Teletandem principles in focus: documenting how learners act during the oral sessions

Princípios do teletandem em discussão: documentando como os aprendizes agem durante as sessões orais

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Abstract: Teletandem is a virtual exchange project that promotes intercultural contact between geographically distant language learners. Participants work in pairs and should observe the principles of separation of languages, reciprocity, and autonomy. Few studies have concentrated on reviewing these principles in the Teletandem literature and discussing how learners observe the three principles during the oral sessions when participating in the program. This study aims to fill this gap. We conducted a literature review of the three Teletandem principles and a qualitative analysis of seven transcripts from seven oral sessions of one dyad, whose data are available at the Multimodal Teletandem Corpus (MulTeC). Findings indicate that learners (i) make an effort to divide the oral sessions into two parts observing the principle of separation of languages, (ii) act in a reciprocal manner in at least five dimensions (alternating roles, making decisions together, meeting each other's needs, showing affection and emotion, searching for mutual interests, and sharing intercultural information), (iii) exercise autonomy when deciding on learning activities and strategies, and evaluating themselves and the experience.

Keywords: telecollaboration; virtual exchange; tandem principles; synchronous oral session.

Resumo: Teletandem é um projeto de intercâmbio virtual que promove contato intercultural entre aprendizes de língua distantes geograficamente. Os estudantes formam duplas e devem observar os princípios de separação de línguas, reciprocidade e autonomia. Apesar de relevantes, poucos estudos discutem como os participantes agem para observar tais princípios durante as sessões orais. Este estudo objetiva preencher essa lacuna. Conduzimos uma análise qualitativa de sete transcrições de uma dupla, cujos dados estão disponíveis no MulTeC (Multimodal Teletandem Corpus). Os resultados indicam que os alunos (i) se esforçam para dividir as sessões em duas partes, observando a separação das línguas, (ii) agem de forma recíproca em pelo menos cinco dimensões (alternando papéis, tomando decisões juntos, atendendo às necessidades um do outro, demonstrando afeto e emoção, buscando e compartilhando interesses mútuos e informações interculturais), (iii) exercem sua autonomia ao decidirem sobre atividades e estratégias de aprendizagem e avaliarem a si próprios e a experiência.

Palavras-chave: telecolaboração; intercâmbio virtual; princípios do tandem; sessão oral síncrona.

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Introduction

Telecollaboration or Virtual Exchange (VE) projects are increasingly popular in education (González-Lloret; Vinagre, 2018; Oskoz; Vinagre, 2020). They describe initiatives that promote intercultural contact between geographically distant learners (Cavalari, 2018; O'dowd, 2021) and give learners a chance to collaboratively achieve specific goals (Vinagre, 2008; Sadler; Dooly, 2016), including practicing languages.

One example of such an initiative is Teletandem, which has connected over 8,544 students in different countries (Brasil, 2021) so that the learners, in pairs, help with practicing each other's languages (Telles; Vassallo, 2006; Vassallo; Telles, 2006). Grounded in tandem learning (Brammerts, 1996), teletandem exchanges entail the observations of three principles - separation of languages, reciprocity, and autonomy (Vassallo; Telles, 2006).

The many mentions of these principles in publications suggest their relevance for the Teletandem practice. Most authors present reports on the principles separately. Referenced scholars have observed how learners' perception of the oral sessions may inform autonomous (Garcia; O'Connor; Cappellini, 2017) and reciprocal learning (Cappellini; Elstermann; Rivens Mompean, 2020) and recent publications focused on proposing a change in the terminology of the principle of separation of languages (see Picoli; Salomão, 2020; Satar *et al.*, 2023).

However, to date, few empirical peer-reviewed studies have concentrated on discussing how learners observe the Teletandem principles (Cappellini; Elstermann; Rivens Mompean, 2020; Garcia; O'Connor; Cappellini, 2017; Lima-Lopes; Aranha, 2023; Picoli; Salomão, 2020; Satar *et al.*, 2023), most of which concentrate on separation of languages. We aim to achieve this goal by investigating how learners act to guarantee the maintenance of Teletandem principles during synchronous oral sessions. We analyzed seven transcripts of the Teletandem sessions from a pair of learners that participated in the integrated modality of the project, i.e. when attending Teletandem sessions and completing telecollaborative tasks as part of their language classes, there are other formats of virtual exchange that are not integrated or partially integrated to a course (see Cavalari; Aranha, 2016). We argue that the observation of the three principles in Teletandem oral sessions may contribute to a better understanding of how such principles are put into practice by the learners. Considering that these principles should guide students' experiences and are presented to them during the tutoring session, the results of this study could help inform researchers and practitioners when implementing teletandem practice.

Literature Review

Teletandem (Vassallo; Telles, 2006) is carried out at three campuses of São Paulo State University (UNESP) and in several partnering universities, as well as at other institutions that are not necessarily connected to UNESP (Brasil, 2021). Designed with the goal of developing learners' linguistic and cultural skills (Aranha; Wigham, 2020), teletandem can be promoted in different modalities: not integrated into the classroom (TTD), integrated into the language classroom (iiTTD), or semi-integrated (siTTD), meaning that only one of the two partnering institutions integrates the teletandem practice into the language curriculum (Aranha; Cavalari, 2014; Cavalari; Aranha, 2016). Each of the teletandem principles is simultaneously independent and connected to the other (Aranha; Cavalari, 2014; Cavalari; Aranha, 2016).

Separation of languages

Vassallo and Telles' (2006) seminal work proposes the separation of languages as the first principle of Teletandem. The authors emphasize that, when learning languages in tandem, languages should not be mixed so that both partners have a chance to communicate both in the target language and their language of proficiency (p. 102). According to the authors, this principle means that Teletandem sessions are to be composed of two parts, one for each language, which, in the original proposition (Telles; Vassallo, 2006), could be done either in a chronologically subsequent manner in the same session or in two different days (each session focused on one of the languages).

In previous literature (Brammerts, 1996), the principle of separation of languages is embedded in the principle of reciprocity. Nevertheless, Vassallo and Telles (2006) argue that this pillar should be taken as a principle in and of itself, given that it encourages and challenges speakers to use the target language and promotes commitment to and involvement with the practice. The same understanding is shared by Salomão, Silva, and Daniel (2009) and Picoli and Salomão (2020).

Salomão, Silva, and Daniel (2009) state that the use of two languages in tandem learning is an inherent characteristic and mention that, in tandem literature, the principle has been referred to as bilingualism - as also presented by Benedetti (2010) -, equality, or separation of languages. In consonance with Vassallo and Telles (2006) and Panichi (2002), Salomão, Silva, and Daniel (2009) propose that the separation of languages should be viewed as a principle that regulates not only the separated use of the languages but also the observation of the equal status attributed to the two languages.

According to Aranha and Cavalari (2014) and Cavalari and Aranha (2016), who discuss institutional integrated Teletandem practice, the principle of separation of languages is reified by the practice of dividing the sessions into two parts, one for each language, in order to promote the balanced practice of languages.

The principle is further discussed by Picoli and Salomão (2020). Using data from a Portuguese-English Teletandem project, the authors analyze oral sessions from three dyads to observe how much time students dedicate to each language and quantify code-switching occurrences during the oral sessions. Even though participants dedicated virtually the same amount of time to each language practice, the authors state that this does not necessarily mean that both learners equally benefit from the experience as participants often code-switch during the sessions. They propose the use of the terminology *principle of equality* instead. For the authors, equality better reflects partners' effort to take advantage of the practice of the target language to the same extent. In contrast, separation of languages would denote a monolingual view of communication and not guarantee equal benefit.

Satar *et al.* (2023) present a compelling critique of the prevailing nomenclature used: separation of languages. Through an examination of multimodal and translingual practices exhibited by a pair of learners characterized by low proficiency in the target language, the authors assert that while the conventional principle remains influential in guiding teletandem implementation, particularly in Brazil, its interpretation should be refined. They propose that the principle should be reconceptualized as the *principle of translanguaging*, emphasizing its role as a framework allocating specific time periods to guide the adoption of learner roles. The authors contend that this renaming is essential to underscore the participants' utilization of semiotic repertoires for meaning-making, highlighting teletandem as a collaborative learning space fostering mutual support.

Lima-Lopes and Aranha (2023) recently directed their attention to the aforementioned principle, undertaking an analysis of the initial TOS (Teletandem Oral Session) from diverse participants by employing language processing tools. The objective of their study was to scrutinize the extent to which participants adhere to the principle of language separation. Their findings revealed a general adherence to the principle, notwithstanding instances of cross-linguistic usage during moments of meaning negotiation among learners. Yet, the authors do not introduce a new terminology in light of their findings.

While acknowledging potential concerns regarding the term 'separation of languages,' we choose to retain its use within the context of this paper. This decision is informed by its prevalence in teletandem literature as the favored nomenclature. Previous research and

presentation of the data in MulTeC (Multimodal Teletandem Corpus) (Aranha & Lopes, 2019) indicate that this principle is generally upheld and respected. Additionally, it is the principle presented to participants in this study during the tutoring session. In alignment with the insights presented in the above-mentioned research, we interpret the principle of separation of languages as a guide for learners to allocate dedicated time to each language under study. Each session comprises two parts, wherein students actively engage and demonstrate motivation to actively assist or learn the other language.

Reciprocity

Elstermann (2017) argued that several definitions and explanations of the term reciprocity in Teletandem have associated the terminology with "the division of time learners speak each language" (Eltermann, 2017, p. 31). Salomão, Silva, and Daniel (2009, p. 88) observe that reciprocity in Teletandem is related to the equal use of languages, in terms of time. However, this principle is not limited to the temporal aspect of the use of the target languages, but must also cover the commitment to their own and each other's learning.

To clarify the conceptualization of reciprocity in Teletandem, Salomão, Silva, and Daniel (2009) refer to it as interdependence. In agreement with these authors, Benedetti (2010) affirms that although the equal division of time for both languages' practice is essential, reciprocity is also related to students taking turns: for half of the time, they are helping the other learn their languages, and for the other half, they are learners immersed in the target language.

Having established that students play the role of tutor of the language in which they are proficient, and the role of the learner of the target language, Aranha and Cavalari (2014) define reciprocity as a commitment to mutually contribute to the peer's learning goals (Aranha; Cavalari, 2014). Reciprocity is also encouraged in teletandem when students take turns as they collaborate with each other (Aranha; Cavalari, 2014, 2016, p. 328).

Cappellini, Elstermann, and Rivens Mompean (2020) analyze learners' logs from three teletandem projects. They propose that reciprocity in teletandem can be empirically observed in learners' reflections in six different dimensions: (i) time and language division (organizational reciprocity); (ii) collective decision making; (iii) meeting partners' needs; (iv) topics and skills comparison (intercultural reciprocity); (v) expressing themselves in affective and emotional ways; (vi) discussing mutual interests (communicative reciprocity).

We implement this framework but differ from Cappellini, Elstermann, and Rivens Mompean's (2020) understanding of the organizational dimension. Instead of being a feature contemplated in the principle of reciprocity, in our work, the organizational dimension is

present in the separation of languages principle. Such a distinction follows the bulk of literature on Teletandem (Vassallo; Telles, 2006; Cavalari; Aranha, 2016; Lima-Lopes; Aranha, 2023, among others[3]), which has maintained the separation of languages as a principle on its own.

Building from the definitions presented in this literature review, reciprocity happens when students use their agency to perform their roles as learners and tutors within Teletandem, in six dimensions: (i) reserved roles, (ii) mutual decision-making, (iii) meeting each other's needs, (iv) affection and emotion, (v) communication, and (vi) interculturality.

Autonomy

The concept of autonomy has been widely discussed in the context of (tele)tandem (Brammerts, 1996; Cavalari, 2011; Little, 1996; Luz, 2009; Salomão; Silva; Daniel, 2009; Vassallo; Telles, 2006). This principle establishes that partners are responsible for their learning, that "they alone determine what they want to learn and when, and participants can only expect from their partner the support that they themselves have defined and asked for" (Brammerts, 1996, p. 11). At the same time, Brammerts (1996) draws attention to the fact that because participants are not usually trained teachers, they need help in identifying goals, applying methods, and organizing materials when working in tandem.

Inspired by tandem's principles, Telles and Vassallo (2006) proposed the Teletandem project with the ambitious goal of articulating the Freirian view of an authentic pedagogy of autonomy (Freire, 2020) and providing a greater number of people the chance to connect with speakers of the languages they are learning. For them, autonomy corresponds to offering chances for the learners to create their own learning tools.

When discussing autonomy in non-integrated teletandem, Vassallo and Telles (2006) state that participants are free to decide what, when, where, how to study, and for how long. The authors explain that autonomy levels may vary if the practice is institutionalized or not. On the same token, Salomão, Silva, and Daniel (2009) point out that autonomy levels may differ depending on whether Teletandem practice is institutionalized; still, learners are expected to be autonomous. The authors defend that autonomy in Teletandem is essential for the learning process and emphasize that such principle is interconnected to the one of reciprocity as some decisions should be discussed and decided with their partners.

Aranha and Cavalari (2014) discuss that in the context of institutional integrated Teletandem, students would still exercise their autonomy by being responsible for their learning

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[3] See teletandembrasil.org for a list of the majority of studies conducted on the context.

process, which includes deciding on learning goal(s) and ways to achieve them. However, considering that, when integrated, instructors often implement a series of tasks that may be required and graded, the practice might contradict the principle of autonomy to some extent (Cavalari; Aranha, 2016).

More recently, Garcia, O'Connor, and Cappellini (2017) studied the collective learner's logs from a French-Australian teletandem experience. Their study proposes that participants' verbalization of metacognitive operations indicates autonomous learning. The authors established their analysis categories, making a case for the observation of three dimensions in the principle of autonomy in (tele)tandem: (i) setting goals; (ii) planning learning activities/strategies and (self-) evaluation of learning; and (iii) making explicit the emotional dimensions of learning.

In their data, only the second and third dimensions were identified. Instances of the two dimensions occurred when learners described that they had scheduled meetings, decided on learning strategies and feedback, and modified the required tasks to fit their needs (second dimension). The dimensions also appeared when students showed appreciation for their partner and the quality of their performance (third dimension). The authors conclude that autonomy in teletandem is developed via social relations, through and during the interaction with the partner.

Considering Garcia, O'Connor, and Cappellini's (2017) discussion, and, in consonance with Cappellini, Elstermann, and Rivens Mompean (2020), in this paper, we understand the third dimension (emotional dimension) to be contemplated in the principle of reciprocity, given that showing appreciation for the partner seems to be more related to establishing a good relationship than to taking the lead or assuming responsibility for their learning.

We perceive autonomous learning in teletandem, regardless of the modality, to correspond to the process of participants taking responsibility for their learning. Therefore, autonomy is not seen as a result of a solo practice, but as a principle embedded into a guided independence. Learners' autonomy in teletandem can be described as the action of setting and sharing goals and working towards achieving them by helping each other, which includes engaging in teletandem tasks, using learning strategies, and evaluating themselves and the experience.

Methods

This study uses qualitative methods (Creswell; Creswell, 2018; Dörnyei, 2007) to deeply understand the use of the teletandem principles of separation of languages, reciprocity,

and autonomy. The present investigation focuses on textual data - transcripts of seven 50-minute-long Teletandem oral sessions - selected from MulTeC (Aranha; Lopes, 2019).

Context

MulTeC is a multimodal corpus composed of data collected from Teletandem partnerships established between a public university in the state of São Paulo and a public university in the state of Georgia, USA, from 2012 to 2015 (Aranha; Lopes, 2019). Data collection was approved by São Paulo State University Ethics Committee[4] as well as University of Georgia Institutional Review Board (Study #2012100240). All participants whose files were integrated into MulTeC have given consent to use and share their data for research purposes. The documents have been anonymized to preserve their identities (Aranha; Lopes, 2019; Aranha; Wigham, 2021). This validation ensures that the data collection and analysis were conducted in an ethical and responsible manner, upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and participant well-being.

The dataset employed in this study comprises seven transcripts of oral sessions in Teletandem, featuring a specific pair engaged in institutional integrated Teletandem (iiTTD) during the academic year of 2012. Despite the temporal distance since data collection, we contend that the information remains pertinent. This assertion is grounded in the consistency observed in recent Teletandem literature, wherein all three guiding principles are reported to continue to be presented to learners during orientation/tutoring sessions in alignment with the original conceptualization by Vassallo and Telles (2006). In other words, there have not been changes in how the principles are presented to learners.

In addition to the seven Teletandem Oral Sessions (TOS) usually held in language classes, students were advised to schedule a final eighth session at a time and date that suited them better. Metadata indicates that learners were meant to get to know their partners in the initial TOS. Students were to write three texts in the target language, receive feedback from their partners, and discuss the texts during TOS from sessions two to seven. Brazilian students were also expected to answer the initial and final questionnaire, write a diary, and save the chat registers for each oral session.

The focal pair in this study was selected because all their TOS recordings were available at MulTeC – all the sessions that happened at the Teletandem laboratory. The pair consists of a

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[4] Data collection was approved on October 28, 2016 under the project named *Teletandem institucional integrado: a construção de um banco de dados multimodal para pesquisas em Linguística Aplicada*. Such information may be confirmed at https://plataformabrasil.saude.gov.br/.

male from Brazil, aged 18, who self-evaluated his ability in English at the C1 (advanced) level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, and a female from the United States, aged 19, whose self-evaluation was unavailable at MulTeC. The Brazilian participant was an undergraduate student of Languages and Literature. The major of the US participant was not indicated in the data, but she was taking an intermediate Portuguese course. Each of the seven oral sessions averages 44 minutes and 26 seconds, and each transcript has an average of 4,040 words. The total length of the corpus of this study is 4 hours, 26 minutes, and 31 seconds of recordings or 28,285 words of transcribed texts.

Analysis procedures

To answer the research question 'How do students act to observe the teletandem principles during the oral sessions?', we first established analysis categories that surfaced from the discussion of teletandem principles in the literature review section as described in Table 1.

Table 1 - Analysis categories and their description

Categories	Description
Separation of languages	Moments when participants negotiate the language they will use for that part of the session.
Reciprocity	(i) Moments in which participants act as learners and tutors (Reserved roles dimension); (ii) Moments in which students seek agreement regarding a decision that needs to be made (Decision-making dimension); (iii) Moments in which learners support their peer's needs and learning objectives (Meeting needs dimension); (iv) Moments in which affective and emotional language emerge as the students express feelings and emotions (Affective and emotional dimension); (v) Moments in which participants search for mutual interests (Communicative dimension); (vi) Moments in which learners compare topics mostly related to the cultures associated with their countries (Intercultural dimension).
Autonomy	Moments in which participants share, ask, and agree on how they would like to be helped by: (i) setting goals (Setting goals dimension); (ii) doing certain activities or using specific learning strategies (Learning activities/strategies dimension); (iii) evaluating themselves and the experience (Evaluative dimension).

Source: The authors

Both authors analyzed the data independently to ensure the systematicity, communicability, and transparency of the study (O'Connor; Joffe, 2020). Our analysis consisted

of reading the transcripts and associating the categories above with the portion of texts that corresponded to the observance of the principles. The two analysts then compared and discussed analysis categories to reach an agreement. The intercoder reliability coefficient (ICR) was high, approximately 92.5%. When there was a disagreement, we met, discussed, and decided together what coding to use, revise, or restructure.

Results and Discussion

The analysis of the seven oral sessions indicates that participants observed the principles of separation of languages, reciprocity, and autonomy. Participants acted accordingly to at least one of the teletandem principles at a time and usually observed all three principles in all teletandem sessions.

Separation of languages

Students tried to divide the time between each language in all oral sessions. In the first TOS, participants collaboratively decided to start speaking in English and intercalated the first language in every session moving forward. Excerpts 1 and 2 below demonstrate how the students took turns to start the interactions in one language and announce the shift to the other language. Excerpt 1 shows the beginning of the session, and Excerpt 2 shows the moment in mid-session when they switch languages.

Excerpt 1, Session 2

Original Occurrence
1. B: é oi tudo bem?
1. E: oi tudo bem e você?

Translated Version
2. B: hi how are you?
2. E: hi I am fine and you?

Excerpt 2, Session 2
1. E: my professor just said we have to talk in English
2. B: ah ok ok

Following the conversation shown in excerpt 1, students continued to speak Portuguese, until it was time to switch languages ('my professor told us to'), as shown in excerpt 2. In the sessions analyzed, we notice the overlapping of the principles of separation of languages and reciprocity, given that the decision of the language depended on the peer agreeing to it collaboratively (decision-making dimension) (B says 'ah ok ok'). Throughout the seven sessions of the pair, the negotiation to switch languages in the middle of the oral session happened in two ways. It was either initiated by one of the students verbally announcing it was time to speak

in the other language or by reporting they were following the direction of the teachers to make the change. Regarding the languages used at the beginning of each session, data suggests that learners followed directions presented in the tutoring session and by their teachers, and, besides negotiating with their peers, intercalated and tried to balance the use of the two languages.

We also noticed in oral sessions 2 to 5 that the language spoken first tends to be related to the written assignment. Students naturally started with and provided feedback in the language in which the texts were written. Even though our data reveals that students were cognizant of their roles during the oral session, we also noticed that the mediators were present and constantly reminded them of the principle of separation of languages. Hence, the results presented here symbolize the outcomes of integrating teletandem into the classroom.

Finally, in light of Picoli and Salomão's (2020) and Lima-Lopes and Aranha's (2023) results, we agree that learners may have distinct motivations to advance in the target language, their linguistic background and resources may vary, and the cross-use of languages may be a strategy to convey meaning. Nevertheless, the studies cited and our results suggest that these strategies do not exempt them from attempting to be responsible for and responsive to each other's learning, balancing their language use between the two languages in the context of teletandem, even if/when code-switching and translanguaging occur.

Our analysis revealed that students tried to observe the principle of separation of languages as it had been presented to them. We argue that observing the principle should not limit students' interaction to a monolingual conversation, but instead indicate that focusing on each language at a time is possible and an inherent characteristic of tandem learning. Even though the principle of separation of languages does not necessarily ensure that both partners equally benefit from half of the time in each language, it still clarifies that an equal division of the time is expected. Additionally, provided that learners are guided and supported through the practice, teachers can still emphasize the importance of the equal status of both languages, as advocated by Picoli and Salomão (2020), and openly discuss translanguaging and multimodality with participants, as suggested by Satar *et al.* (2023).

Reciprocity: reversed roles dimension

We defined the reversed roles dimension as the moments in which participants act as learners and tutors. Instances of reversed roles occurred when students checked for confirmation of understanding, used clarifying questions, or reformulated their words to communicate and support their learning, as well as when they negotiated meaning.

The alternation of roles was more prominent when learners commented on their revisions of their peer's texts. They confirmed that their partner understood the topic, re-explained their comments on the written texts, negotiated meaning, or compared concepts or elements from their cultures. In Excerpt 3, as one learner asked a clarifying question (learner role), his peer had a chance to explain (tutor role).

Excerpt 3, session 2

1.	B: was the word where it is typo, I did not understand
2.	E: oh that is just when, ahm, you misspell a word, on accident, like, you said I think fell
3.	B: aham
4.	E: and you tried to say feel
5.	B: yes, yes
6.	E: Yeah
7.	B: I, I intend to say feel
8.	E: so it ended up being a completely different word
9.	B: aham
10.	E: so kind threw me off
11.	B: so so fell means that she, she fell she [[moving his head down]]
12.	E: yeah
13.	B: Oh my God, ok, yeah I did not intend to so to say that [[laugh]]
14.	E: yeah that is what I thought [[both laugh]]

Reciprocity: decision-making dimension

Decision-making was observed when students agreed regarding a decision that needed to be made. Instances included agreeing on which language to use first, informing the peer it was time to switch languages in every session, and committing to staying in touch after the program ended. Students also exercised their agency when they decided to work on their written texts, selected topics of mutual interest to talk about and started planning the extra session requested by the program during the oral session, as observed in Excerpt 4 below.

Excerpt 4, session 5

1. E: oh yeah oh and for the ahm this the skype for outside this class do you wanna do that next week?
2. B: uhum
3. E: ok
4. B: next week? could be ahm é which day is the best you
5. E: probably ahm Monday or any day really not Wednesday yeah
6. B: yeah Wednesday is hard for me hum é é Monday it is opened two o' clock to [E: ok] to four o' clock
7. E: yeah
8. B: it is it is ok to you?
9. E: yeah that should be fine ahm oh
10. B: yeah oh I have class in this period but I think I can skip it

11. E: I will have to ask my teacher when the lab is open [B: that is ok]
12. E: and then I will email you I had to do that but I forgot

In Excerpt 4, students make arrangements to follow up outside class time to choose when to meet. This decision happens following reciprocity while also being made autonomously and interdependently. For example, at a moment during the interaction, the Brazilian student suggested that they share a list of musicians, and his peer agreed to contribute with suggestions. On the same token, at another time during the session, the Brazilian student agreed to take a second look at the peer's revised text even though that was not a program requirement.

Reciprocity: meeting needs dimension

Students tried to meet each other's needs at several moments, including patiently waiting when a partner had a technical difficulty or repeating themselves when a peer had a problem understanding the target language.

Excerpt 5, session 3	Translation
1. B: é você tem algum parente que mora em outro país?	1. B: do you have a relative who lives in another country?
2. E: ahm parente?	2. E: ahm relative?
3. B: é você não sabe o que é parente?	3. B: ah you don't know what relative is?
4. E: o que é parente?	4. E: what is a relative?
5. B: é é relatives	5. B: is is relatives (provides translation)
6. E: oh ah não a minha família toda a minha família ahm moram na Geórgia	6. E: oh ah no my family all my family ahm live in Georgia
7. B: on/ onde fica a Geórgia?	7. B: on / where is Georgia?
8. E: ahm a a sudeste	8. E: ahm to the southeast
9. B: no sudeste	9. B: in the southeast
10. E: ah ah dos Estados Unidos	10. E: ah ah from the United States
11. B: hum perto de Miami?	11. B: um near Miami?
12. E: ah nor/ norte do que Miami	12. E: ah nor / north than Miami
13. B: ah tá	13. B: ok

When facing a communicative problem, they re-explained concepts, reformulated sentences, spelled words, used the chat function, and, as illustrated in the example above (Excerpt 5), offered a translation of a word (line 5) or clarification of their responses (line 12) to ensure understanding. When facing a technical problem, participants communicated with each other, adjusted pieces of equipment, or waited until a glitch was solved.

Reciprocity: affective and emotional dimension

There were moments when learners expressed their feelings or demonstrated support, empathy, and courtesy. We observed this dimension when learners: exchanged greetings at the beginning and the end of each session, showed appraisal for the texts they had written in the target language and sent each other, gave compliments, were supportive about speaking/using each other's language, apologized for their own mistakes or minimized peer's mistakes, and said they were upset the experience was coming to an end.

In agreement with Cappellini, Elstermann, and Rivens Mompean (2020), we understand that the emergence of affection and emotion in our data fosters a friendly climate conducive to their involvement and motivation. In our corpus, learners often resorted to affective language. The frequent use of affectionate words and expressions seems to reinforce their willingness to cooperate and contribute to each other's learning, especially when showing support in the use of the target language, either through speaking or writing.

The excerpt below illustrates the American participant complimenting the Brazilian student on his text, minimizing his mistakes (lines 1, 3, 5, 7). In return, the participant from Brazil provides his partner some encouragement to keep trying and improving after she mentioned that his text was better than hers (line 8):

Excerpt 7, session 3

1.   E: yeah *you did a really good*
2.   B: oh thank you
3.   E: *better* than mine
4.   B: it was not that good because the verbs are all messed up
5.   E: I mean it looks like a lot like a lot of errors but *it really wasn't*
6.   B: yeah
7.   E: it is just like the same error in different places
8.   B: oh but but your your text was good too you need to to train more the the the listening é do just a little practice it is all practice

As the excerpt above shows, affection is observable in the moments where participants express feelings or demonstrate support, empathy, and courtesy. Such occurrences are slightly distinct from Cappellini, Elstermann, and Rivens Mompean's (2020) results because we analyzed TOS while the authors studied the feelings learners reported in their logs. The outcomes of their research diverge from what we observed in the oral sessions, probably because the audience of the logs was the teacher, and the communicative purpose of the logs was to reflect on the experience. We noticed that to establish cooperation and collaboration in TOS, learners might have found it more urgent to demonstrate affection and emotion that went

beyond demonstrating feelings regarding the contact with their peers and the teletandem experience (Cappellini; Elstermann; Rivens Mompean, 2020).

Reciprocity: intercultural and communicative dimension

In Cappellini, Elstermann, and Rivens Mompean (2020), intercultural and communicative reciprocity dimensions are associated with different categories. Communicative reciprocity is displayed as the discussion of common interests and hobbies, while intercultural reciprocity is presented as comparisons related to cultures and language skills. In our data, we often found it challenging to separate the intercultural and communicative dimensions. The complexity of differentiating the categories derives from our understanding that participants in teletandem often focus on comparing their lives (Telles, 2015) as a means of finding common interests (Aranha, 2014; Rampazzo, 2021) as they work together. Moreover, it can be complicated to define whether learners intend to share aspects of their cultures or find commonality through cultural topics.

During the oral sessions, learners took turns telling each other about their lives, cultures, and interests and sharing information and opinions about a diversity of topics, including living arrangements, their university, and other topics of interest. The topic of music, for instance, was recurrent in different sessions (sessions 2, 3, 5, and 6). On some occasions, the conversation about music also revealed learners' personal opinions about elements of their cultures:

Excerpt 7, session 2

1. B: hum é I I don't really like Brazilian bands because because I don't know they are kind of boring I don't know there is only country here yes not not country but Brazilian country you know é do you know Michel Teló for instance?
2. E: no
3. B: no? é it is it is pretty famous in in the Europe and even and even in in United States I think but but there there is only country and and I don't like it [E: yeah] that it is [incompreensível] I I prefer American singers and British singers hum let me see

As learners talked about famous artists in Brazil and the United States, the Brazilian student provided information about a famous artist of his country, sharing cultural aspects of Brazilian music. The dialog soon moved back to sharing personal information (line 3: "I prefer American singers and British singers") and trying to find common interests, which illustrates the overlapping of the intercultural and communicative reciprocity categories.

Comparably, when learners talked about politics in the last session, the communicative and intercultural dimensions were noticeably combined. They often contrasted the American

and Brazilian voting systems, talked about their political views, and how they both identified with left-wing parties and candidates. In such occurrences, it is not always possible to determine which parts of the dialogue are strictly culturally informative or communicative. For this reason, we argue that the communicative and intercultural dimensions of reciprocity should be observed together. Learners act to observe reciprocity both from communicative and intercultural perspectives. Reciprocity is also evident when learners search for mutual interests and compare topics related to the cultures associated with their countries.

Autonomy

Autonomy in institutional integrated teletandem (iiTTD) is often regarded as the action of making a decision related to the tasks established by the professors or deciding on other tasks that are external to the program. Autonomy in TOS is not only related to how students want to be helped by each other but also encompasses two categories proposed by Garcia, O'Connor, and Cappellini (2017): autonomy related to learning activities and strategies, and the evaluation of themselves and the experience.

We draw attention to the connection between the principles of autonomy and reciprocity, adding emphasis to the fact that the first is practiced in cooperation. In other words, when students alone determine what they want to learn, how this learning should happen, and are self-aware of their strengths and weaknesses in learning and in helping each other to learn, their decisions still need to be negotiated with their peers. An example of such negotiation is illustrated in the excerpt below:

Excerpt 8, session 5
1. B: hum a a gente tem que ter uma conversação fora da aula?
2. E: sim
3. [...]
4. E: ah qual dia?
5. [...]
6. B: que dia você pode?
7. [...]
8. E: ahm então ahm eu vou a e-mail para você quando eu posso
9. B: aham eu também faço isso

Translation
1. B: hum we we have to have a conversation outside of class?
2. E: yes
3. [...]
4. E: ah when?
5. [...]
6. B: when are you available?
7. [...]
8. E: ahn so ahm I will send an email to tell you when I'm available
9. B: aham I'll do the same

In the excerpt, we observe collaborative autonomy when participants try to arrange a time that will fit both their schedules and decide they will have to further negotiate via email (lines 8-9). Here, learners are autonomous in deciding the date for their make-up session and do so in cooperation.

Autonomy: learning activities/strategies dimension

Such an aspect of autonomy occurred whenever learners' attitudes showed they were aware of how they could benefit from the experience or took the lead in the activities defined and suggested by their professors. Even though some decisions were related to what was established in the program, participants were autonomous in choosing whether to follow the program or not, as well as the best moment in the session to do so.

The learning activities and strategies dimension was noticeable in multiple ways including when learners decided the moment to switch languages, took the lead in asking questions based on their expertise in the target language, paused the conversation to exchange emails, reversed roles in discussing the writing tasks, made arrangements and promises, made suggestions to guarantee better understanding (e.g., googling a picture), provided a translation to support peer's learning, and more (Excerpt 9).

Excerpt 9, session 7	Translation
1. E: ah quando nós ah falamos em inglês ah eu posso ah dizer sobre isso melhor	1. E: ah when we speak English I will be able to better explain it
2. B: não tudo bem eu eu entendi aqui aqui a gente num tem muito os partidos eles não são muito ligados a religião eu acho eles são separados	2. B: no that is ok I got it here we don't have many parties they are not really related to religion I guess they are separate

Excerpt 9 also demonstrates the interconnection of this principle with the separation of languages. Instead of code-switching to English, the American learner decided to wait for the second part of the session, during which they would speak English, to better explain what she meant. The Brazilian learner releases her from this responsibility by affirming that he could understand, this result also suggests the connection between reciprocity and autonomy.

Autonomy: evaluative dimension

In consonance with Garcia, O'Connor, and Cappellini's (2017) findings on language assessment and the teletandem experience, our data analysis indicates that learners evaluate themselves and their peers on their ability to speak or write in the target language and show appreciation for the experience.

The evaluative dimension was also evident when learners realized they should have saved some questions to ask later in the first session, assessed their ability to understand and explain grammar rules, evaluated their attitudes towards their work, reflected on their strengths and limitations concerning learning languages, appraised the effort put in their partner's writing assignments (Excerpt 10), and more.

Excerpt 10, session 7	Translation
1. E: ah eu corrigi a sua papel	1. E: ah I corrected your paper
2. B: uhum	2. B: uhum
3. E: e ahm isso é muito bem	3. E: e ahm it is very good
4. B: uhum obrigado eu me esforcei mais nesse nessa redação	4. B: uhum thank you I put a lot of effort in this writing assignment

Excerpt 10 illustrates the overlapping of the affective and emotional dimension of reciprocity and the evaluative dimension of autonomy as the Brazilian learner was recognized by the quality of his text (line 3) and reflects on the effort put into his own writing (line 4).

Teletandem principles revisited

Our discussion consolidates the previous definitions of the Teletandem principles, sharing evidence of how the three of them are observed in practice, specifically during TOS. We propose the concepts to be detailed as follows:

● Separation of languages: Consistent with Vassallo and Telles (2006), separation of languages, in teletandem oral sessions, is inherent to tandem learning and observed by learners' effort to sustain the use of each language.

● Reciprocity: Following Aranha and Cavalari (2014), Cavalari and Aranha (2016), and Cappellini, Elstermann, and Rivens Mompean (2020), we see reciprocity more broadly linked to the social relationship formed by learners. In Teletandem Oral Sessions, reciprocity is observed when participants (i) alternate the roles of tutor and learners of languages, (ii) make decisions together, (iii) meet each other's needs, (iv) show affection and emotion to build a friendly, encouraging and supportive atmosphere, and (v) search for mutual interests and share intercultural information.

● Autonomy: Based on Garcia, O'Connor, and Cappellini (2017), we understand autonomy to be endorsed in Teletandem Oral Sessions when learners (i) decide on learning activities and strategies, and (ii) evaluate themselves and each other, as well as the whole experience.

Final remarks

This study emerged from the need for more empirical research concentrating on how learners observe the teletandem principles. We analyzed learners' interaction during the sessions and expanded previous empirical work on these concepts. Our study results indicate that participants are attentive to the three teletandem principles during the oral sessions and, at

least in the sample provided, had enough guidance to complete their experience. We identified the salient presence of separation of languages, five dimensions of reciprocity, and two dimensions of autonomy in each teletandem session. The analysis results may become the basis for the continued planning and execution of integrated teletandem and can be used by mediators to organize the implementation of teletandem tutoring and oral sessions.

Future research can expand the corpus by increasing the number of pairs observed in detail in this study. Though time-consuming, this could be done with the assistance of language processing software. Still, the selected methodology and methods of data analysis improved the systematicity, communicability, and transparency of our coding (O'Connor; Joffe, 2020) and provided rigor to our co-independent and collaboratively executed analysis of the dyad participation in seven oral sessions.

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