

Identity and positionality of non-native speakers of English and Spanish in virtual Exchange: UNAM & University of Glasgow

Identidad y posicionalidad de hablantes no nativos de inglés y español en el intercambio virtual: UNAM y Universidad de Glasgow

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Abstract:

Collaborative Online International Learning offers a framework where participants from different learning circumstances is established. One specific type of telecollaborative exchange model is e-Tandem where different dimensions of language learning are benefited. During the communicative and intercultural interaction, identities emerge revealing the positioning adopted by participants in discourse. According to post-structuralist approaches, identity is constructed and reconstructed every time there is a discursive act and emerges from interaction in a way that is intentional. The aim of this study is to explore the emergent identities and positionalities adopted by university students from Scottish and Mexican contexts. Under the Progressive Telecollaborative Model, 10 students worked together during a set of 12 telecollaborative sessions conducted through synchronous e-tandem. Preliminary results reveal that even though participants initially assume identities as foreign language learners, their identity as native language experts develops in relation to a situated context positioning during interaction.

Keywords:

Telecollaboration, identity, Computer mediated communication (CMC), Virtual exchange, Discursive identity

Resumen:

El aprendizaje internacional colaborativo en línea ofrece un marco en el que se encuentran participantes de diferentes circunstancias de aprendizaje. Un tipo específico de modelo de intercambio telecolaborativo es el e-Tandem, en el que se benefician diferentes dimensiones del aprendizaje de idiomas. Durante la interacción comunicativa e intercultural, surgen identidades que revelan el posicionamiento adoptado por los participantes en el discurso. Según los planteamientos postestructuralistas, la identidad se construye y reconstruye cada vez que se produce un acto discursivo, y emerge de la interacción de forma intencionada. El objetivo de este estudio es explorar las identidades y posicionalidades emergentes adoptadas por estudiantes universitarios de contextos escocés y mexicano. Bajo el Modelo Telecolaborativo Progresivo, 10 estudiantes trabajaron juntos durante un conjunto de 12 sesiones telecolaborativas realizadas a través de e-tandem sincrónico. Los resultados preliminares revelan que, aunque los participantes asumen inicialmente identidades como aprendiz de lengua extranjera, su identidad como experto en lengua nativa se desarrolla en relación con un posicionamiento contextual situado durante la interacción.

Palabras Clave:

Telecolaboración, Identidad, Comunicación mediada por computadora, Intercambio virtual, Identidad discursiva

Introduction

Language learning as an area of applied linguistics has been characterized by its constant evolution, practically since its beginnings. Telecollaborative projects, are an example of this, where through technological innovation a collaboration scheme is established between participants from different languages, cultures, and environments. Authors such as Mendoza (2014) and Cruz (2018) suggest that in

these contexts, students develop strategies for autonomous learning, planning skills, and collaborative competencies. In addition, the negotiation of meaning, error correction, pronunciation, and the intrinsic development of oral skills and listening comprehension are just some aspects that the participant can improve through telecollaborative exchange (Vasallo & Telles, 2009; Vinagre & Muñoz, 2011; Brown et al., 2019).

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Norton's research on identity and language learning (Norton, 1995; McKinney & Norton, 2008; Norton & Toohey, 2011) emphasizes that the learner is a social being with complex identities that are constructed and reconstructed every time he/she enters into a communicative and intercultural interaction. Thus, the positioning that participants adopt in a telecollaborative exchange is influenced by their belief system and/or stereotypes about the other and themselves; for example, the idea of identifying the other or identifying oneself with a particular culture or ethnic identity (Train, 2006; Ortega & Zyzik, 2008; Telles, 2014). For authors such as Klimanova (2021), who makes a systematic review of studies on identity in three periods from 1995 to 2020, within the post-structuralist tradition, what is most evident in virtual exchanges is that individuals experience different identities in social participation, so that the context determines the construction, emergence, and negotiation of identities, which is expressed through linguistic resources and discursive actions that show how the participant is positioned within an interaction in a telecollaborative environment.

This study is based on synchronous e-Tandem via videoconferencing (Zoom) in which pairs of learners who are native speakers of the language the other is studying join for the purpose of practicing and learning about each other's culture. In order to delve deeper into identifying how participants' identities emerge and how they position themselves to their peers, we employed the Progressive Telecollaboration Model proposed by O'Dowd & Lewis (2016) consisting of three types of tasks: Icebreaker Tasks, Practice Comparison and Analysis Tasks, and Collaborative Work Tasks.

The study we present is in-progress research, what we discuss in this article derives from initial analysis the research. Our findings reveal that while it is true that, participants in an e-tandem assume two identities as part of the interaction (L1 expert and L2 learner), it is also true that these identities are not stable stages but evolve during the 12 e-tandem sessions.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that supports this research is made up of three sections through which the concepts, constructs, and definitions necessary to understand the emergence of identity or identities during virtual exchanges of the e-tandem type are integrated: Virtual exchanges, Identity and virtual exchanges, and Task design in telecollaboration.

In order to clarify the concept of e-Tandem and teletandem, the term that we will continue using throughout the paper, in the first section we focus on virtual exchanges by analyzing the COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning) model, the different terms

used to describe them and the differences involved in their planning, organization, and development. In this section, we also discuss the concept of Computer Assisted Learning and the relevance of technological evolution in the field of virtual exchanges; finally, we make a historical review of the evolution of these exchanges and the main studies that have been carried out since their implementation. The second section focuses on the design of tasks for work in telecollaborative environments. To do so, we briefly review the evolution of how collaborative work has been understood through the use of activities and tasks. Until reaching the Progressive Telecollaboration Model proposed by O'Dowd & Lewis (2016) and its importance for the development of collaboration in virtual exchanges. Here we delve into how this model is integrated into virtual exchanges and how it has been applied in other studies. The third section addresses the state of the art in studies of identity or identities within virtual exchanges, the evolution in the conceptions of the construct from structuralist conceptions of identity to post-structuralist ones that speak of the construction and reconstruction of identities within discursive acts (Helm, 2017). Finally, in this section, we propose the way in which the theoretical constructs addressed guide our research.

Virtual Exchanges

Our study is in the area of Applied Linguistics under the research line of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and virtual exchanges. Virtual or telecollaborative exchange projects are in themselves an example of the enormous development that language learning has undergone as a consequence of the rapid development of technology. In these projects, through technological innovation focused on communications, a collaboration scheme is established between participants who may be geographically and, in some cases, culturally distant, which makes the exchange an extremely interesting and innovative experience for the people involved, both as participants and as coordinators of these projects. From the point of view of the study of virtual exchanges, not only linguistic aspects have been analyzed, such as the improvement and enhancement of skills, but also collaborative competencies or intercultural competencies (Avgousti, 2018; Brown et al., 2019; Dooly & Vinagre, 2021). Such has been the relevance of the study of virtual exchanges that for authors such as Vinagre (2022), a virtual exchange constitutes in itself a new pedagogical approach.

In the particular case of our study, we consider a specific type of virtual exchange, e-Tandem or Teletandem. In this type of exchange, different dimensions related to language learning are benefited. It is an activity that takes place in a one-to-one environment within a

communicative interaction, where the participant puts into practice strategies that promote autonomy in learning.

The studies of virtual exchanges and language learning have had a gigantic evolution in recent years (Avgousti, 2018; Klimanova 2021), product of the scopes and perspectives that in different periods have been glimpsed; from research conducted in the area of technological innovation and language learning, research about the development of intercultural competences to studies about identity and multilingualism. It is important to emphasise that our study is based exclusively on synchronous e-Tandem via videoconferencing (Zoom), in which pairs of learners, each of whom is a native speaker of the other's language, practice the language and learn about each other's culture. For the study, we use Telles (2015) definition for teletandem, which is described as a virtual, collaborative, and autonomous context in which two students help each other in the learning of their own language. This type of Virtual Collaboration is based on the concepts of autonomy, and reciprocity. According to Cortes-Aquino et al (2020), e-tandem is differentiated from teletandem in that the latter is characterized by the visual aspect in the communication and in that it goes beyond writing and audio, guaranteeing oral and non-verbal dimensions of communication.

Identity

In the case of the framework of analysis proposed by Bucholtz & Hall (2005), the authors define identity as the social positioning of self and others (p. 586). Within this framework of analysis, five fundamental principles are established for the study of identity: emergence, positionality, indexicality, relationality, partiality. Each of them addresses important aspects for the analysis of identity; however, in the specific case of our study, the principles that we take up in our study are:

Principle of emergence. Identity is seen as a product that emerges from linguistic practices; thus, it is defined as a social and cultural phenomenon.

Principle of positionality. Identity emerges in discourse through the temporal roles and orientations assumed by the participants. Beyond the view that identity is a set of social categories (age, gender, social class), the positionality principle explains that identity relations emerge from local identity contexts.

Principle of relationality. Identities are not autonomous or independent; on the contrary, they always acquire a social meaning in relation to other available identities and other actors.

Principle of indexicality. This refers to the way in which language elements are employed in discourse to construct an identity positioning. Bucholtz & Hall (2005) emphasize:

a) The overt use of identity categories or labels.

b) Implications or presuppositions towards one's own or the other's positioning

c) Use of evaluative, epistemic orientations during the interaction as well as interaction roles

d) Use of linguistic structures or systems that are ideologically associated with specific persons or groups (p. 594).

Additionally, we retake the principle of situationality (corresponding to the local level of the principle of positionality) from Helm's (2017) proposal, a principle that comes from the field of ethnography and establishes the importance of the situation in which the interaction takes place, as well as the characteristics of the participants. For Helm (2007), the location of identity in discourse allows the incorporation of positionality of other types such as ethnographic or local that translate into concrete discursive actions.

Thus, in our study we seek to identify and characterize the identities and positionings that emerge in:

(a) The teletandem interaction of Mexican university students with Scottish university students,

b) The orientation of the identities and positionings that emerge as a function of the tasks

Design of Telecollaboration Tasks

The tasks that participants perform within a telecollaborative exchange play a fundamental role because they are the common thread that will encourage the practice of certain linguistic uses, will contribute to the development of intercultural skills, and will allow participants to identify themselves in a given circumstance. As suggested by authors such as Vinagre (2022), telecollaboration in itself, without a clear pedagogical structure, will not achieve the development of learning and skills in participants

Thus, the design of tasks in telecollaborative environments represents a fundamental aspect that must be seriously considered. The design and development of tasks involves pedagogical, intercultural, linguistic, and technical factors that those of us interested in the area must take into account. Some of the questions we can ask ourselves to understand the complexity of the design of a task are: What aspects of the language do we seek to develop in the telecollaborative exchange? what intercultural aspects will be involved during the development of the task? what elements does the participant need prior to the start of the task to be able to carry it out successfully? and what technological elements can we count on to carry it out? As can be seen, the task allows participants to have certainty about the topics they can address during the duration of their virtual exchange. This certainty gives meaning to the work that the participants will do as they explore their own culture and

the culture of their exchange partner (Furnstenberg, 1997).

The evolution in the development of tasks for Telecollaborative environments

As we can see, the work carried out by the participants in a telecollaborative exchange should be mediated through a task that offers a clear guideline on the objectives that have been determined, the strategies that have been planned to be used, and the products that are expected to be achieved once the telecollaborative exchange is finished. This planning will also allow students to have certainty about what aspects they should take into account prior to the development of the task. The design of tasks as such is a complex process that, like other important aspects within the pedagogical field, has undergone an evolutionary process. In the following paragraphs, we will briefly review this pedagogical aspect.

We can determine a first period in task design. Here, the development of tasks for socio-collaborative learning is offered by Meskill (1999), who talks about the anatomy of a task for learning in computer-mediated environments. In his proposal, he details a series of requirements that a task should include for language learning within Computer Assisted Learning environments. Among the requirements he mentions we can find that:

- the task has more than one possible solution to solve the problem,

- that the task is interesting and motivating in itself, and that it has a solution that is close to reality. Similarly, Chapelle (2001) developed a more integrated approach that considers pedagogical and sociocultural aspects in task design. However, his proposal still focuses importantly on how tasks contribute to second language learning from a linguistic point of view.

Doughty & Long's (2003) analysis of task design begins to make an important distinction between methodological principles of tasks and pedagogical principles. This proposal constitutes a first approach to the way in which those of us who implement virtual exchanges approach the task. The authors identify methodological principles as those features of instructional design motivated by research in second language acquisition and educational psychology, in other words, those theoretical aspects that underpin our research needs and what we seek to observe. On the other hand, the pedagogical principles refer to the concrete possibilities that potentially exist to put these methodological principles into practice, but at the classroom level. In this proposal, once again, there is a marked emphasis on aspects that have a direct relationship with language learning.

In a second period, we can locate the works of Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-v. Dittfurth (2011), who identified a series of pedagogical characteristics that tasks have and that can help the teacher not only in the design of tasks but also in the suggested sequences for work in Computer Assisted Learning environments. One of the important contributions that these authors make to task design is that they approach the concept of task from the learner's perspective. That is, an activity only becomes a task if it is able to engage the learner in meaningful language use. In addition to including the idea of the task sequence, Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-v. Dittfurth address the notion of balance. This conception is relevant because it shows that tasks have different objectives and characteristics, from cognitive, linguistic, to interactional, metacognitive, and technological.

One of the most important contributions of this second period was outlined by O'Dowd & Ware (2009). They categorized tasks into 12 general types and depending on the type of communicative activity they were organized into three general areas, which allow us to understand much more about what the task demands in cognitive, linguistic, and interactional terms; and allows us to locate its relevance in the task sequence. The three areas in which the 12 general types of tasks are located are Information exchange, Comparison and analysis, and finally Collaboration and creation of a product. A relevant aspect of the proposal made by O'Dowd & Ware is that each area corresponds to a particular phase of the collaborative process: introduction phase, comparison phase, and negotiation phase, the latter being where the most intense collaborative process takes place in the sense of the decision making to be done by the collaborative pair. Among the most relevant contributions made by O'Dowd & Ware are the vision of the activities from a much more discursive and interactional point of view and their organization in methodological areas of collaborative exchange, i.e., a task that corresponds to comparison and analysis will have particular activities that due to their characteristics will develop different cognitive skills in the participants. Finally, another valuable element is the relevance of the creation of a product as part of telecollaboration, an aspect that allows participants to make decisions on a tangible aspect and that in a certain way had already been previously addressed by Meskill (1999) and Chapelle (2001) when they define the task as an aspect that should be motivating in itself for the participant and that should pose the resolution to a problem of reality.

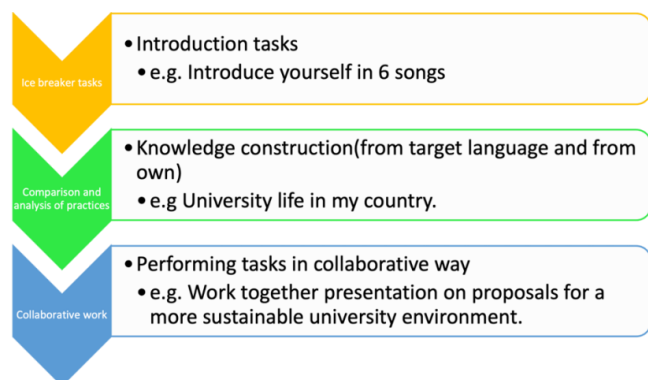
Helm & Guth (2010) subsequently propose a sequence of tasks for each phase. This would be comprised of a pre-task, the task itself, and a post-task. The aim of this sequence is that in the pre-task participants get the

context and what they need to be able to perform the task properly. The post-task will offer the participants in a collaborative exchange the possibility to reflect on what they have achieved while performing the task. This is very interesting because it allows reflection on linguistic and intercultural aspects they have encountered during the interaction.

Progressive Telecollaboration Model

The Progressive Telecollaboration Model proposed by O'Dowd & Lewis (2016), and which has been taken up by different authors, including Vinagre (2022), for the realization of a telecollaborative study using the concept of Linguistic Landscape, is a fundamental part of the evolutionary process of the work in the Design of tasks for telecollaborative work, and constitutes in our opinion a third period of this process. Under the approach of this Model, telecollaborative exchanges take place through the realization of three types of tasks that together allow the participants of an exchange to carry out collaborative work. Table1. Progressive Telecollaboration Model: Categories of Tasks describes each of the three categories in the Model and offers some examples to each of these stages.

Table 1. Progressive Telecollaboration Model: Categories of Tasks.



One of the most important stages of the telecollaboration process is undoubtedly the work prior to the exchange. When students participate for the first time in a virtual exchange, it is common that there are some preconceptions about what may occur during the exchange; for example, some students express concerns such as "I don't know who I am going to talk to, I don't know what I am going to talk about". With this in context, according to the Progressive Telecollaboration Model, the first type of task before the exchange becomes fundamental, because it is precisely when students have the chance to get to know each other prior to the exchange. In the first type of task, they exchange personal information that allows them to get to know each other and

begin to glimpse some coincidences about personal preferences or tastes. According to literature (Prusko, P. T., & Calix, L. P. 2016; Nissen, E., Cavalari, S. M., & Aranha, S. 2023), a first approach in an asynchronous environment can allow the participant to reduce their anxiety levels produced by the uncertainty that can cause a virtual exchange with someone "unknown". In addition, these tasks benefit the later stages of the exchange as they promote participants to socialize and improve their confidence in the activity and in their virtual exchange partner. Once a first approach is established, the second task, Comparison and Analysis, refers to the moment in which learners construct knowledge that they can share with their exchange partner, in this type of task the participant not only learns and constructs knowledge from what his partner shares, but also through what he himself researches to bring to the virtual exchange. As we can see in Table 1 Progressive Telecollaboration Model: Categories of Tasks, in the second phase the participant needs to compare how some aspect or topic works in the culture of the L1 and how it works in the culture of the L2; through this process, the participant has the opportunity to know, analyse, and confront values, principles, and ideologies of his or her culture with those of the target language. The third type of tasks proposed by the Progressive Telecollaboration Model corresponds to collaborative work, where from the information analysed in a previous stage, the participants can jointly generate an academic product or proposal that shows how each participant contributes to an integrated proposal by the participants.

Methodology

Zoom

As stated earlier, this is an ongoing study, and we are presenting the findings revealed at this stage of the research. Participants who voluntarily joined the ENES Leon Teletandem project signed an informed consent document that they would participate in a series of 12 videoconference-based Teletandem sessions via the Zoom platform that recorded both, audio and video. As it is typical, participants from both the University of Glasgow and ENES León connected to a Zoom session where once all participants logged in, they were assigned a partner and sent to breakout rooms, where one of them oversees recording the session. The Teletandem sessions have a duration of 1 hour of which the first 30 minutes are conducted in one language and the next 30 minutes in the other language. At the end of the session, all participants return to the main room where they are asked general questions about the session and what elements they found interesting about each other.

As mentioned above, each Teletandem session is based on the development of the Progressive Telecollaboration Model (O'Dowd & Lewis 2016), so the first task that participants perform is prior to getting to know each other. The tasks developed by the participants can be problem solving, decision making or exchanges of opinion, so the topics addressed are expected to encourage or trigger in the interaction the positioning before one's own culture and the culture of the other, as well as topics that may cause some kind of controversy and it is necessary for students to position themselves before it from their identity. The study was carried out over a semester during the school term (class period) in a period of 4 months.

For data collection, one of the instruments we used for the analysis of the identity construct, as well as its emergence and positioning adopted by the participants, were the transcripts obtained from the oral and text (chat) interactions generated in the Zoom session. Once the e-Tandem project finished, participants were asked to elaborate a self-reflection video in which they answer a series of questions related to their identity and positioning in each of the tasks. To obtain and analyze transcripts we adopt the multimodal approach proposed by Bezemer & Mavers (2011) and applied by Helm (2017). Within this approach, mode is defined as an organized set of semiotic resources used for the creation of meaning. In other words, the mode as a communication channel will allow us to identify identities arising from interaction whether at the oral, textual or visual level.

For this study, following Bamberg's (2022) proposal, we use the Positioning Theory proposed by Davies & Harre (1990), and pose three dilemmas that account for how people position themselves and the other within a discursive interaction:

- Agentivity vs Pasivity
- Equality vs Difference
- Constancy vs Change

Once the positioning has been analyzed, we use Helm's categories of analysis (Helm, F., 2017) for the identification of identities, situated, transportable, and discursive: open categories, implications, or presuppositions of their own or about the other, evaluative orientations and interaction roles.

Context of research

ENES León Teletandem promotes the voluntary participation of students in teletandem virtual exchange sessions organized with different universities and UNAM campus abroad. In the case of this study, participants both at the University of Glasgow and at ENES León, are volunteers and although they are invited to complete the

12 sessions, as the project lasted 4 months some students didn't complete them all and carried out only 10 and some of them did only 9 sessions.

Unlike the way in which other Teletandem sessions work, in the case of the project carried out with the University of Glasgow, students have the opportunity to get to know the partner with whom they will be working in more depth during the sessions. With this, participants can generate greater closeness and empathy for their peer and display clearer identity positioning in the interactions than in the case of sessions where they meet for the first and only time with a peer.

Participants

As stated before, for this study 20 pairs were integrated from which:

-ENES León: 4 men (Mexico City, Veracruz, Leon, State of Mexico) & 6 women (León, Mexico City)

-University of Glasgow: 3 men (Scotland, United Kingdom) & 7 women (Scotland, Rumania, United Kingdom).

The above information serves as a form of stratification of the participant population. These are categories that allow us to make a first exploration of who makes up the project group. An interesting aspect in this regard is that; for example, in the transcripts derived from the interactions that the participants had, participants identify themselves more or less with their place of origin (transportable identity).

Pairing procedure was flexible, elements such as common interests and musical preferences were considered when integrating pairs.

Preliminary Findings of the Study

At the time of publication of this paper, the 12 sessions for teletandem have already been conducted and we are currently analysing the video recordings and interviews. Preliminary findings correspond to a first stage of data analysis.

Throughout the 12 sessions corresponding to the ENES León-University of Glasgow Teletandem project, the audio and video transcripts reveal two major identity categories in the participants as we can observe in Table 2. Identity Categories:

Table 2. Identity Categories. (Smith & Thorne, 2015)

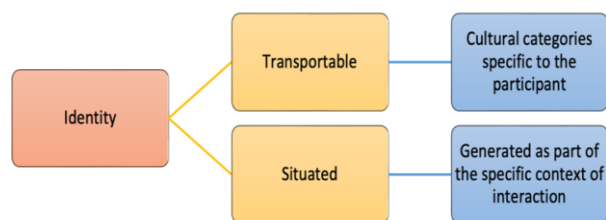


Table 2. Identity categories show two notions of identity revealed along the 12 sessions of the teletandem; according to Smith & Thorne (2015), these classificatory notions are derived from the process that participants carry out in the negotiation of their identities. Considering that the members of the project worked in a telecollaborative way during a span of 4 months, these positionings were moving in relation to said negotiation process. Coincidentally with what Helm (2017) states, the discursive identities assumed by the participants are fluctuating and anchored to a contextual circumstance of the interaction.

Agentivity vs Passivity

The first dilemma we pose following Davies & Harre's (1990) Positioning Theory addresses the participant's ability to position him/herself identitarily as an individual who has agency in his/her activities or as a passive subject:

Figure 1. Transcription session 2.

- (1) K: ...and ... and your degree...is...dentistry...yeah?
- (2) A: ahm...could you repat please?
- (3) K: Your degree...you study Dentistry and English?... [sic] Odon...tologia
- (4) A: aha
- (5) K: yeah, yeah in English we call it dentistry
- (6) A: [silencio]
- (7) K: and...ahm... why did you study...why did you choose to study dentistry?
- (8) A: ahm... because I... [se mueve el teléfono] he is dentist so it's a... he was a ... like a mentor?
- (9) K: ok...mmh
- (10) A: So, it's... a... easy for me
- (11) K: mmh...oh cool
- (12) A: Ah, it's a... it's a very funny career [se puede percibir una ligera risa de ironía no perceptible por K]
- (13) K: yeah? You enjoy it?

- (14) A: yes
- (15) K: yeah... it's very...very hard, my...my friend studies dentistry and she works all the time
- (16) A: yeah I... it's a... so difficult because you have to work all time •[...]
- (17) K: ahm one another question is... ahm how...how... how well known is your university in you country? Is it popular... and ...yeah
- (18) A: My university is the... most... pop...popular...? university of Mexico and...yeah
- (19) K: Has the most students... would you say?
- (20) A: oh mmm... could you repeat please?
- (21) K: does it have the most ... mmh students there?
- (22) A: ahm no...there are...mmh... erm... no there are not many students.

During session 2 in the English section, the native English-speaking participant K leads the conversation, in addition to maintaining a paused discourse, assumes the role of expert and "teaches" his partner the meaning of dentistry, while participant A assumes the role of language learner. An interesting phenomenon that was generated and that is related to this Agentivity-Passivity dilemma was that, when the session switched to Spanish and the native Spanish-speaking participant assumes the identity of the language expert, the participant did not correct the errors of the native English-speaking peer.

Equality vs Difference

This dilemma poses an interesting position on how we approach the other, and how we recognize ourselves, in other words, how I differ from the other and how we are similar.

Figure 2. Transcription session 3.

- V: And what about the food
- (2) G: oh yeha, we have to talk about the food, right? erm...the tacos...the tacos uff...uff [gestos de aprobación por parte de ambos]
- (3) V: yeah hehe [sonríe] delicious
- (4) G: oh my god, I have never tried anything that taste that good in my life, it was ridiculous... erm...the tacos al pastor
- (5) V: really [aprobando]
- (6) G. Incredible
- (7) V. yeah

- (8) G. Absolutely incredible... and they have pineapple with it, they have pineapple in it... I was like.. That...that shouldn't...that should not taste good but it does, it taste so good
- (9)V: yeah
- (10) G. I don't know what you know about....do you know anything about food here in the United Kingdom?
- (11)V: No, I don't know
- (12) G: There's a reason why you don't know... because there's no...there's not much... you know?... In terms of native...erm... like.... You know.... national food...you don't go to restaurants to eat British food, you know

Definitely, food is always an identity element in which, as individuals belonging to a culture, one can see reflected in it, different aspects we have grown up with. How we position ourselves before this cultural component is important, either as V does, feeling proud of the typical food, or as G does, distancing himself from his own food.

Constancy vs Change

The third dilemma we address refers to how we position ourselves before a given turning point and the notions of progress or stagnation, they generate in us as individuals.

Figure 3. Transcription. Session 2.

- (1) H: ...Me gusta el baile...soy un...bailador de... [sic] calleje... baile callejero
- (2) F: callejero
- (3) H: Cuando estaba en...en España una de mi mis cosas [sic] favritas...favoritas de mi...estadia ahí fue frecuentemente bailaba con...con...este... bailadores cai...callejeros...es un algo... parte de mi identidad es...un algo que...hago...también erm... me gusta el buen tipo erm... por eso erm....no quiero quedar en el Reino Unido... voy a viajar después...para viajar es algo que tambien erm que me importa un montón, no, no, no sentir erm atado a un sitio no...que que... tienes tienes eh, ...haya posibilidad eh de viajar,,, de de... moverte erm

Unlike participant H, F is able to acquire agentivity in his identity as a language expert and corrects his partner several times. From the point of view of this third dilemma, and possibly from a European view H, assumes a position of change in the face of a possible point of inflexion such as living in the UK.

Conclusions

Technology as a means of communication represents a scenario where we can contrast our own visions of the world and of ourselves, it presents us with challenges where interaction goes far beyond the mere plane of language learning. On the contrary, it highlights the way in which we attend to and solve very specific tasks. From the point of view of the identity construct, we can observe that there is an anchoring to what we know ourselves to be, whether it is transportable Identity, cultural heritage, our place of origin, etc. But at the same time, identities that emerge during the interaction are revealed, the Situated Identity that reveals discursive identity traits more identified to a specific moment, that is, how we position ourselves before a learning need as a correction of mistakes, as agents or as subjects.

Throughout the 12 sessions it is noticeable that the participants reveal more information about themselves and their different identities, partly due to the closeness and familiarity achieved by working with the same participant. Being able to work consecutively with the same partner generates a phenomenon of trust and friendship, to the extent that after the e-tandem sessions, many of the participants continue to converse regularly through their social networks.

It is evident that when forming pairs, it is necessary to generate a good start in the icebreaker stage of the sessions, otherwise the students will generate a limit in their interaction; however, this is also part of the identity process that they are building. It should be noted that the videos allow us to have a vision not only of the verbal plane, but also from the nonverbal plane such as gestures or body movements of approval or disapproval that occur as part of the exchange.

The present study is part of a research in progress, so we have unveiled some interesting findings that support the importance of the study of identity in medium-length telecollaborative exchanges.

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