

A Trial of Foreign Language Education through Cooperative Distance Learning

Due to drastic downsizing and rapid expansion of broadband Internet access, the Internet learning environment is about to be realized at the personal level at home and abroad. Language education in this environment, especially computer-supported cooperative learning (CSCL), has been actively conducted, with more inter-learner communication and collaborative learning made through computer networks. We have made it possible to provide a learning environment closer to real classroom situations. Following the trend toward CSCL, we had collaborative lessons every three weeks for Taiwanese university students majoring in Japanese and Japanese students majoring in Chinese in a multimedia language education environment for a semester starting in October 2007. What makes this trial distinctive is the collaborative learning environment where all the participants can give native peer support to the students over the network while they are themselves learners. During the lessons, we had presentations, person-to-person communication, dictations of dialogues, reviews of lessons, and so on. In this presentation, we will give the changes in the keenness and the proficiency developments of the participants in the Japan-Taiwan cooperative distance learning, based on the analysis of the conversations made and questionnaires. We will also review and evaluate the lessons we have conducted.