

Autonomous LOTE Tandem Language Exchange

*Fostering Plurilingualism
in Higher Education*

Silvie Převrátlová
Charles University, Prague
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Key concepts

Learner Autonomy

"the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (Holec, 1981; Little, 1997)

LOTEs (Languages Other Than English)

Multilingualism (García & Wei, 2014)

Plurilingualism (Council of Europe, 2001; 2020)

Language Learning Tandem

Informal learning format

- mutual language acquisition
- insights into target culture and community
- authentic communication with peers
- motivation catalyst

Learner autonomy, **collaborative** learning, and **reciprocity** (Brammerts, 2003; Benson, 2011)

Monolingual approach! - Vassallo & Telles, 2011

Course Organisation

Students enroll → language preferences → pairing

Three sessions with the supervisor

1. Introduction: the nature of the course, principles of autonomous learning: self-assessment, goal setting, interdependence, reciprocity, and reflection, course requirements, and Moodle support.
2. Mid-term session: sharing experiences & discussing problems
3. Final session: reflective

In all three sessions: guidelines for the tasks to receive credits (2 ETCS).

Research Questions

1. How do learners express aspects of their plurilingual identities through reflective writing in their tandem diaries?
2. How do learners leverage their plurilingual repertoires in tandem learning, particularly in terms of language awareness and translanguaging?

Participants

24 students enrolled (12 pairs) initially

7 pairs in the sample:

L1 LOTE learning Czech as L4+

L1 Czech learning a LOTE

Languages learned previously

A word cloud visualization showing the frequency of languages learned previously. The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with 'English' being the most prominent word in the center. Other languages include 'Spanish', 'German', 'French', 'Italian', 'Latin', 'Norwegian', 'Czech', 'Turkish', 'Sign Language', 'Ancient Greek', 'Swedish', 'Finnish', and 'Russian'. The words are color-coded: 'English' and 'Spanish' are in dark blue, 'German' is in green, and the others are in light green or yellow.

Norwegian
Czech Spanish
Turkish Sign Language
Ancient Greek English Latin
Italian French Swedish
German Finnish
Russian

Data Sources

- **Language learning diaries**
- **Questionnaires:**
 - language background and goals
 - perceived language interaction
 - final q. – plurilingual approach
- (Lesson recordings)

Duration:

Longitudinal – focus on reflexive practice 1 semester



[illegible]

Data Analysis - Thematic coding

Code	Description
Plurilingual Identity	How learners perceive and construct their linguistic identities, including emotional, cognitive, and social aspects linked to using multiple languages.
Language Awareness	Learners' awareness of cross-linguistic influences, metalinguistic strategies, and how their existing knowledge supports or interferes with new language learning.
Translanguaging	Strategic use of multiple languages in reflection and communication, fluid movement between linguistic resources.

Secondary patterns: Intercultural competence, motivation, social dimension

Plurilingual Identity

Speaking
several
languages is a
part of my
identity.

Learning more
languages
makes me a
better person
genuinely.

Learning a language
comes with
learning about a new
culture and its
customs as well
which is invaluable.

I do carry
importance
in being
European
international
knowing languages

Key Findings: Plurilingual Identity

Languages = integral part of identity

Shape worldview and emotional expression

Enable intercultural connection and self-expression

Language Awareness

The more language studies I had behind the easier picking up a new language became.

The vocabulary of most of the languages I know can somehow and shallowly interact, since a lot of etymologies come from Latin, which is very similar in Spanish, Italian and English. On the other hand, I also found a lot of relations with the Czech language

Latin, French, Spanish, and Portuguese are all related, which helps in learning them.

Some aspects of Czech grammar were completely new for me and differ from the grammar of Romance Languages such as Spanish and Italian. However, other aspects were very similar;

Key Findings: Language Awareness

Awareness of cross-linguistic similarities /
differences

Use of prior language knowledge

Both facilitating and interfering effects

Translanguaging in Journals

Práce s výslovností - Travail sur la prononciation:

1. What was the main topic of the session?

→ Cesky výslovnost.

2. What did I learn?

→ Učil jsem se správně vyslovovat česká písmena a slova. Naučil jsem se rozdíly mezi francouzštinou a češtinou.

3. How did I learn?

→ Daniela écrivait un mot, j'essayais de le prononcer toute seule. Si c'était faux elle me corrigeais.

Translanguaging in Journals

Les thèmes de cette leçon

Système scolaire tchèque et français

- *Jak v Česku tak ve Francii existuje mateřská škola a poté škola základní. Hlavní rozdíl nastává v 11 letech, kdy se v české republice pokračuje ve výuce na základní škole a ve francii nastupují žáci do College. Nároky vysokoškolského studia si jsou velice podobné, ale ve samotné studium je velmi odlišné.*
- En République tchèque comme en France, il y a une école maternelle puis une école primaire. La principale différence intervient à l'âge de 11 ans : en République tchèque, les élèves continuent leurs études à l'école primaire, et en France, ils entrent au collège. Les programmes d'études universitaires sont similaires, mais les études elles-mêmes sont très différentes.

Le Musique

- *Vytiskla jsem text písně „Kráva“, ve kterém jsem vynechala určitá slova, která [jméno] doplnila při poslechu písně. Vybrala jsem ji kvůli tomu, že mi přišla zábavná a relativně jednoduchá. [Jméno] mi poté dala tip na poslech francouzské hudby.*
- J'ai imprimé les paroles de la chanson "cow", en omettant certains mots que [Name] a ajoutés en écoutant la chanson. J'ai choisi cette chanson parce que je la trouvais amusante et relativement simple. [Name] m'a ensuite donné un conseil pour écouter de la musique française.

Translanguaging in Journals

Example 1:

Setkáníme v Kávárna v Praze 8. pijeme kávu. Se učíme česky a pak německy. Se učíme posesivne proniminu. Kavárna je moc dobře ale dráhy. Se učíme moc. Jsme unavená.

Corrected:

Setkali jsme se v kavárně v Praze 8. Pili jsem kávu. Učili jsme se česky a pak německy. Učili jsme se přivlastňovací zájmena. Kavárna byla moc dobrá, ale drahá. Hodně jsme se naučili (Učili jsme se moc). Jsem unavená.

hodně - viel

((We met in a cafe in Prague 8. I drank coffee. We learned Czech and then German. We have been learning possessive pronouns. The cafe was very good, but expensive. We learned a lot. I'm tired.))

Example 2:

We also talked about time and family, a good repetition from class with some additions. When we talked in German about trends, relationships, dating, moving abroad etc. I got really tired, I hope Bára was not annoyed by that. Chci spát. Jsem unavená.

Translanguaging in Journals

On the other hand, I cannot deny that I feel inferior when speaking second languages, especially in English. I'm not fully competent in organizing my thoughts, when I use second languages. I think my brain depends more on my mother tongue than on second languages. Therefore, when I use second languages, there is a lag between thinking and speaking, which makes me frustrated and feel less confident.

What would you like to achieve (in this tandem and in language learning in general)?

英語を話す能力を伸ばしたいです。具体的には、授業のときに、順序だてて、話の内容を遮らない程度の流暢さで、意見を伝えられるようになることです。現在の私は、自分の脳内に浮かんだ内容を言語化するのに精いっぱい、順序やスピードを、聞き手のために整える余裕がないのです。タンデムでたくさん英語を練習することで、英語を話すときに自信と安心感を感じられるようになりたいです。そして、自分の話し方を整えることで、聞き手が自分のことをもっと理解しやすくなってくれたらいいと思います。そうしたら、英語での友達作りや、意見交換を気軽に、積極的にできるので、タンデムを頑張りたいです。

I want to improve my ability to speak English. Specifically, I want to be able to express my opinions fluently during classes in a structured manner without disrupting the flow of the conversation. Currently, I am so focused on converting the thoughts in my mind into language that I don't have the capacity to organize the order and speed of my speech for the listener's sake. By practicing English a lot in the tandem, I want to feel more confident and comfortable when speaking English. Also, by improving the way I speak, I hope the listeners will understand me better. If I can achieve this, I will be able to make friends and exchange opinions more easily and actively in English, so I want to work hard in the tandem.

Key Findings: Translanguaging

Dynamic language mixing in **journals** (and sessions)

Strategic use based on topic and comfort

Asymmetrical language competence (*exolingual conversation*, Lüdi, 2022): code-switching as support to ensure **comprehension**

Monolingual Approach

Challenge the monolingual approach rooted in language classrooms (Woll, 2020)

Prioritize plurilingualism within tandem language learning experiences (McAllister et al., 2019).

Teacher training

Conclusion

Tandem learning supports sustainable multilingualism

Learners naturally engage in plurilingual practices

More explicit support can amplify learning outcomes

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silvie.prevratilova@ff.cuni.cz

<https://cllt.ff.cuni.cz>

