

Non-formal Education for a Culturally Isolated Student in a Remote Area: The Case of a Thai Student Who Received Learning Assistance via the Internet

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This article describes how a language minority student developed through flexible online learning assistance for the entrance examination of a Japanese public high school. The simple camera function of a digital tablet helped the isolated Thai student attain success in developing academic skills and self-esteem. The case also shows the insight that small public schools and local governments with few resources in remote areas can have advantages thanks to the tablet and the internet.

Keywords: immigrant; ICT; remote education; non-formal education; learning assistance; empowerment

Introduction

High school entrance examinations are one of the biggest events for students in Japanese public schools: many of them experience the exam as their first official event, and its result decides the rest of their school life and future. Junior high school generally provides all Japanese students with opportunities to prepare for the examination, while compulsory school education from grade one to nine accepts but does not target non-Japanese students resident in Japan. Japanese teachers try their best to assist many non-Japanese students in public schools for the examination. But low-skilled immigrants do not always go on to further education, and parents with low educational attainment often have less motivation for their children's education. These parents cannot always support their children's learning at home, and Japanese language skills are the main issue for immigrants' schooling.

There are three problems which can be identified for instruction for non-Japanese. The first is shared information. The approach tends to be general for all immigrants, not for specific purposes such as entrance examinations, even though language assistance is available. With certain Japanese language textbooks, the contents are so broad that instructors actually need to

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customize teaching materials for the learners' needs. Language support for non-Japanese students is increasing in public schools in Japan (MEXT, n.d.). Books and publications are shared among teachers for Japanese lessons, but this happens only in areas where many non-Japanese and their supporters live.

The second is little attention paid to minority languages. Chinese, Korean, English, and Portuguese are common foreign languages for the Japanese society, and many supporters are available. But there are very few supporters of minority languages such as Thai, Tagalog, Malay, Indonesian, Bengali, Pashto, and etc. This problem sometimes comes with geographical difference. Urban places have more of a variety of language supporters and Japanese instructors, but there are very few in remote areas.

The last problem, or a combination of the two problems above, is very difficult to deal with. When a language minority student comes to school in a remote area where no teacher has support experience, generalized learning materials can hardly help either teachers or the student. For example, a child came from Thailand to live with his mother in a remote area in Japan. No other Thai people live nearby and the school has never experienced teaching Japanese as a second language. The local Board of Education has no budget for interpreting or teaching assistance.

How can then technology help a non-Japanese student surrounded by inexperienced teachers if he or she has few Japanese skills and is under great pressure for entrance examinations? Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is sometimes regarded as a solution beyond time and space, although there are problems like families' digital divides and children's addiction to digital entertainment. ICT can be either an accelerator to widen the gap between the resource-rich and the poor or a potential tool to overcome the gap.

Thus, this article tries to describe how a language minority student developed through non-formal learning assistance, to analyze the case of tablet-mediated assistance for learning via the internet, and to show the potential of devices when resources are decreasing but intercultural situations are increasing. The case study shows that the Thai student, studying at a junior high school in a remote area, changed his attitudes to study and self-esteem through receiving learning assistance via the internet. The case study illustrates a trial of technical and morale support by regular virtual communication. The tablet's simple webcam function was a bridge between the Thai student and supporters.

Literature Review and Framework of Study

1. Non-formal Education

The term non-formal education did not have any cultural history (Rogers, 2004: 78). However, the definition is generally understood as "any organized educational activity outside the established formal system – whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity – that is intended to serve identified learning clienteles and learning objectives (Coombs et al, 1973: 10-11)." Compared to formal education, often equated with school education, non-formal education (NFE) is more contextualized and flexible and occurs regardless of location.

Therefore, NFE is semi-structured and has educational intentions but is not always autho-

rized by official organizations (Maruyama & Ohta, 2013). Teaching and learning sides are basically set, while teachers sometimes learn from learners¹. The main characteristic of NFE is its flexibility: the teaching side can change the materials and methods depending on the context of the learning side and environment. Teaching materials are chosen or made by the teaching side to match the level of the learning side's understanding much more than formal education.

Collins & Halverson (2009) point out that the age of learning changed historically from apprenticeship to national service and then to individual lifelong learning with computer-mediated learning opportunities today. When public school was for the privileged, learning opportunities were responsible for parents to succeed to their occupations. The school system provided common contents and standardized evaluation. The age of the information network sets the environment for individuals to learn what each wants and needs, like an apprenticeship but more flexible regarding time and place. Thus, this article considers individual teaching and learning with a remote control ICT device as NFE.

2. School Environment

Generally speaking, Asian parents are strongly supportive of their children's education. Bankston III et. al (2014) illustrates that immigrant students from Asian countries drop out of school far less often than Mexican immigrants in the United States because the support of their parents differs. The Japanese school environment is different again, but Japanese parents generally place importance on their children's educational environment.

Japanese schools are, however, not used to intercultural and flexible settings yet. Tsuneyoshi (2003) explains that the classroom community develops students' relationships and class management in Japan. When students are comfortable with the rules or norms of the community, they experience fulfillment in their school life. But if a student does not fit there, he or she may feel embarrassed and the classroom will offer nowhere to escape (p.29). She shows that an international student is treated the same as "all the other Japanese students" when he or she becomes able to use daily Japanese, and she also points out that the experiences of international mobility and racial difference disappear in the classroom (p.145). The Japanese school structure expects students to be thinking of others with the teacher's tacit direction. School environments tend to have an unconscious assimilation orientation to the majority domain. The typical example is a school has "adaptation" class for those who have different backgrounds and/or native languages other than Japanese.

Culture also influences Thai student's attitude. House & Pinyuchon (1998) report that Thai Americans are not always willing to change their values due to religious beliefs, and have the language barrier as a large problem in the United States. They also point out that Thai society considers harmony to be a significant social value, so that "*Mai Pen Rai*" meaning "never mind" or "it is OK" conveys the message that mistakes and inconveniences are not problems (p.197). Thai immigrants in Japan may not look very active to solve the problems in their environments, even though they have severe language problems.

On the other side of the coin, education for international understanding and intercultural education is becoming more common in cities with many non-Japanese residents. Many labor immigrants sometimes send their children to local schools, and local government try hard to match their needs to schools' requests. Teachers also study hard to respond to these needs:

teacher training courses in most teachers' colleges in Japan do not yet require study of these issues, compared to Europe².

3. Orientation and Geographical Condition

This study focuses on an isolated area and school with a minority-oriented approach, because few experiences of the intercultural learning environment are shared. On the one hand, Japanese public schools are designed for the Japanese majority, and schools do not have an official system to take care of non-Japanese students. On the other, the recent education practice for non-Japanese is accumulating experiences of a minority-oriented approach where minority students are present in numbers. But if only a few such students are enrolled, as in isolated areas, they are expected to adjust themselves to the Japanese norms. If the school system is designed only for Japanese nationals and the school expects its students to follow the explicit rules and tacit norms as a part of Japanese culture, non-Japanese students have few alternative choices.

With majority/minority orientation and areas of minority presence on two axes, Figure 1 shows four categories of conditions and approaches. Quadrants I and II refer to the present domain of Japanese school environments, providing standardized education for the Japanese majority and paying little attention to ethnic and linguistic minorities. III represents the practice of international and intercultural education due to the presence of minority students. However, IV indicates the most difficult situation for two reasons. One is the lack of budget of local education board cover the needs of the minority. The other is few resources available, such as skilled instructors or counsellors and interpreters/translators of minority languages. The case study in this article is an example of IV, where a language minority student came to school and no teachers could treat him the same as other Japanese students.

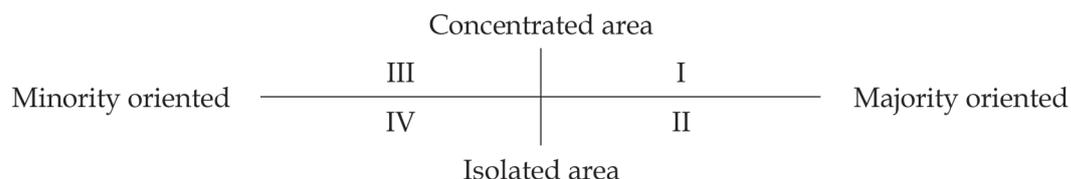


Figure 1 Geographical condition and approach

Case Study

1. Project Design and Technical Preparation

The National Institute for Educational Policy Research (NIER), belongs to the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT), has conducted a two-year research project on school education for non-Japanese students since April 2013. NIER identified the need of assistance for non-Japanese students in remote areas and started an assistance program for one Thai junior high school student from September 2013 to March 2014³.

The case in this article is a part of the project conducted with the cooperation of the Boards

of Education of X City and Y Prefecture in Eastern Japan. Z Junior High School accepted three students from Thailand. Two of them were eighth graders who had attended Japanese elementary schools, so that they had no problem with the medium of lessons. One student, MT, had come to Z directly from Thailand with his mother. He was in grade nine, the last academic year of junior high school, and hoped to continue his study in public high school by taking the entrance examinations of Y Prefecture. The problem for MT was Japanese use in subject lessons and examination, and low confidence because of weak language skills, although he understood daily colloquial expressions.

The main problem for X City and Z School was that the officials and school principal could find no language support for the Thai student MT to catch up with lessons and prepare for the entrance examination. There were very few Thai people living close to X City who could interpret and translate subject knowledge like scientific terms between Thai and Japanese. Another problem was how the local BOE could save budget and evaluate its effects if money were used for a foreign student.

NIER designed remote assistance for MT through a set of ICT devices with a Thai Ph.D. candidate, CH, from Tsukuba University, located 50 km away from Z, and an expert instructor, HF, who had worked with non-Japanese students in Tokyo for more than 30 years. On September 10th, 2013, MT spent about three hours consulting with HF on subject lessons and with the author on his school life, while CH interpreted some phrases when MT did not understand.

The device used was an Apple iPad tablet with a video call function. It connects its users for real time communication by the cellular phone network. Much like a phone call, one user can call another user with just a click even if the receiver's iPad is not active. The iPad has two built-in cameras in front and rear, and the users switch between them during the call. The resolution of the camera is good enough to discern handwritten notes and textbook contents at close range. NIER bought the two iPads with two-year fixed service from KDDI⁴. The prize for one was 173,000 yen. This price seemed high, but it was not a large expense for the local BOE when calculating a two-year budget allocation for deployment of supporters and payment for an adviser/expert⁵.

2. Learning Contents

Having coordinated with Z School after the consultation, HF made a plan for subject lessons support in order for MT to pass the entrance examination to a prefectural high school in Y. HF developed 22 units of supplemental learning material customized for MT, focusing mainly on MT's weak point of mathematics. Getting a high score in mathematics after limited study before the entrance examination was easier than other subjects, according to HF's past experience with 1200 non-Japanese children. Table 1 shows the schedule of learning topics and opportunities to talk about school life between MT and the interpreting assistant CH during the period of the program. Some parts of the material were translated by CH and shared with MT beforehand.

MT turned on the iPad's webcam and practiced unit exercise together with CH's instruction in their mother tongue via video call weekly. MT used a special education classroom or a meeting room at school, and CH usually went online at her home near her university. Lessons usually took place third period Wednesday mornings, for 50 minutes, during which time MT

Table 1 Schedule and contents of assistance

<i>Date</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Learning contents</i>	<i>Talk about school life</i>
2013/09/10	0	Consultation on learning plan	Yes (direct interview)
2013/09/18	1	Device check, schedule & plans confirmed	Yes
2013/9/25	2	Device trouble, no lesson	NA
2013/10/02	3	Math, Japanese & vocabulary for exam*	Yes
2013/10/9	4	Math, Japanese & vocabulary for exam	No
2013/10/17	5	Math	No
2013/10/23	6	Math, Japanese & vocabulary for exam	Yes
2013/10/30	7	Math	No
2013/11/06	8	Math & Japanese	No
2013/11/13 to 12/18	9 to 14	Math & vocabulary for exam	No
2014/1/7	15	Math, English, & vocabulary for exam	Yes
2014/1/15 & 1/22	16 & 17	Math, English, & vocabulary for exam	No
2014/1/29	18	Math & English	No
2014/2/5 to 2/18	19 to 21	Math test & English test	No
2014/2/26	22	Social studies & how to study alone	Yes
2014/3/7	NA	NA	Yes (direct interview)

*Vocabulary for exam is the Japanese frequently used in texts and lines in examination.

was separated from his classmates. MT received these 22 special lessons from September 18 to February 26; the primary entrance examination was on February 12 and 13, testing subject knowledge, and the secondary examination on February 28, evaluating applicants' writing skills and background. CH sent NIER a report after each weekly unit, consisting of the content studied and her impressions of MT at the time.

3. Self-esteem and Research Limitations

To understand MT's school life, the first interview was held in consultation at the beginning of the program and the second was at the end, as shown in Table 1. In the September interview, the author sat together with MT and asked informally about his daily life, school and study environments, and his family. After an hour of this informal discussion, the author asked for permission to ask questions about his self-esteem in a semi-structured interview. The author read out 22 questions, categorized into three domains of "myself," "my abilities," and "relationships with others" as shown in Table 2. These were originally developed for Japanese students in Tokyo by the Tokyo metropolitan government⁶. MT chose one of four responses for each question (Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, and Disagree). His selections were coded from one to four, and the average within the domain was calculated. When the questions seemed hard for him to understand, the author added extra explanations as well as interpretation by CH. These questions were read out again to him at the end in March, and the average scores of selections were compared. The reason why the program used this set of questions was that the school explained that according to MT's teachers, his low self-esteem disturbed his motivation to study and led to a vicious cycle.

The limitations of this study were, firstly, methodological. The data was based on the contents of reports by the Thai interpreter CH after every unit and semi-structured interviews conducted at the beginning and the end, but not on observations at school which should be

Table 2 Questions about self-esteem

<i>Myself</i>	<i>My abilities</i>	<i>Relationships with others</i>
I am satisfied with my present self.	I can speak up when I am right even if others are different	I can listen to someone's opinion
I like myself	I have a lot of potential	I would like to contribute to other people
I sometimes think I am worthless.*	I can trust my judgment and actions.	I can imagine other people's feelings
I think my existence is important.	I know my own strengths and weaknesses	I have someone who can understand me
I do not like to present myself. *	I have more advantages than others	I act with responsibility so as not to trouble anyone else
I have many good points.	I want to decide what to do for myself	I am thankful to people around me because they care about me
I feel useless to anyone. *	My personality is important.	I have someone who needs me
I am worth as much as other people.		

* *Reversed items*

very important regarding the process of MT's development. The second concern was that the case involved only one Thai student for the second half of the academic year. The final limitation was that the scale of the questions in the interview was originally for Japanese students in Tokyo. Some questions could be hard for MT to understand clearly in September 2013, and he must have worried very much about what would happen when many unknown adults from authority came to interview him, although the author tried very hard to use friendly words and speech to relax him. But he better understood the same questions asked in March 2014, and this provided a comparison between pre- and post-program.

Results

1. Progress for Examination

The result of MT's efforts was successful. He passed the primary entrance examination, although all the supporters and school teachers never thought he could and had originally planned for the secondary exam at the end of February because his subject knowledge and skills looked too low in September. This "happy ending" changed the contents of the last unit to preparation not for the examination but for high school life, in lessons shown in Table 1 after February 19 when his examination success was officially announced.

There were also clear changes observed in the process of the learning support. The interpreter and virtual assistant CH reported MT's change in both his understanding of subjects and his attitude after every unit. From the reports, we can pick up some remarkable changes. At the early stage, MT had little confidence in himself, and long sentences in questions prevented him from solving mathematics problems:

I [CH] said to him [MT] 'You already have skills and are trying very hard so far' to encourage him to study. I also told him to speed up his examination skills. He asked about five subjects for the entrance examination and mentioned that mathematics was quite hard, especially the questions with long Japanese sentences. (Report on 2013/10/17, Unit 5)

MT did not read the details of questions but only judged what to do by scanning the mathematical signs. If the question was long, he was unwilling to attempt it. (2013/10/23, Unit 6)

MT looked isolated because he did not have an informant to check daily expressions in school: MT already understood some mathematics formulae but misunderstood words and expressions in Japanese. For example, he understood the colloquial ‘*hayaru* [being in fashion]’ as ‘*ha yaru* [be doing]’. (2013/11/6, Unit 8)

However, when he found the supplementary learning material had the same contents as school tests, he started to recognize its importance.

MT told me [CH] he should have studied this material because he had seen similar mathematics problems on school tests. (2013/11/10, Unit 10)

He started to involve himself more, because answering mathematics questions properly built up his confidence and his interest seemed to rise:

MT did not know how to read the *kanji* [Chinese characters] in a problem but succeeded in finding the right answer...By and large, right answers increased. He still did not read well. His unwillingness to study mathematics mitigated and he looked more confident... He asked for instruction about the Pythagoras theorem. (2013/12/11, Unit 13)

The supporters CH and HF found that MT’s comprehension had increased and could be improved more with more effort. But CH and HF still thought Japanese reading was a problem, especially his reading habits:

Comprehension level was 80 to 90% of problem sentences. When I [CH] asked MT to express the text in Thai, he forgot about right angles... It is still not easy for him to understand all the text, but he seemed to find an important point to solve problems. Need more practice. (2014/1/7, Unit 15)

MT avoided long texts in either Japanese or English. I [CH] worry about whether he could answer questions which require reading long texts. (2014/1/29, Unit 18)

There was a mental struggle between MT who seemed to feel there was no problem and CH who wanted to make sure. CH seemed to feel embarrassed with MT’s unexpected results on an English grammar quiz because there was only a week left before the entrance examination on February 12:

MT explained he was good at English but I [CH] had to doubt it. English lessons in the classroom must be in Japanese, especially grammar, so that he could hardly understand the grammar properly... I suggested him make a reflection note for himself after every lesson. (2014/2/5, Unit 19)

No one honestly believed MT would be able to pass the primary examination. This situation created tension shared among adult supporters, but the tension worked toward a good end. The reason MT did not think very seriously about the primary exam was that there was a second special examination for non-Japanese:

MT did not worry about the entrance examination because he said ‘Prefecture Y requires

only writing and interview for non-Japanese who have been here less than three years.’
(2014/2/10, Unit 20)

2. Change in Self-esteem

Compared to the successful result of passing the entrance examination, obvious developments in self-esteem or school life were hard to observe. Positive responses increased by and large in all three domains of self-esteem questions. The largest change was confirmed in the aspect of relationships with others (from 2.43 in 2013 to 3.14 in 2014), and the second was in his ability (2.71 to 3.14). The slightest change was in the perception of others about himself (2.88 to 3.00). Figure 2 shows the attitude change of MT from September 2013 to March 2014.

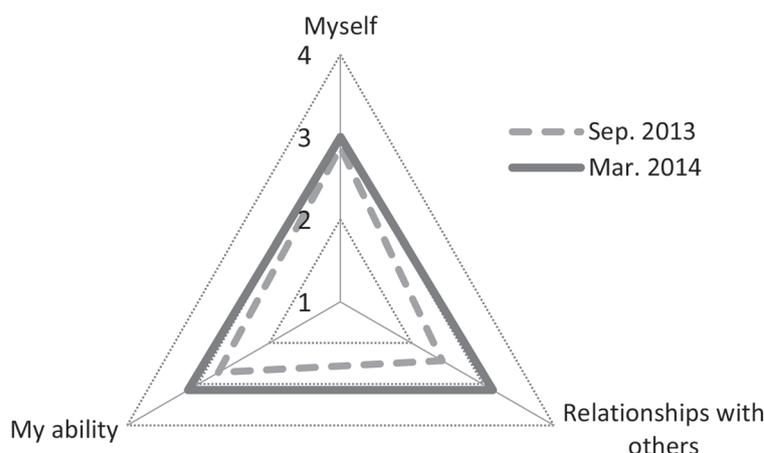


Figure 2 Change of attitude to the self

We could read the meanings of changes with limited conditions, and there were some changes within each domain. A two-step change occurred from “Somewhat disagree” to “Agree” in the item “I am thankful to people around me because they care about me” in the relationships domain. The same was in “I want to decide what to do for myself” and “My personality is important” in myself, and in “I am worth as much as other people” in the perception domain. At the same time, there was a slight one-step fall from “Agree” to “Somewhat agree” in “I have a lot of potential” in “Myself,” and from “Somewhat agree” to “Somewhat disagree” in “I can trust my judgment and actions” in “Myself” and in “I am satisfied with my present self” in perception.

In addition to this, changes in communication were also observed at the final direct interview in March 2014. MT spoke only a few words when CH and the author encouraged him to talk about his surroundings in September 2013. He explained how he came to Japan and what he wanted to become in the future at the end of the September interview, but it took almost two hours for him to talk about his personal affairs. The March interview was much smoother because he had already passed the examination and CH was with us. MT really seemed to trust CH during the interview. For example, he tried to explain something to the author but asked for

help from CH to make it clear in Japanese; CH and he also laughed together in their mother tongue.

His facial expression also changed a great deal. It had seemed that MT tried to use smiling to avoid deep communication in September, but he naturally laughed in March. He also spoke up proudly in front of teachers in a meeting room where adult people in authority and the school principal were present.

Discussion

1. Non-formal Education through Remote Access

We tend to put all immigrants into the same category, and perhaps want to believe the perfect model exists for them. The reality is far from the model, and each teacher makes tremendous efforts to deal with every student at every moment. If school environments are in Quadrants I and II as shown in Figure 1, most teachers repeat the same approach to the non-Japanese students without supplemental learning materials. Those who drop out of the mainstream class are separated from the “normal” classroom and are expected to catch up in “adaptation” classes or sometimes to be sent to a lower grade classroom. In the environment of Quadrant III, where many non-Japanese students are present, more teachers take various approaches for the Japanese and non-Japanese students, even though different students are categorized into one or a few ethnic or language groups.

The Quadrant IV situation has the intention to support the minority students but has few resources, skills or systems. The present case shows a possibility of non-formal education by remote interaction. The veteran instructor HF developed the learning materials for MT and communicated with CH to check points of understanding in each subject. CH, a highly educated Thai native, prepared Thai translations for instruction. The veteran of instructing non-Japanese flexibly created a set of learning materials suitable for the language minority student. An educated native speaker of the student’s mother tongue translated the subject contents and gave virtual instruction via the internet. This model is non-formal education by remote access, flexible contents, and educational intention, although it was not an official program of the school.

The simple functions of the tablet worked for nothing but face-to-face communication between student and assistant. The latest tablets offer the advantage of many functions for learning conditions such as digital textbooks, group chat, and Web browsing with multiple applications. The tablet in this study was chosen only for webcam communication to explain subject contents and receive the student’s feedback, and it was easier to use than a computer. This is a new format of schooling, as Collins & Halverson (2009) show, and the simple tablet functions can create more stable learning environments in remote areas where teaching resources and skills are not available nearby.

ICT tools can connect isolated people. Minorities can be empowered by support beyond borders with ICT. Support for language minority students requires appropriate customized contents of Japanese school lessons, knowledge of relevant language such as unique expressions in subjects and examinations, and trusting relationships based on regular communication. Distance is still a serious issue for Japan where human resources are decreasing but concentrating in urban areas. However, the case study shows that a simple ICT tool can overcome

distance if conditions are properly set.

2. Empowerment of the Isolated

Language skills and confidence were related in this study. For example, MT understood the rules of Japanese expressions on tests with vocabulary he learned in the virtual instruction, and his higher scores on daily tests as a result of the instruction built up his confidence and motivation to study more. Because his self-esteem was low at the initial stage, the whole set was designed to develop his confidence implicitly. The emotional aspects of learning are important for immigrant students, because confidence is a source of emotional security bolstering their dignity (Tananuraksakul & Hall, 2011). In addition, CH encouraged MT's motivation beyond the learning materials. Cummins (1986) summarizes that the performance of language minority students increases when their culture is incorporated into the learning setting:

...language-minority students' educational progress is strongly influenced by the extent to which individual educators become advocates for the promotion of students' linguistic talents, actively encourage community participation in developing students' academic and cultural resources, and implement pedagogical approaches that succeed in liberating students from instructional dependence (p.32).

When customized learning materials were developed and flexibly modified, the feedback from MT was important input. This process was learner participation. Fetterman (2001) suggests that participants can be empowered when they get involved in the process of identifying their problems and evaluating themselves. Evaluation sometimes requires a more authentic and holistic approach, but the entrance examination system does not allow the space. Raising MT's confidence was a part of empowerment, and a virtuous cycle between confidence and high academic performance appeared.

We must not overlook the trust between MT and CH for support of that cycle at the same time. Sharing weekly communication for a half year built up their trust. For example, MT did not have an informant or a friend to check his daily Japanese expressions, because of Thai harmony (House & Pinyuchon, 1998), but the supporter CH from the same country encouraged him to learn Japanese and subject contents. CH might have remembered her own early experience of learning Japanese and was willing to encourage him. Maruyama (2012) illustrated how socially isolated immigrant women found a space to share their experiences in their mother language and built trusting relationships with other women who had previously come from the same place. The case had a virtual space to share and built trust on regular communication.

Finally, we can point out that the case has the potential to apply to anyone isolated socially and physically. The majority of Japanese teachers can be sympathetic to all types of minorities as long as the minority individuals or groups follow the Japanese rules. When they go beyond the Japanese norms, some teachers may become unsupportive. Maruyama (2007) points out how the Japanese norms influence Japanese people who have different backgrounds:

When a non-Japanese Muslim mother talks with a class teacher about problems for Muslims..., the school authority tends to accept their request as a special case. However, it is much more difficult for a Japanese Muslim mother to receive special consideration... a teacher would ask "What nationality are you?" to the requesting mother... Their request will often be ignored because of the perceived norms of being "Japanese" in society. (p.66).

Conclusion

This article describes how a language minority student developed through flexible online learning assistance. The simple camera function of a digital tablet helped the isolated Thai student attain success in developing not only academic skills but also self-esteem. The case also showed the insight that small public schools and local governments with few resources in remote areas can have advantages with information access. The challenge is how local governments can share their experiences among each other.

The population decline is so fast in Japan that keeping human resources is becoming harder than ever. A vicious cycle appears in remote unpopular areas because more people go to central areas and remote areas lose their attraction, but schools must keep the same quality of education. In the name of efficient management, will Japanese schools choose to cut off the potential of diversity brought from students who have different backgrounds and to enforce the majority rules upon them?

The motion to globalization can hardly stop today. Japan will be more culturally diverse tomorrow. When children are decreasing and lifelong learners are ageing, recognizing individual learners' needs will be more important than ever before. The experiences in Quadrant III can be shared with IV via the internet beyond the distance. When Quadrant I and II can flexibly learn from III and IV, intercultural settings in school will start in Japan and the majority will discover the diverse values of people from different culture.

Acknowledgements

This work was partly supported by a JSPS KAKENHI (Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research, Grant Number 25301053). The author recognizes with gratitude the cooperation of participants in the "Comparative Study of Foreign Students in Japan" project conducted by NIER.

Notes

1. This learning by the teaching side is called informal learning. NFE differs from informal education/learning which includes incidental learning without educational intention and structure.
2. See Eurydice (2004) to compare the requirements for intercultural education in teacher training.
3. NIER made agreements with the school and the Thai student's guardian prior to the program and survey.
4. The second largest mobile phone company. The location of Z was not in a central city and KDDI service assured connectivity, although the iPad sometimes lost connection during video calls, according to CH's reports.
5. NIER also paid CH and OK for consultation and translation.
6. Tokyo Metropolitan School Personnel in Service Training Center (2011). Retrieved August 10, 2013 from http://www.kyoiku-kensyu.metro.tokyo.jp/09seika/reports/files/bulletin/h22/materials/h22_mat01a_02.pdf

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