer keyboard, a close-up of a mouth, and a silhouette of a person in a digital environment.



As for the latter, for now, it would seem only science fiction can speculate.



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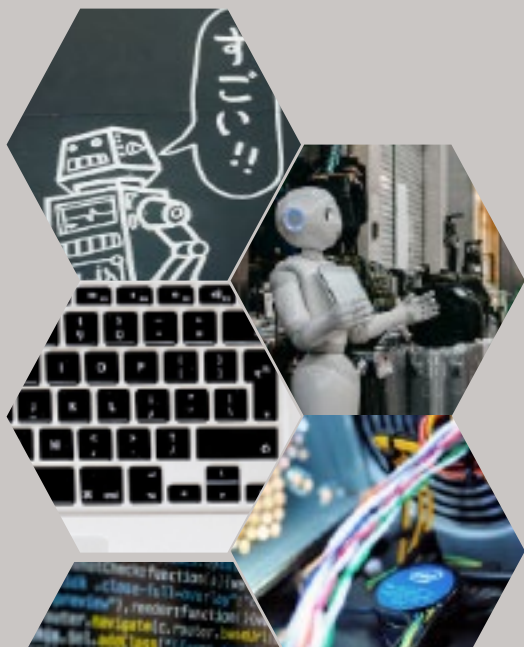


Rhetorical Choices Reflection

When designing my editorial I was brand new at InDesign and I've never professed to have an eye for design at all, in anything. My idea was to create something machina-esque with a computer and technology motif utilizing the hexagon shape in the frame options. I wanted to go for some sort of retro-90s style that still played with themes of technology. I image my editorial would go into a technology magazine and the target audience would be those with an interest in technological advances and perhaps science-fiction.

Trying to narrow down a topic that dealt both with some sort of ecology and something that pertained to tutoring and the writing center was extremely difficult for me. At the same time we are also discussing the future, the bigger picture, and digital media and mediums. This all tossed around in my mind with my own personal interests in language and foreign language study for a long time until I encountered an article discussing the future of English teaching in Japan being handed over to robots and artificial intelligences. I tried to think of how such a thing would apply to English teaching and tutoring and ask, and perhaps answer, some of the questions surrounding what is lost if our language-learning is handed over to robots and AIs. Unfortunately, as this is all still rather new and in development, I was unable to find very much pertaining to AIs specifically, but I did find more on online instruction as that has been around for longer. It's certainly a topic I'm curious to keep an eye on as the years progress and the technology is further improved upon. The graphs I used indicate student satisfaction in face-to-face versus online instruction and I wanted to speculate on whether or not that data may also one day be applied to human instruction versus robotic instruction.

As for those who are unlikely to enjoy my editorial I would imagine that to be anybody with a better grasp on design and how to use InDesign. As well as, perhaps, individuals who are not into a 90s technology theme attempt. I recognize the font is probably a little difficult and perhaps small, but I chose it to try and match the theme that I was going for. Also, individuals hoping for a bit more data or sources on artificial intelligence would likely be disappointed as that technology has not progressed enough for us to get hard data involving human-robotic interaction.



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