

New Language Learning & Teaching Environments

HAYO REINDERS  
STEPHEN RYAN & SACHIKO NAKAO

# Innovation in Language Learning & Teaching

The Case Of **Japan**

## **The book project**

It is said that innovation does not exist until it is implemented in practice. This book therefore investigates the ways in which new developments in areas of language teaching practice, such as policy-making, planning, methodology and the use of educational technology, spread globally and are adopted, rejected or adapted locally, in the Japanese context. By looking at the drivers, stakeholders, obstacles and affordances in one particular national context, it is possible to gain a deeper insight into the ways in which processes of change occur. This will help anyone involved in language development, from curriculum reform to materials development, and from programme evaluation to the setting of assessment standards.

The chapters in this book cover all aspects of language education in Japan, from early childhood through tertiary level in both private and public education to adult learning settings, as well as innovations at local, regional and national levels.

The book will be of particular interest to those involved in managing change in language education that attempts to mediate between global trends and local needs.

Japan in particular is responding to a large number of significant challenges, including its ageing population, the effects of globalisation and the need for lifelong learning, as well as concerns about the quality of its language education system.

Local responses to these changes have been varied and dynamic. Areas that have seen particularly significant changes are those that will be familiar to readers from many contexts around the world, including the integration of technology, the search for more effective teaching methodologies, the benchmarking of language education outcomes against global indicators, and the significant increase in the number of bilingual and international schools and programmes, at all levels from primary to tertiary education.

These changes have prompted intense debate and a fundamental reconsideration of the roles and forms of language education, with both uncertainty and promise for the future. As many countries have experienced similar changes in recent years, the well-documented experiences and lessons learned from this fast-changing country will provide invaluable information to better plan, implement and support developments elsewhere.

Therefore, some of the questions this book answers include:

Where does the impetus for educational change in Japan originate?

Why do some changes gain traction while others do not?

Who are the stakeholders in and drivers of these changes?

And why are some changes implemented successfully, whereas others fail?

## **Call for Chapters**

We are inviting chapters for inclusion in this book project. Chapters will be between 4000-7000 words in length and address an innovation in the context of language education in Japan, or the teaching of Japanese learners overseas. All aspects of language education will be considered, at all levels. We are particularly interested in including the experiences of researchers and teachers working in the private sector, as well as those working with younger learners.

Topics that must be covered in each chapter include:

- The area of innovation (e.g. ‘Technology’)
- Impetus for the innovation
- Information about the specific context
- What worked and what did not?
- Lessons learned

Each chapter is followed by a number of discussion questions to encourage readers to make links with other chapters in the book and to develop a clear understanding of the drivers of innovation.

### **Practical information**

Abstracts of between 200-300 words are due by February 11 with final chapter is due by November 5. Our aim is to publish the book in the ‘new language learning and teaching environments’ series edited by Hayo Reinders and published by Palgrave Macmillan. Please note that the book project is subject to review by the publisher. Also note that acceptance of your abstract does not mean acceptance of your full chapter.

For questions about this project, please contact  
Hayo Reinders ([info@innovationinteaching.org](mailto:info@innovationinteaching.org))

## Editors

Dr. Hayo Reinders ([www.innovationinteaching.org](http://www.innovationinteaching.org)) is Professor of Education and Head of Department at Unitec in New Zealand and Tesol Professor/Director of the doctoral programme at Anaheim University in the United States. Hayo has worked in Japan on many occasions. He is Editor-in-Chief of the journal 'Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching'. Hayo's interests are in educational technology, learner autonomy, and out-of-class learning. He has published over 20 books, of which the most recent ones are on teaching methodologies, digital games, and second language acquisition. He edits a book series on 'New Language Learning and Teaching Environments' for Palgrave Macmillan.

Stephen Ryan has been involved in language education for over 25 years and for most of that time he has been based in Japan. He is currently a professor in the School of Culture, Media and Society at Waseda University in Tokyo. His research and publications cover various aspects of psychology in language learning, with his most recent books being *The Psychology of the Language Learner Revisited*, co-authored with Zoltán Dörnyei (Routledge) and *Exploring Psychology in Language Learning and Teaching*, co-authored with Marion Williams and Sarah Mercer (Oxford University Press).

Sachiko Nakao is a lecturer at Kyushu Sangyo University in Japan and a researcher in the areas of the psychology of language learning and TBLT. She holds an MA in TESOL from Anaheim University and is currently pursuing her PhD, looking at the affective aspects in the development of new language learning environments.