

# Czech Language Learning Journal

Faculty of Humanities, Jinočnice

Fall 2019



This journal is a part of data collection on the motivation and attitudes of students learning Czech during their study abroad. I am trying to discover what influences the students, what they think and how their motivation develops and changes. You can write in Czech or English regularly about your learning experience. Please write your comments and feelings in as much detail as possible, honestly and openly as if you were keeping your own personal, confidential diary. You will not be evaluated on the content of your journal and everything you write is confidential.

Here are some questions to ponder while writing your journal:

1. What are you learning, how are you learning, what do you think about it?
2. Describe experiences during the learning process both in class and outside.
3. How do you feel about learning Czech at each point of the semester? What makes you feel like that?
4. What do you enjoy about the learning process, the language and the use of it?
5. How would you describe your motivation? What motivates you to learn more?
6. Are there any factors that demotivate you? If so, what are they?
7. What aspects of the class would you like to comment on?

Initially, you will be given time at the end of each class. Later on, you should record the entries at a time and place convenient for you. If you hand in your complete journal at the end of the semester, you can receive as much as 5% extra in the final evaluation.

Research has shown (Brown, 1985) that journaling helps students reflect on their own language learning. As you write about what you think and feel as a language learner, you will understand yourself and your experience better. Secondly, by participating in this project, you contribute to the overall knowledge on the psychology of the language learner.

9<sup>th</sup> October 2019  
I am from Germany, so I speak German. I've been speaking English for 13 years and I learned French for six years. (since Grade 3)  
I like learning languages and since I live in the Czech Republic for half a year I thought it might be nice to be able to understand and speak Czech a bit. So I don't feel like a tourist all the time. To understand the culture better. I also like that I know the people in the course already from the Orientation week in our faculty, so I feel very comfortable in this course. I would like to understand what is written on signs around the town.

11.10.2019

I liked learning the numbers. It helps me to repeat them really often. I think I have to repeat it in the next days. Now the new ~~the~~ words and verb forms feel really strange but ~~the~~ it feels good to understand ~~the~~ how it works.  
And I like that I can remember the sentences and words from the last week. It really helps me to repeat them every time.  
Outside the class I am happy that I can say thank you, hello, good bye.

16.10.2019

I am doing a sport course (Step Aerobic) and ~~the~~ the teacher always counts from 1-8. I was really happy ~~in~~ in the last lesson when I could understand her and counted with her in my head. Until now I really have fun learning the new words and recognize them when I hear them around me. I write the things I want to learn on little papers and read and memorize them when I am on the metro.

18.10.2019

The sentences we learned today seem quite confusing to me. ~~It is hard to~~ I think it will help to look at them for myself again ~~to~~ to have a clear order in my head. Before I just learned single words, so it is difficult now to put them together to sentences. Today I met my tandem partner for the first time and I want to practice the pronunciation of the words together with her.

~~20.10.2019~~ 23.10.2019

~~After~~ After the last lesson I was a bit confused with all the new sentences. But it helped to look at them at home and to write them down and especially to reformulate them. In my sport class I could understand "right and left", that was nice!  
At the meeting with my tandem partner, we looked at the menu ~~work~~ together and I tried to read it out to her. It was nice.

25.10.2019

Today we learned a lot of new words. I think they will be useful. Last weekend we went to a place outside of Prague with some people and wanted to order food in a restaurant. The menu card was only in English and because it was in a forest no one had an internet connection on their phones. So we ~~didn't read~~ only partly understood what we were ordering. So next time I hopefully understand better what it says after I learned ~~at~~ the foods and drinks today.

30.10.2019

Last week I went to a cafe where the ~~waiter~~ waiter/owner only spoke Czech. He ~~also~~ He asked me where I am from and I could answer him in Czech. That was nice.  
My parents visited Prague last weekend and when we went to a restaurant I tried to understand what it said on the menu and I could at least understand some words.

01.11.2019

Funny dialogue today. I can remember the words better now. Repeating them helps a lot.

I think it is getting harder, because in the beginning we only learned words and now <sup>ec. 11.2016</sup> it's getting to read sentences and conversations. I like that because this is what you need in "real life" but it ~~also~~ also means that I have to concentrate more and remember a lot of words to speak well.

Since I missed the last two classes and the test, I was a bit afraid that 22.11.2019  
getting back to the class would be difficult. But it was really nice today, and it was helpful  
for me to learn the grammatical structures of the verbs.

And I also think that it was good to learn for the test to wrap up everything we learned so far,  
and to memorize things that are not used that often.

27.11.2019

Many new words. ~~As~~ Practicing the verbs helps. Last week I went to a theater play in 29.11.  
Czech with German subtitles. I ~~was~~ understood some of the words, which made me really  
happy. So I think in every second sentence I could understand the word, sometimes  
more. Sometimes there were even whole sentences that we already learned in class.  
I think with the new verbs, I will be able to understand and say much more.

Yesterday I tried to order food in Czech, but when I just didn't know one word 04.12.2019  
the waitress directly switched to English. That was a bit disappointing.

It is really nice to know all the new verbs, but I think that I don't know all  
of them by heart, so I sometimes have to think of their meaning for longer.  
Which makes it hard when you listen to a sentence because the next word  
comes so fast. 06.12.2019

We learned <sup>the</sup> past tense today. I think it is nice to know this, because it opens  
new possibilities. 11.12.2019

It is really nice to be able to formulate whole sentences, also in the past. With all the  
new words, I can understand or guess quite a bit of what is written on posters  
around me. ~~So~~ Today I went to ~~an~~ a big store where you had to pick a number  
to see to which desk you have to go and although they called the numbers  
really fast, I could understand quite a bit, that was nice.

13.12.2019

It is really sad that the Czech course is nearly over now. Today for the first time I had the  
feeling that I can formulate sentences on my own and can have a little conversation  
~~without~~ with formulation own sentences and not just putting memorized phrases  
together. I had a great time in this class and I think that I learned quite a lot  
in this short amount of time. ~~I don't think it~~ Although I would like to continue  
learning Czech I think that I won't do it when I am back in Germany.

Yesterday I bought some postcards and the woman on the counter asked me if I want  
to have stamps for <sup>the</sup> Czech Republic or Europe and I could understand her and answer  
in Czech. That was nice.

### Czech Learner Survey

This survey is a part of research on the motivation to study Czech during Erasmus stay at the Charles University. It is anonymous, so be honest please. Read the following statements and write how much you agree or disagree with them. Please, do not leave out any items.

strongly disagree	disagree	not sure	agree	strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

1. I like learning new languages.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My university requires me to take a Czech language course.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I would have signed up for the course if it was optional only.	1	2	3	4	5
4. My university validates the Czech language course credits.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Learning the local language is important when you study abroad.	1	2	3	4	5
6. At the start, I was excited to start learning Czech.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I am learning Czech in order to understand Czech culture better.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I study hard because I am afraid of getting a bad mark.	1	2	3	4	5
9. At the beginning I thought learning Czech was important.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I felt uneasy at the start of the course.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Learning languages is a burden for me.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Learning Czech is important for living in the Czech Republic.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I like the atmosphere of my Czech classes.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I use Czech outside class.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I am good at learning languages.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I enjoy learning Czech.	1	2	3	4	5
17. The course meets the needs of the students.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I like the teaching method used in the Czech course.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I find Czech a hard language.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I often feel overwhelmed in class.	1	2	3	4	5
21. At the start of the course, I was afraid.	1	2	3	4	5
22. My final grade in the Czech course is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I look forward to my Czech classes.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I would like to be able to communicate with locals in Czech.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Having learnt Czech may be useful for me in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I am glad that I have taken the course.	1	2	3	4	5
27. I like my Czech teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
28. I think that the Czech for beginners course should be mandatory.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Learning Czech enhanced my study abroad experience.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I plan to continue learning Czech after I leave the Czech Republic.	1	2	3	4	5

Please provide the following information:

Gender: male  female

Erasmus student:  yes  no

Nationality: German

Mother tongue: German

Age: 21

Major: Cultural Studies

Czech is the 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup>  3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> or further foreign language I have taken up (please circle).

Did you have any contact with Czech prior to your arrival?  No  Yes. Specify:

Thank you very much, your help is highly appreciated!