

# Learning French and Chinese through Skype

## Some conversational variations and methodological considerations

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# Plan

- Context
- Methodological considerations
- Conversational variations
- Conclusions and open questions



# CONTEXT



# Teletandem Language Learning

- Tandem Language Learning (Lewis & Walker 2003)
  - Principle of autonomy
  - Principle of reciprocity
- Teletandem
  - F2F tandem (Lewis & Walker 2003)
  - eTandem (Cziko 2004, Kotter 2003)
  - Teletandem (Telles 2009)

# The *Teletandem Dalian-Lille* project

French Department of the  
Dalian University of  
Foreign Languages

UFR Applied Foreign  
Languages  
Lille 3 University



2<sup>o</sup> edition: October 2010 – January 2011

3<sup>o</sup> edition: February 2012 – May 2012



# Research questions

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

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



# METHODOLOGY



# An ecological data collection...

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

## ... and its problematic questions

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



# Transcriptions

- ICOR transcription norms (ICOR group, 2006)

The screenshot displays the ELAN software interface for file 'ELAN - CS2.eaf'. The main window shows a video of a person speaking, with a chat window below it. The right-hand side features a control panel with tabs for Grid, Text, Subtitles, Lexicon, Audio Recognizer, Video Recognizer, Metadata, and Controls. The 'Text' tab is active, showing a transcription of the video content. The transcription is organized into channels: 'C oral chn (tdp)' with the text '嗯对对对 差不多也是 但是也有marketing的事物 的事物？', 'S oral chn (tdp)', 'SPAs' with 'chnSPAlex', and 'Positionnements expertise culturelle' with 'sujet personnel'. Below the transcription, there is a timeline with a waveform and a list of tracks including 'Positionnement', 'SPAs', 'notes', 'C oral fr (tdp)', and 'S oral fr (tdp)'. The bottom of the interface shows a control bar with playback buttons and a selection range of 00:50:16.544 to 00:50:53.949.37405.



# Transcribing Chinese

- *Pinyin* or Chinese characters?
- Representing tones
  - A conversational perspective on errors
  - 眼睛 [yan3jing4]
- Representing vocabulary errors
  - If understandable: 物动 [动物]
  - If not: *pinyin*



# Annotation of multimodality



# Corpus of teletandem interactions

(about 166.000 words)

Teletandem pair	Edition	N° of recorded sessions	Time length
LS	2010-2011	4	7h30
AH	2012	3	3h20
CS	2012	5	6h10
CW	2012	3	3h20
<i>Total</i>		<i>15</i>	<i>20h20</i>



# CONVERSATIONAL VARIATIONS



# Analysis approach

A mixed sequential approach (Ware & Rivas 2012)

## Qualitative approach

1. Conversational analysis of role-taking about the topic discussed (Cappellini & Rivens Mompean 2013)
2. Adaptation of existing categories of language learning scaffolding side sequences (Cappellini 2014, Cappellini & Pescheux 2015)

## Quantitative approach

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



# 1. Topics and role-taking

12 + 1 categories

<b>French topic</b>	<b>Chinese topic</b>
expert-learner	expert-learner
expert-expert agreeing	expert-expert agreeing
expert-expert disagreeing	expert-expert disagreeing
learner-learner	learner-learner
expert (chn)-learner (fr)	expert (fr)-learner (chn)

Mixed French and Chinese topic	expert-expert
Personal topic	expert-expert
Other	/



## 2. Scaffolding side sequences

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

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

⇒ for French and for Chinese





# Quantitative analysis approach

A descriptive statistics approach

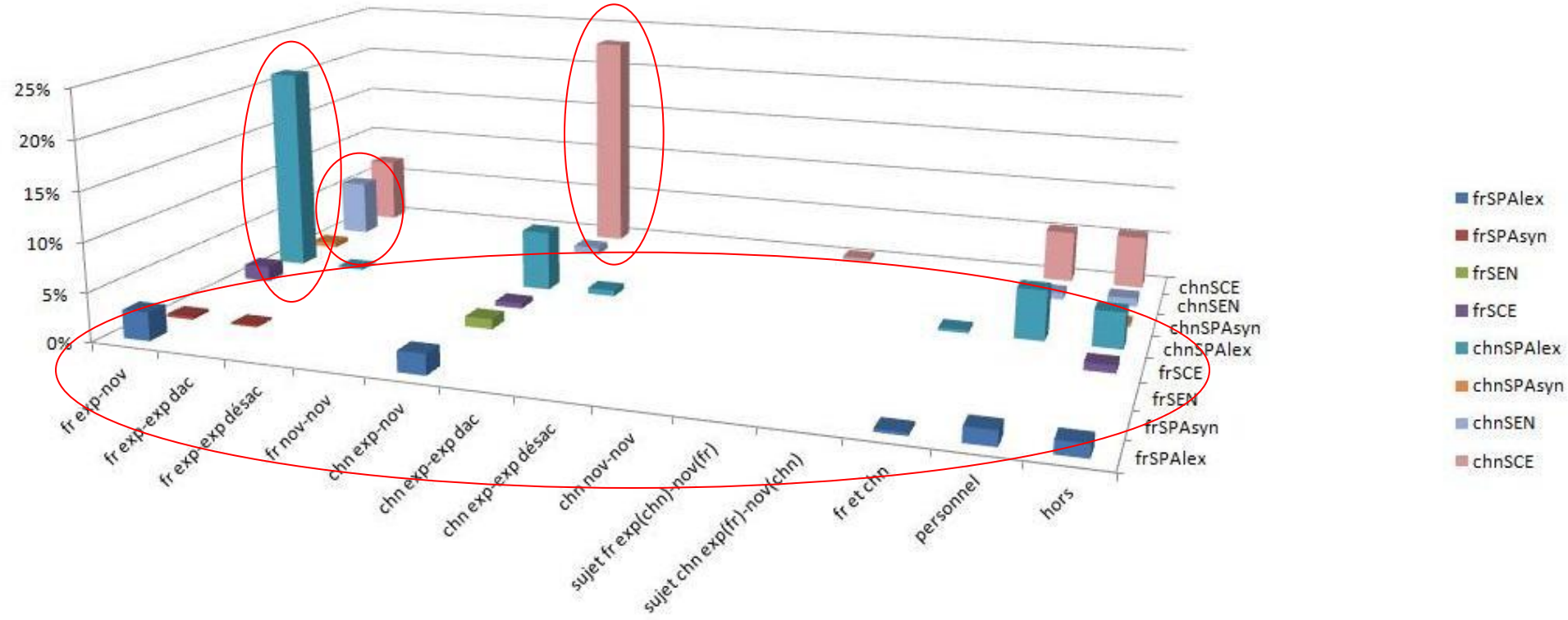
- Identification of occurrences of configurations
- Absolute frequency
- Relative frequency for each teletandem session and pair, for French and for Chinese
- Average of relative frequencies among pairs
- Total per cent frequencies



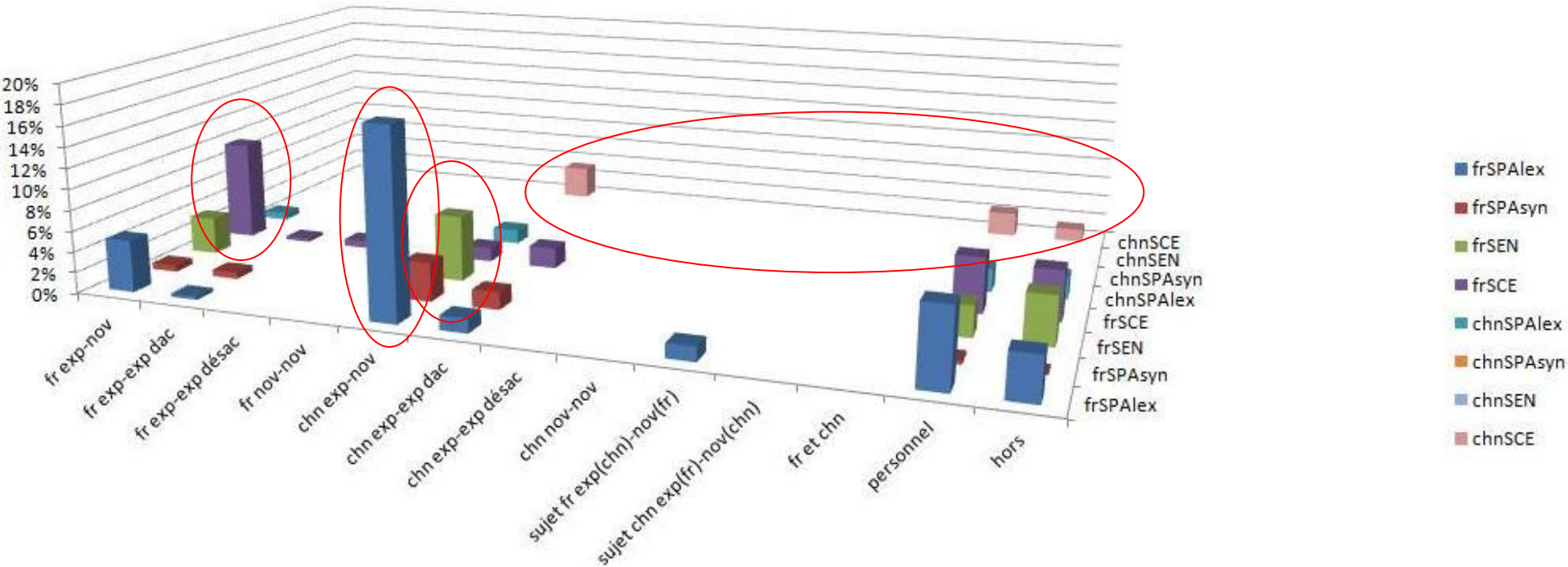
# Global view

- 519 side sequences
- 47 configurations observed (out of 104 possible configurations)

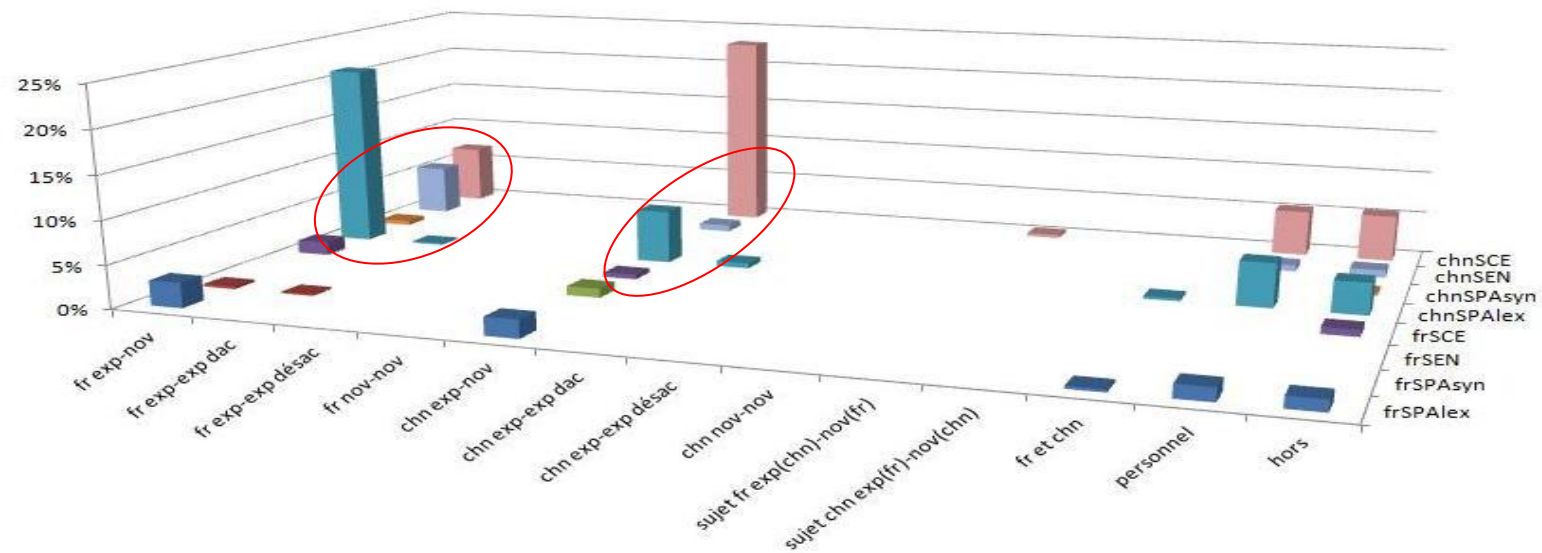
# Configurations in Chinese



# Configurations in French

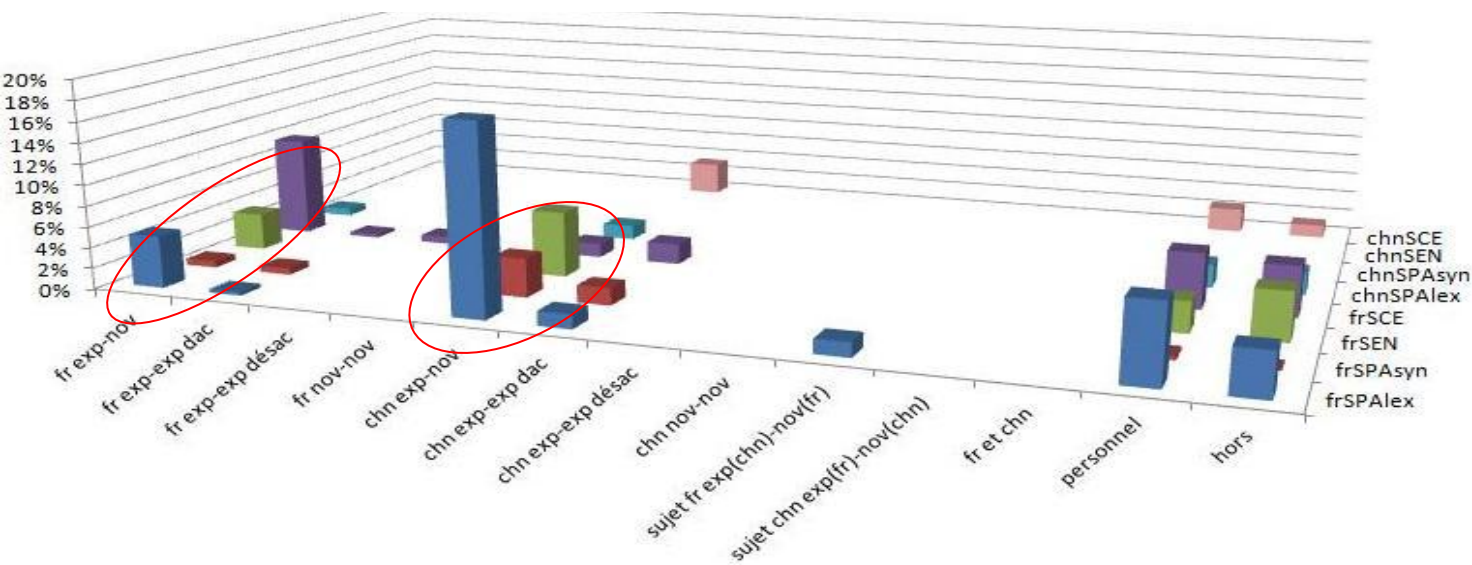


# Configurations comparison



## Chn parts

- frSPAlex
- frSPAAsyn
- frSEn
- frSCE
- chnSPAlex
- chnSPAAsyn
- frSEn
- frSPAAsyn
- chnSEn
- chnSCE



## Fr parts

- frSPAlex
- frSPAAsyn
- frSEn
- frSCE
- chnSPAlex
- chnSPAAsyn
- frSEn
- frSPAAsyn
- chnSEn
- chnSCE



# CONCLUSIONS AND OPEN QUESTIONS



# Stability and variation

What is stable

- Unilateral and crossed expertise configurations

What is variable

- Treatment of grammar
- Explicative conversational sequences



# Pedagogical considerations

The three most productive topic&role-taking configurations are

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

Teletandem and grammar acquisition

Teletandem and intercultural learning





# Open questions

- Methodology
  - How could multimodality in Skype conversations be represented ?
  - How could Chinese language be represented?
- Results and transferability to other contexts
  - Are the phenomena/variations observed specific to the corpus analyzed?
  - Are they specific to the language involved?



Thank you for your attention

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