Learning French and Chinese through Skype
Some conversational variations and methodological considerations

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Plan

• Context

• Methodological considerations

• Conversational variations

• Conclusions and open questions
CONTEXT
Teletandem Language Learning

- Tandem Language Learning  (Lewis & Walker 2003)
  - Principle of autonomy
  - Principle of reciprocity

- Teletandem
  - F2F tandem (Lewis & Walker 2003)
  - Teletandem (Telles 2009)
The Teletandem Dalian-Lille project

French Department of the Dalian University of Foreign Languages

UFR Applied Foreign Languages Lille 3 University

3° edition: February 2012 – May 2012

3d Variamu Workshop
Research questions

How expertise roles about the topic discussed combine with scaffolding for language learning during teletandem interactions?

1. What are the expertise roles taken about the topics during teletandem interactions?
2. How is scaffolding provided for language learning during teletandem interactions?
3. How do these two dimensions combine?
METHODOLOGY
An ecological data collection...

• Aim: to be as ecological as possible
• Students’ training
• Dynamic screen capture and audio recording by the students themselves: looking for a software...

... and its problematic questions

• Multiple software interfaces to be dealt with
• A reduced processing power
• Fragmentary data collection and instable quality of data

3d Variamu Workshop
Transcriptions

• ICOR transcription norms (ICOR group, 2006)
Transcribing Chinese

- *Pinyin* or Chinese characters?

- Representing tones
  - A conversational perspective on errors
  - 眼睛 [yan3jing4]

- Representing vocabulary errors
  - If understandable: 物动 [动物]
  - If not: *pinyin*
Annotation of multimodality
Corpus of teletandem interactions

(about 166,000 words)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teletandem pair</th>
<th>Edition</th>
<th>N° of recorded sessions</th>
<th>Time length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LS</td>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7h30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AH</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3h20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6h10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3h20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20h20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONVERSATIONAL VARIATIONS
Analysis approach

A mixed sequential approach (Ware & Rivas 2012)

Qualitative approach

1. Conversational analysis of role-taking about the topic discussed (Cappellini & Rivens Mompean 2013)


Quantitative approach

3. Statistical analysis of the relation between role taking and language learning scaffolding
1. Topics and role-taking

12 + 1 categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French topic</th>
<th>Chinese topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>expert-learner</td>
<td>expert-learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expert-expert agreeing</td>
<td>expert-expert agreeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expert-expert disagreeing</td>
<td>expert-expert disagreeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learner-learner</td>
<td>learner-learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expert (chn)-learner (fr)</td>
<td>expert (fr)-learner (chn)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mixed French and Chinese topic</th>
<th>expert-expert</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal topic</td>
<td>expert-expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Scaffolding side sequences

Scaffolding (Bruner 1983) and side sequences (Jefferson 1972)

- Sequence of potential acquisition of vocabulary (SPAlex) (De Pietro, Matthey & Py 1989)
- Sequence of potential acquisition of syntax (SPAsyn) (Jeanneret & Py 2002)
- Sequence of normative evaluation (SEN) (Py 2000)
- Explicative Conversational Sequence (SCE) (Gulich 1990)

=》 for French and for Chinese
Quantitative analysis approach

A descriptive statistics approach

- Identification of occurrences of configurations

- Absolute frequency

- Relative frequency for each teletandem session and pair, for French and for Chinese

- Average of relative frequencies among pairs

- Total per cent frequencies
Global view

- 519 side sequences

- 47 configurations observed (out of 104 possible configurations)
Configurations in Chinese
Configurations in French
Configurations comparison

Chn parts

Fr parts
CONCLUSIONS AND OPEN QUESTIONS
Stability and variation

What is stable
• Unilateral and crossed expertise configurations

What is variable
• Treatment of grammar
• Explicative conversational sequences
Pedagogical considerations

The three most productive topic&role-taking configurations are

2. Personal topic, expert-expert (in both languages)
3. Chinese topic, expert-learner (in French)

Teletandem and grammar acquisition

Teletandem and intercultural learning
Open questions

• Methodology
  • How could multimodality in Skype conversations be represented?
  • How could Chinese language be represented?

• Results and transferability to other contexts
  • Are the phenomena/variations observed specific to the corpus analyzed?
  • Are they specific to the language involved?
Thank you for your attention
Selective bibliography