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メタデータ	言語: jpn 出版者: 公開日: 2019-03-05 キーワード (Ja): キーワード (En): 作成者: 田中, 幸子, 常盤, 僚子, 茂木, 良治, TANAKA, Sachiko, TOKIWA, Ryoko, MOGI, Ryoji メールアドレス: 所属:
URL	https://doi.org/10.15084/00001878

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In collaboration with the “Centre de Linguistique Appliquée de Besançon,” University of Franche-Comté, France, Sophia University organized an experimental distance learning program of French “FR2003”. Using TV conferencing systems and a learning management system, the objectives of this program were to examine the language learning process in a distance learning situation and to establish a well-adapted curriculum for this learning mode. The findings were that whilst IT tools provided the participants with many opportunities for both learning and using the target language, conversely, the learners faced a variety of problems in using these new tools - technical, methodological and affective. To solve the problems and to facilitate the language learning, the role of the mediator was found to be crucial. In this article, we will discuss the roles and competencies which are necessary for a mediator to organize and manage, successfully, distance learning using information technology.

Key words: distance learning program, mediator's role, inter-university collaboration, TV conferencing systems, learning management system