Contribution ID: **44**   Type: **Research Presentation (30 minutes)**

The Possibility of English Practice with Peers in VR : A Case Study of the iTL VR Café

Saturday, 18 May 2024 16:20 (30 minutes)

The benefits of VR for English education such as increasing engagement (Hu-Au & Lee, 2017), reducing affective filter (Schwienhorst, 2020), and public speaking anxiety (Godefridi et al., 2021), and raising students' motivation (Tai, Chen, & Todd, 2020) have been reported. This presentation details a pilot study on the iTL VR café, focusing on the utilization of Virtual Reality (VR) for English practice. iTL means Information Technology and Law, which is a nickname for our department. Although the students at iTL hope to improve their speaking skills, the number of English classes offered at the department is limited. To find a solution, we decided to create a space in a VR platform, Spatial, where students can practice English with other students in a relaxed manner. Adopting the concept of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), proficient English-speaking university students led VR sessions to support their peers' English-speaking practice. Eight students participated in six sessions in English practice in the VR platform. A speaking test was conducted before and after the six sessions. Also, pre and post questionnaires were collected. The results showed that the students were able to enjoy the English practice, be motivated in learning English, and lower their foreign language anxiety though no improvement was observed in the post speaking test. Referring to the potential of creating avatar-based learning spaces among students for autonomous learning and engagement (MEXT, 2020), we will explore the feasibility of implementing a VR café for English practice. This discussion will include its benefits, challenges, and potential, as reflected in the pilot study. Additionally, the presentation will touch upon future directions, such as expanding the study to include more participants and sessions, and the possibility of integrating telecollaboration with students at international universities into the iTL VR café.

Keywords

Virtual Reality, Socio Cultural Theory, Foreign Language Anxiety

Primary author: Dr SAITO, Yukie (Chuo University)

Co-authors: Ms NISHIDA, Reia (Chuo University);   Ms TSUDA, Shiori (Chuo University)

Presenters: Ms NISHIDA, Reia (Chuo University);   Ms TSUDA, Shiori (Chuo University);   Dr SAITO, Yukie (Chuo University)

Session Classification: DN 404: Innovative Teaching Using Technology

Track Classification: General CALL: Innovative Teaching Using Technology