

Chapter 5

Portuguese Language Teaching, Lusophone Literature, and Telecollaboration



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5.1 Teletandem: What it Is, and What it Is Not

Teletandem is one of the many types of telecollaboration. It is defined by Telles and Vassallo (2006) as a virtual context of foreign language teaching/learning within which pairs of native (or competent) speakers of different languages work collaboratively in order to learn each other's language. By means of online, computer-mediated, and videoconferencing software, each student plays the role of learner for 30 minutes by speaking and practicing the partner's language. Then, the roles are reversed, and the languages switched. It is important to note that several other terms have been used for this type of telecollaboration, not necessarily with the same exact definition, such as eTandem, Virtual Tandem, Online Intercultural Exchange, or InTandem, among others.

Some of the common misconceptions about Teletandem, and telecollaboration in general, are that it is just a shoot-the-breeze style interaction, a simple conversation between language partners with no direction, objective or specific purpose, and, perhaps more absurdly, it makes the instructor's job easier.

Quite the contrary, Teletandem is strongly rooted in Brammerts' (1996, 2003) three principles of in-tandem foreign language learning: one language at the time, reciprocity, and autonomy. It is a directed interaction with guidelines and instructions that allow the interactors to move within those parameters creating a conversation that will flow and develop freely. The autonomy principle provides ample space for the creativity and spontaneity that are natural to conversation. Reciprocity, on

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the other hand, allows the interactors to negotiate how feedback will be given for grammar, vocabulary, or cultural items that arise during the interaction. It is an excellent complement to task-based language teaching (TBLT), which, according to Broady (2006), may at times not provide sufficient interaction opportunities in addition to, as Bruton (2005) points out, yielding little acquisition of new grammar or vocabulary features. Finally, the approach of one language at a time for 30 straight minutes each increases the student's level of comfort and ease over time, which in turn will improve fluency.

5.2 The Use of Literature as Linguistic Development in Telecollaboration Studies

Telecollaboration has been part of the foreign language field for decades now (Brammerts, 1996). The Teletandem Brasil Project began in 2006 at São Paulo State University (UNESP) in an area where some of the concerns were of grassroots nature: relative weakness in foreign language education; quality of foreign language teacher education; digital literacy exclusion due to limited access to technology; hegemony of English in relation to other languages; geographic isolation, both linguistic and cultural; restricted access of economically challenged students to world languages and cultures; general social and educational exclusion; and above all, the need to develop oral competence (speaking and comprehension) along with writing and reading abilities in FL learning.

The Project pairs up Brazilian university students who wish to learn foreign languages with students in other countries who are learning Portuguese. Telecollaboration is an important and useful tool to help students develop their language skills and promote intercultural contact and critical cultural awareness. It encourages an inclusive environment of education and educational collaboration, in addition to creating the opportunity for students to have multicultural contact and to practice the language with a native, or competent, speaker of the target language.

When examining the literature on telecollaboration, one will find that there are many aspects within the language learning/teaching process, which have been researched and studied, for example, corrective feedback (Freschi & Cavalari, 2020; Cavalari & Freschi, 2018; Garcia, 2017), use of dictionaries and translators (Sartori, Alves & Salomão, 2020), assessing oral proficiency (Consolo & Furtoso, 2015), language-related episodes (Fernandes & Telles, 2015; Garcia et al., 2012), communication strategies (Silva-Oyama, 2010), learning strategies (Campos & Salomão, 2019), implementation (Souza, 2020; Kaneko-Marques & Garcia, 2019; Cavalari, 2018; Garcia & Souza, 2018; Telles & Ferreira, 2011), teacher's role (Cavalari et al., 2019), teachers' beliefs about culture and language (Salomão, 2019), and self-assessment (Gontijo & Salomão, 2019; Cavalari & Freschi, 2018; Furtoso & Ferreira, 2018), among others. Some of these studies can be categorized into language-related, interaction-related, and cultural episodes. According to Swain

and Lapkin, language-related episodes (LREs) are described as “any part of a dialogue where the students talk about the language they are producing, question their language use, or correct themselves or others” (1998, p. 326). Zakir, Funo, and Telles (2016) describe cultural-related episodes (CREs) as any part of a dialogue in which language learners discuss their own or their partner’s culture (adapted from Swain & Lapkin’s, 1998 LRE definition) and “instances of spoken classroom discourse that concentrates on the collaborative construction of cultural understanding and cultural knowledge” (Zhu 2012).

There are no studies concentrating on the role of literature and literary readings in the telecollaboration environment. The first attempt to endeavor in this area is the case study conducted by Ramos and Carvalho (2020), which proposed the use of telecollaboration to promote the discussion of readings in L2 using the Teletandem model. The study was conducted with the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* (UNAM) and the *Universidade Estadual Paulista* (UNESP) *Faculdade de Ciências e Letras de Assis* (FCL) in fall 2019. For this study, students were encouraged to choose the literary work they wanted to read and discuss it after the sixth teletandem session. The authors reported their findings based on the analysis of one participant. The findings indicate that literature discussion was not spontaneously initiated by the participants. It required an extra incentive to help participants engage and start discussing the literary work they chose, a text entitled “Carioca” from a contemporary author, João Doederlein (2019), published on Instagram as a post. During the discussion, participants talked about the content of the text, and it also triggered a debate on tangential topics.

The current study aims to expand on the study of Ramos and Carvalho (2020) and proposes the new dimension concentrating on literature in a telecollaboration context. This new dimension will be literature-related episodes (LitREs) following the work of Swain and Lapkin (1998) and the work of Zakir, Funo, and Telles (2016). LitREs are any part of a dialogue in which language learners discuss literary texts of their own language or their partner’s language.

The excerpt below brings an example of part of an interaction in which the participants are discussing the novel *My sweet-orange tree* (*Meu pé de laranja lima*) by José Mauro de Vasconcelos (1968). From the transcription, one can notice that both participants are thrilled when they realize that they had both read the book and had quite a positive experience.

Example 1: Excerpt of LitREs (A: American Participant, B: Brazilian Participant)

B: [eh]... you know any Brazilian authors /, have you read anything from a Brazilian author?

A: aw, no. The only thing I read from a Brazilian / was well... *Meu pé de laranja lima*. [My sweet-orange tree].

B: [aw no] [laugh] That’s one of my favorite books / Oh my / that’s amazing.

A: [then] It is / is a great / wonderful book. I was surprised / ah I thought it was a children’s book / but it was not. My experience was great reading this book.

B: [aw, Oh my]... this is the book that I most love. I always cry / I cry a lot with this book. The first time I read it / I cried for a week / I was suffering with the story and crying / it was ... I swear. You know? [then] I remember... I read it again, I watched the movie. Then, I read it one more time... I don't know but I think I will still like this book when I am 50, 60 years-old. I believe this book will have the same impact or maybe even more ... more than when I was a child ... teenager. Anyway, if I am speaking too fast, please interrupt me.

A: No, go ahead. I am following everything.

The use of literary readings in the telecollaboration context offers the students involved the opportunity to be exposed to different registers, discuss authentic texts, negotiate understanding and meaning of the literary reading, connect discussions with their own realities, enhance their linguistic skills in L2, and tie linguistic, interactive, and cultural spheres together. In addition, literary texts feature an extensive variety of lexical and grammatical items. Through reading, interpretation, and discussion, students are exposed to features of written language, such as a variety of syntactic functions, linguistic structures, ways of connecting ideas and developing argumentation, and essential factors for the development of linguistic and communicative competence (Reichter, 2013).

Therefore, the present chapter proposes to investigate in a cross-sectional study the benefits of bringing together literature and telecollaboration for foreign language development.

5.3 Methodology

The data collection for this research project was conducted yearlong. Due to the limited number of participants, a qualitative, interpretive case study approach was used, which includes qualitative instruments, such as interviews, questionnaires, audio and video recordings, as well as discussion sessions.

As discussed in Duff (2007), this model is robust, as it allows triangulating instruments and data and examining the same object from different angles. The details about the methodology, research questions, materials, and procedures are explained below.

5.3.1 Research Questions

As mentioned previously, this study looks at the relevance of using literary texts for linguistic development through telecollaboration. Thus, it aims to answer the following questions:

1. Does the use of literature in telecollaboration offer a neutral ground for both learners to participate and collaborate without constraint?

2. Does the use of literature in telecollaboration add knowledge and contribute to learning?
3. Does the use of literature in telecollaboration lead participants to discuss other topics related to literary works?
4. Does the use of literature in telecollaboration enhance virtual intercultural communication?

These questions will be addressed in the results section.

5.3.2 *Participants*

Eighteen students from each institution participated in the study. Participants were selected voluntarily from two courses in a Portuguese program at a university in the United States. The students were at the intermediate and advanced levels of Portuguese, at the beginning of the second and third years of formal learning or the equivalent of the levels B1/B2 in the *Common European Framework of Reference* (Council of Europe, 2001). This was the second year that the Portuguese program participated in a Teletandem project. Most of the students at the university are full-time students. The language courses are small and tailored to promote maximum language development.

The American university students carried out the telecollaborative practice with counterparts from a state university in Northeastern Brazil, which has been part of the Teletandem Brasil Project since 2018. It currently has 27 undergraduate majors, 9 masters, and 4 doctoral programs. Most of the students who participate in Teletandem are majoring in Language and Arts and come primarily from lower middle-class households. The majority of the students work two or more jobs, and they view a college degree as a passport for social mobility.

Given the socioeconomic disparity in Brazil and in the USA, Teletandem is a tool to make language learning equitable and to promote intercultural exchange.

5.3.3 *Procedures and Materials*

For this specific study, the data was collected during fall 2021 and spring 2022. Students filled out a questionnaire to collect demographic data, such as age, major, goals for language course, and previous experience with Portuguese.

Teletandem was an integrated activity, meaning that it was embedded in the syllabus during both terms, and it was a mandatory activity. Students could choose not to participate; however, if they started the project, they were required to continue until the last session. Participants had to meet for a minimum of eight 60-minute sessions. One person of the pair had to provide evidence of participation and duration of the encounters through submission of session recordings. Participants were

required to have a computer (desktop or laptop) or a mobile phone with access to the Internet and Zoom platform. These were necessary to participate in the meetings, to record the sessions, and to access the digital copy of the books at the library.

Participants were guided to discuss the literature books, 30 minutes in one language and 30 minutes in the other. They were also instructed to alternate the starting language each meeting to avoid code-switching issues as per UNESCO's original recommendation. After using the dominant language, it takes the brain some time to adjust to the non-dominant language. Therefore, the methodological reason behind this maneuver is to avoid benefiting one language over the other. It is important to note that this recommendation comes from over 15 years of observation and discussion with Teletandem participants.

Adjustments had to be made from fall to spring semesters to overcome issues experienced in the latter. Meetings were autonomously scheduled by students in the fall, which is the original method for Teletandem practice, also known as Institutional non-integrated Teletandem (TTD). In the spring, however, the weekly sessions were scheduled by the instructor and took place during class time, which is known as Institutional integrated Teletandem (iiTTD). Both TTD and iiTTD are described in Aranha and Cavalari (2014). In the first semester, there were many points of miscommunication and students not being able to meet their partners. As a result, WhatsApp groups were created in order to facilitate communication between the participants and their partners as well as faculty. Another challenge was partner assignment. We began working with fixed partners, which became an issue since most of the Brazilian counterparts also had formal jobs, some with two or three, which caused some sessions to be canceled. Therefore, in the spring, students were paired up at the beginning of each session. This allowed for even more diversity of opinions in the conversations, getting to know other students, and being exposed to different accents. Students were excited, and it was a clear motivating factor.

The weekly required readings followed the course syllabus. This way, students knew what was expected from them. All the sessions were recorded, and the videos were shared with the instructors from both institutions and later transcribed for analysis. There were weekly discussions, known as mediation sessions, in which students and their respective instructors could talk about their experience and socialize information with the entire group. Transcriptions of the discussion sessions and students' questionnaires will be presented in the results section.

Students were also required to fill out a questionnaire focusing on literature. The objective was to capture, on one hand, if literature was discussed or not, what the conversations were about, if the experience provided a better understanding of the novels as well as if the discussion about literature led to other topics, such as culture, politics, or society. On the other hand, we were interested in the students' self-assessment on their language progress in vocabulary, grammar, and fluency through these discussions about the readings.

The next section will present and discuss the case study results.

5.4 Analysis

The data was carefully examined to see how the literary discussion was approached by the participants, if discussions concentrated on the novels for the entire duration of their meeting or if it triggered conversations about other topics. For the purposes of this study, the analysis presented will be of the first, fourth, and eighth interactions, the questionnaires, and mediated discussions. The research questions will be addressed and discussed in this section.

Overall, examining the interactions, we found many instances of LREs, CREs, and LitREs. It was interesting to observe the dynamics of the encounters. Usually, the conversations started with a warm-up topic: the weather, vacation, holiday, or school. The duration of this warm-up was between 2 and 3 minutes and then discussion moved to the readings. All participants reported having a positive experience with discussing the literature during their teletandem sessions. Some of their comments were in relation to language skills (more fluency, less pauses, more accuracy, less L1 interference), cultural aspects, confidence, and motivation. Although this study does not aim at identifying or assessing the participants' LREs, CREs, or LitREs, it is important to note that these episodes originated from literary discussions. Below are American participants' comments on these aspects:

Example 2: Mediation Discussion – American Participants' Comments Language Abilities

I thought that the sessions helped me work on my speaking abilities. I feel I am much better now. I am able to articulate my ideas better. I also noticed that my vocabulary is better and my fluency as well.

Confidence

I think the very first thing for me when I started learning Portuguese was dealing with my insecurity, my lack of confidence. I wanted to participate in teletandem but I was not sure I could do it. Then, the weekly meetings helped me “unlock”. I saw I was able to communicate and my partner could understand me. This experience really had an impact on my confidence.

Motivation

I really liked speaking with my partner and learning colloquial language from him. Our discussions would start with the book, we would connect the social aspects present in the book, compare historical facts or talk a lot about the social consequences of poverty in Brazil.

Example 2 shows how participants felt about the interactions, their language development, and their confidence in the course of the 8 weeks of Teletandem. It is clear that the participants felt that their oral skills improved and that there was an increase in their lexical knowledge and an increase in their motivation, confidence, and attitude toward the language.

Below in Example 3 is an excerpt of a recording session in which participants end a discussion on *Capitães da Areia* by Jorge Amado (2008) and begin discussing *Comédias para se Ler na Escola* by Luis Fernando Veríssimo (2001). There are several aspects in this interaction that are worthy of further discussion. It is rich as

both participants contributed to it and shared their beliefs, difficulties, and frustrations without barriers. This is relevant since this phenomenon hardly manifests itself in the classroom. Students often feel intimate with their peers and are afraid to make mistakes. Participant B shares their desire to improve their language skills and tells Participant A that she/he doesn't have a friend who finds practicing the language and having an opportunity like teletandem important. Similarly, Participant A shares their experience about Luís Fernando Veríssimo's book that she/he enjoyed the reading but could not fully understand it. The humor in the short stories made it a bit complicated to make sense out of the joke. This level of negotiation shows that participants were comfortable in the environment and with their partners.

There is also an informative conversation about *Comédias para se Ler na Escola*. In this LitRE, participant B elaborates on the author's style and choices to use humor as a critical tool. This kind of exchange is relevant as it offers participants opportunities to better understand cultural norms and conventions. It also allows participants to communicate their ideologies and beliefs.

Example 3: Excerpt of LitREs - Teletandem Meeting (A: American Participant, B: Brazilian Participant)

- A: [Warm-up conversation about the weekend] I've just arrived from Miami. The temperature was 35 degrees. It's like 1.5 degrees. But now I am back to school.
- B: I am from Juazeiro do Norte, Ceará, Northeast region of Brazil. So it is always very hot here. (laugh). This moment is very important for me because I want to practice my English with you/. I want to speak with you because it is very difficult to speak with another person because I don't have a friend to talk in English with me. Understand?
- A: Yes, sure. We will practice both languages / in Portuguese and in English. We have just finished reading *Capitães da Areia* and now we started to read the book *Comédias para se Ler na Escola*. The book is cool and funny. There are some comedies that I read, but I don't understand much like the "O Homem Trocado". I see why it's funny, but... you know... I do not know...
- B: Well, Veríssimo always describes his texts with a hint of comedy, but he also makes a lot of criticism, social criticism through humor. They are light texts that approach everyday themes, Brazilians and the *carioca* lifestyle.
- A: *Carioca*?
- B: Yes, people from the state of Rio de Janeiro. It is interesting to exchange these ideas because this is the most interesting thing about how he [Veríssimo] develops his texts. He enables the reader to have a critical look at society, but also without the harsh criticism.
- A: He makes social criticism with a little humor. That makes it easier to talk about the topics, right?
- B: That's it!

These findings confirm RQ1: does literature in telecollaboration provide a neutral ground for both learners to participate and collaborate without constraint? Our data indicates that during the 8 weeks, participants tend to feel more comfortable

with the telecollaboration experience and with their peers, which lead to a neutral and learning conducive place. As stated by McCarthy: “for some learners, interacting online is less threatening and stressful than the more ‘public’ arena of the face-to-face classroom” (Azeredo-Cerqueira & Bértoli, 2021: p. 376).

Examining RQ2: Does literature in telecollaboration add knowledge and contribute to learning? There are several instances of LitREs that are worthy of analysis. Let’s start by looking at aspects of literature that occurred during the interactions. Students discussed the following aspects:

- Characters.
- Main plot and subplots.
- Passage(s)/chapters.
- Related literary work(s).
- Genre.
- Author.
- Language register and variation.
- Cultural aspects in the book.
- Visual aspects on the book cover.

As we can see in Example 4, during the mediated discussion, participants mentioned they had learned or developed the following aspects: new vocabulary, expressions, regional words, speaking (pronunciation, confidence), sociolinguistic, sociocultural, and historical information. Some of these aspects were already mentioned on Example 1, specially the LREs.

Example 4: Mediation Discussion – Participants’ Comments (A: American Participant)

A1: I learned a lot of new vocabulary, a lot of colloquial words.

A2: In one of the meetings, I discussed with my partner regional vocabulary, words and terms that we read in the literature book that were common in Bahia and not so much in the rest of Brazil.

In Example 5, we witness another layer to support RQ2, above, and to answer RQ3: does literature in telecollaboration lead participants to discuss other topics related to literary works? It also addresses RQ4: does literature in telecollaboration enhance virtual intercultural communication?

Example 5: Excerpt of LitREs - Teletandem Meeting (A: American Participant, B: Brazilian Participant)

B: It’s all about survival. Everything they do is about survival... like we were saying, they’re not afraid of society because it only sees the negative in them. So much so that in that one instance when they go to the restaurant to eat some *feijoada*, some *vatapá*, a little something, the people at the restaurant immediately say that those kids are going to rob us. They need to gain their own space in society and the only way they can is through illegal actions, doing bad things. Speaking of *feijoada*, have you ever seen it? Have you ever heard of it?

A: Yeah... I was going to ask about that. *Feijoada*? What is in a *feijoada*?

B: *Feijoada* has black beans in it... I'm not sure you all eat beans much from what I see in the movies. Not really, right? Do you like beans?

A: Yeah! Sure!

B: You do? Great. *Feijoada* has beans, some people put ribs in it, sausage, some spices until the stew is nice and thick. You may ask why?

While discussing the social stigma and difficulties homeless children struggle with in Amado's novel, the Brazilian partner mentions local food that may be unknown to the American counterpart, thus changing the course of the discussion. Participant B goes on to explain the history behind *feijoada*, a black bean stew, and its origins in slavery, shows images, and elaborates on its ingredients. B then takes Participant A through no less than four local foods from northeastern Brazil, among them *mungunzá* and *vatapá*, their ingredients, and the social contexts in which one might eat such dishes. B finishes this culinary tangent in the conversation describing *acarajé*, a common street food in the city of Salvador, Bahia, where Amado's story takes place:

B: I'm going to show you one last dish. I swear it's the last one because it will show up in Jorge Amado's story... This dish is local to Salvador, Bahia where *Capitães da areia* takes place. You might have heard of it. It's *acarajé*.

A: *Acarajé*?

B: Have you heard of it?

A: Yeah, yes....

B: *Acarajé* is made with seafood. It is like a... fish... cake.

A: A fishcake?

B: It's like a fishcake. A type of bread with fish. They usually split it in half and fill the middle with the ingredients. They like to eat it with hot peppers. Actually, hot peppers from Bahia are no joke!

A: Oh... Interesting....

B: It's delicious! Delicious! One thing I like to do is to talk about food!

A: (Laughs) I love food! I exercise just to be able to eat more!

B: (Laughs) I should do that too, but my exercise is chewing!

The talk of local food from the northeast of Brazil, mainly the states of Bahia and Ceará, triggered a geographic clarification from A, which led B to talk about the region's geography, the history of Portuguese colonization in the area, the exploitation during colonial times of the rich northeast, the current state of the economy in the region in comparison to the rich southeast, and how northeasterners suffer prejudice from other regions because of the current poverty, health, and education levels. The discussion about the economy and the elites in the northeast reminded B of a character in Amado's novel as can be seen below.

B: During this period in *Capitães da areia* there is a historical period in which a hero emerges that you might remember. It's *Bem de Vida*, I think?

A: Isn't it *Volta Seca*?

B: That's it. *Volta Seca*, sorry... *Volta Seca* is the godson of Virgulino Teixeira, known as *Lampião*.

A: *Lampião*, yeah, *Lampião*. I saw *Lampião*, but I was a little confused....

B: Quem é ele, né?

A: Who is he?

The poverty and the prejudice displayed by other regions toward the northeast triggered a historical figure in the conversation who is mentioned in *Capitães da areia*. B explains to A a period in Brazilian history, when landowners and the elite controlled the food in the northeast, in which a figure emerges to fight back.

B: Virgulino Ferreira was like an avenger to people in the northeast because he would rob the landowners and give food to the poor, like a northeastern Robin Hood. You know? [*Lampião* and his band] may seem like heroes at first, but they were bloodthirsty. They would rape, rob and pillage towns, but also fight the elite to help the poor. He did all this because he was very religious, actually he respected and feared a famous priest. His name was *Padre Cícero* and he founded the city where I live.

A: Really?

Participant B relates the relationship of these two famous historical figures; shows images of *Lampião's* *cangaceiro* band and his love, Maria Bonita; and describes the semi-nomadic *cangaceiro* culture, its values, and its way of life. The conversation continues on to how *Lampião* and his band were killed and their heads displayed in a museum.

B: It is very confusing... At the same time, they were killers and helped the poor. They helped people. That's why when we talk about *cangaceiros*, sometimes people imagine villains and sometimes heroes.

A: Oh, wow. I got it. Very cool. Very interesting.

B: Check this out. This is the *cangaço* and the *cangaceiro* life. When you talk about *cangaço*, it's all about the lifestyle. To live lawless. You live according to your own beliefs. You take what you want and the path you want.

A: Their attire looks like a mix between a cowboy and a pirate. (Laughs).

The conversation flows toward the leather clothing they wore and the semiarid environment they lived in, known as the *caatinga*. In the interest of space, this 30-minute interaction does not end here. It still covers how and what history is taught in Brazilian middle schools versus the USA, the Paraguayan War, or the War of the Triple Alliance in the nineteenth century and how today's politics in Brazil seem to be reviving the ideas of two centuries ago. It is important to note that at the end of this interaction, Participant A says: "Thank you for all this new information. It gives me a much deeper context to consider in my readings."

During the interaction, both participants embark on a serious and long discussion about cultural, historical, philosophical, geographical, and political aspects of the northeast and Brazil itself, all triggered by Jorge Amado's novel and specifically by the troubled character *Volta Seca*.

Example 6 brings participants' comments during the mediation session. These observations are relevant as they show how participants are benefiting from the interactions and emphasize the richness of including literature (in the broad sense) in language programs. Naturally, this requires planning and balancing many methodological factors.

Example 6: Mediation Discussion - Participants' Comments (A: American Participant, B: Brazilian Participant)

B: The most important thing was to connect with people who have a different vision of my culture. I consider this very enriching because interacting with someone who is abroad (in another country), ends up enriching and valuing the way I see my culture, the literature of my country. (Appreciation for the partner's culture).

A1: We talked a lot about the book and discussed many of the social issues addressed in the book. For example, I grew up with the reality of the Paraná region ... I know almost nothing about the other regions of Brazil. So those meetings and conversations were very....

A2: For me, when we talked about books, we made many connections with Brazilian culture and society in general. It was very interesting to see Brazil from before and currently through literature. I learned a lot.

A3: I found it fascinating to know that Brazilian students like English literature, and even more so that my colleague likes Sally Read - the same writer I like.

As can be observed from these findings, literature in the context of telecollaboration is a fruitful tool that can broaden students' horizons and enhance many different aspects of their learning trajectory. In addition to the linguistic arena, there is a globalizing world where students need to learn how to navigate, not only by speaking the other's language but also by being proficient in cultural aspects, traditions, and norms. Literature in telecollaboration can help close the gap in foreign language learning and teaching to promote a more just and equitable language learning experience.

5.5 Conclusion

This cross-sectional research demonstrated that the use of literature in telecollaboration proved to be positive as it facilitated language development and language use, students' engagement and motivation, fostered conversation in diverse topics, and promoted literary reading, comprehension, and discussion. Even with the limitations, this initial study showed that the combination of literature in telecollaboration is needed.

Nevertheless, this combination requires careful planning before its implementation. A great amount of preparation is necessary in order to define a partner institution, coordinate the institutions' calendar, choose the appropriate literary works, prepare all the logistics (dates, time, partners, etc.), and organize orientation and

mediation sessions, and tasks, to name a few. Therefore, telecollaboration is not a mere free chat; there are many pedagogical, methodological, and theoretical aspects involved so that students may benefit from it. Then, it depends on the teacher's skills and resourcefulness to take advantage of telecollaboration and facilitate this opportunity for the students. However, the possibilities for multicultural exchange of ideas are limitless, and the same applies to language development.

Finally, telecollaboration can be a powerful tool to help programs achieve internationalization and create global citizens. Technology is an ally to help shorten distances and create a more equitable and socially inclusive environment.

5.6 Limitations and Future Studies

Future research concentrating on the role of literary-related episodes (LitREs) in telecollaboration should consider the following aspects to overcome methodological issues, to better understand the complexity and the characteristics of the exchanges in the interactions, and to be able to run more robust statistical tests.

Therefore, future studies should have a larger n in order to apply quantitative methods. Thus, with a larger sample size, more robust statistical tests can be applied, for example, when statistical significance between variables is evidenced, regression tests or a R^2 test can be performed. New studies should examine the longitudinal effects of teletandem interactions. It is relevant to understand the long-term benefits of telecollaboration compared to cross-sectional results.

Future research concentrating on LitREs should also consider the use of diverse literary works, other than novels and canon classics. We would suggest short stories and contemporary writers. Studies should also investigate the social and cognitive aspects of teletandem interaction for the communities involved. There is so much happening in the interactions that it is extremely relevant to examine aspects related to individual differences in the cognitive and affective area. In the cognitive domain, for example, we can highlight aptitude, working memory capacity, intelligence, awareness, and noticing (Mota & Azeredo, 2009; de Silva, 2011; Azeredo-Cerqueira & Mello, 2011). In the affective domain, we can mention attitude, anxiety, and motivation, for example (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003; Long & Doughty, 2003; Azeredo-Cerqueira & Badger, 2015). Finally, future studies should examine the outcomes of collaboration with one fixed partner versus multiple partners. This is one aspect that showed a positive potential through classroom observation, but more studies are required for conclusive results.

Despite its limitations, our study hopes to encourage more research into the use of literature in telecollaboration and bring further contributions to the understanding of this rich exchange on L2 development, cultural awareness, and language equity.

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