Learner’s reflection about German-Portuguese Teletandem in advising sessions

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Research Questions

- What is happening in peer group advising sessions?
- Which are the learner´s perceptions and beliefs in relation to language learning in teletandem?
- How is the advisor´s role in peergroup advising for teletandem?
- Which are the implications for teacher development/training?
Research Context

- One-semester (12 weeks) German-Portuguese teletandem program with learner support in form of peer group advising sessions

- **Period:** 2nd semester of Brazilian academic year (August-December)
- **Local:** Brazilian State University, teletandem lab
- **Activities:**
  - Individual teletandem sessions
  - Group videoconferencing with both groups
  - Advising sessions in peer group with Brazilian group
Voluntary participation from both groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Brazil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Faculty for Translation, Linguistics and Cultural Studies, Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz-Germersheim</em></td>
<td><em>Universidade Estadual Paulista, Campus Assis (UNESP)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Portuguese learners</td>
<td>15 German learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age: 18-30</td>
<td>Age: 20-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course: Translation (14), A-level completed (1)</td>
<td>Course: Teacher training in Languages: Portuguese and German (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited target culture: 14 no, 1 yes</td>
<td>Visited target culture: 14 no, 1 yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MAIN FOCUS: peer group advising sessions and learner’s reflections

**Instruments:**
- learner biography
- audio records of advising sessions (transcribed)
- learner diaries
- interviews
- evaluation questionnaire
- field notes/researcher’s diary
## Data Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description of Category</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Evaluation of the Teletandem project and the offered peer group advising sessions</td>
<td>“My listening ability seems to have become better.”</td>
<td>EVA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical/Administrational issues</td>
<td>Technical and administrative issues in relation to the Teletandem project and advising sessions</td>
<td>“The time difference changed this week, it’s now 5 hours.”</td>
<td>TEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner support</td>
<td>Learner support offered by the advisor through advising sessions and learner diaries</td>
<td>“I never read the guidelines for teletandem sessions.”</td>
<td>SUP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Issues</td>
<td>Issues around the teletandem partner (interaction, relationship, problems)</td>
<td>“It seems that my partner and I know each other already for a long time.”</td>
<td>PAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison to traditional classroom</td>
<td>Teletandem sessions in comparison to traditional learning contexts like the classroom or home study</td>
<td>“I use my teletandem for conversation because in the German class we only see grammar.”</td>
<td>CLASS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic Issues</td>
<td>Linguistic issues (grammar, phonetic, etc.) about the native and foreign language</td>
<td>“My teletandem partner has a strong German accent while speaking Portuguese.”</td>
<td>LING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies</td>
<td>Learning and communication strategies used for the teletandem sessions</td>
<td>“How can I train pronunciation in the teletandem sessions?”</td>
<td>STR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Process</td>
<td>Conscious and unconscious learning processes</td>
<td>“How can I learn more efficiently during the teletandem session?”</td>
<td>LPR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Objectives</td>
<td>Learning objectives in relation to the foreign language learning in teletandem</td>
<td>“For which purpose should I set a learning goal?”</td>
<td>OBJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Feedback phase in the teletandem session</td>
<td>“We could give the feedback after the session by email.”</td>
<td>FRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistakes &amp; Correction</td>
<td>Handling of mistakes and correction in teletandem sessions</td>
<td>“I don’t correct wrong prepositions as long as I understand what my partner means.”</td>
<td>MIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Issues</td>
<td>Cultural issues that arouse in the teletandem sessions or in the advising sessions</td>
<td>“Today we talked about a typical day for a Brazilian/German student.”</td>
<td>CUL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources &amp; Materials</td>
<td>Resources and materials used for and in the teletandem sessions</td>
<td>“I use google images for explaining vocabulary.”</td>
<td>RES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of Teletandem</td>
<td>Issues around the preparation of teletandem sessions</td>
<td>“I don’t plan any topics for our teletandem sessions, they come up spontaneously.”</td>
<td>PREP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Factors</td>
<td>Affective factors in relation to the learning in general, in teletandem, and to the teletandem partner</td>
<td>“I am afraid of halting to often while speaking German.”</td>
<td>AFF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others/General</td>
<td>General issues on learning and teaching, and other issues that are difficult to sort in</td>
<td>“The language learning process never ends.”</td>
<td>OTH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussed themes in all mediation sessions (TOTAL)

- Strategies - 93
- Learning Process - 48
- Learning Objectives - 45
- Mistakes and Correction - 40
- Linguistic Issues - 30
- Preparation of TT - 29
- Affective Factors - 29
- Partner Issues - 28
- Feedback - 23
- Others/ General - 23
- Learner support - 19
- Evaluation - 18
- Technical Issues - 18
- Comparison to trad. Classroom - 16
- Cultural Issues - 13
- Resources & Materials - 4
Data Analysis: Strategies

Many types of strategies were mentioned:

- memory, cognitive, compensation strategies
- Metacognitive, affective, social strategies
- Learning and „teaching“ strategies
Data Analysis: Learning Process

- Different learning styles/types
- Different conceptions about learning (efficient learning vs. natural acquisition)
- Influencing factors on the learning process (tandem partner, motivation, etc.)
Data Analysis: Learning Objectives

- What is a learning objective/goal?
- Different objectives of the participants
- How to help partner to achieve goals? And combine with personal goals?
What comes next:

- Deeper analysis of the categories, incl. Affective Factors, Preparation of Teletandem & Learner support
- Maybe case studies of 2 or 3 participants to show learner development in relation to categories
- The advisor’s role
- Impact on teacher development
Some Conclusions

- Lack of autonomy (especially with Brazilian learners): missing reflection, needs analysis, goal setting, etc.
- Peer group advising session for personal exchange of information and experiences to raise awareness and reflection in relation to learning.
- Individual advising sessions more efficient for promoting learner autonomy - -> for the individual learner, his needs and goals.
Thank you!

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