



Integrating Video Conferencing in Foreign Language Education: the Case of Soliya Connect Program at the University of Jordan

Zahra Mustafa Awad, Hussein Yagi

University of Jordan (Jordan)

Abstract

This research project is an attempt to verify the value of integrating videoconferencing in foreign language courses. It is also a linguistic study of Jordanian University students' performance in a video chat program, the Connect Program, sponsored by the American NGO, Soliya. It checks empirically the degree of improvement in their language skills in terms of fluency and accuracy. The research also looks into students' attitude towards the different other. The project was conducted in two stages. In the first stage; the program was integrated in a Public Speaking course usually taken by third and fourth year students majoring in Applied English. In the second stage, first and second year students majoring in English Literature and Applied English participated in the program through a Pronunciation course. The methodology used included (1) a quantitative analysis of pre- and post-questionnaires on attitude, of pre- and post-TOEFL IBT speaking performance, and of video chat transcripts; and (2) a qualitative analysis of structured interviews, and of students' diary entries. The first stage was completed, but the second is still in progress. The results of the first stage indicated that there has been a significant improvement in students' EFL proficiency after participating in the program. It was found that the frequency of errors significantly decreased and their types were of a less serious nature. In addition, there was noticeable improvement in the students' fluency after participation in the program. The results also showed that Soliya's Connect Program has had a significant impact on the participants' attitudes towards Western cultures.

The significance of this research stems from the implications of integrating videoconferencing in foreign language training in terms of education delivery and future international involvement in cyber forums.