

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.

09/10 = - I speak french and my language as mother tongue but also german and english and now I'm trying to learn a little bit Czech. I love to learn new language, new words... because it's a way for me to learn more about a culture but also about a new "world's view". Learning language is also useful to travel and meet new people without be blocked by any barrier language. By learning Czech, I hope to learn more about Czech Republic and to be more "integrate" in that country for the everyday life.

11/10 = - It helps me a lot to learn by playing and making interaction because in France we haven't so interactive language courses and that's really a pity so I'm really happy to have my first contact with Czech with this method. It's a little bit difficult to remember all what we learn in one course but with practice, that would be okay I think! (and hope). We learn very basic and useful notions and that's also great because in France - again - we often start to learn a new language with complex grammatical notions and that isn't so efficient! So I really love my first contact with this language because of this link with movement and games. → Thank you! ☺

15/10 = - I like to learn and "work" in small group for time to time → so everybody talk and participate, can express his motivations and it's not always the same people who talks and the same who just listen to them. It is really efficient for getting involved in the course and being an actor of it, not just a spectator! Learning things that are immediately useful in the everyday life is also a motivation to be focused on the course and try to memorize things. For the moment, I just say the basic greeting in Czech when I meet Czech people in the bus or in the supermarket but perhaps there will be more opportunity for me to say more than just that in Czech!

23/10 = - I missed a class last Friday because I was in Krakow and Auschwitz with one of my course and even if I have take the class for another student, I was a little bit lost today because I haven't participate to all activities and just read some new sentences. So I think that this course is really something to LIVE and not to READ

and that's correspond perfectly to the aim of the course = giving us tools to practice Czech and not just in a theoretical way! My conclusion now is that I have to renew mine a course again! More seriously, I'm really happy to see that now, I'm able to construct some sentences and ask easy questions! Every week we learn new vocabulary and even if I didn't remember everything, I feel more comfortable with the language (but also more lost, and that's paradoxical!).

25/10 Today we learn so many things! I really enjoy to have so much information and new vocabulary about the everyday life! I also begin to learn basic words by myself because I read them a lot in the street, shops... When public announcements are made in the transport, I understand new words like the information about the direction and that's completely exciting for me! Even if I can't have discussion in Czech because I haven't so much vocabulary, I feel more integrate and in secure because I have some basic vocabulary. I also like to receive cultural information during the course, that's connect really what we are learning here with the "reality" and the everyday life of Czech people.

30/10 It's always so pleasant to learn a language like that with games and team work. Some basic phrases are regularly repeated during the course (how are you, some numbers, expression like "nezumím...") so they begin to be familiar for me! But there is so much new things every lesson and I don't used all what we learn so I forget so much between every classes, especially about some verbs or high numbers. I found also really good to have classes during the week, it helps to have a good balance in the learning (not 2th 6^o at the same time - it would be too much for the concentration).

06/11 I found that work in team is really useful because we can correct each other or simply helps us really mutually. I also realized that time goes so quickly out: in ~ 2 month I will go back to France and I'm asking myself if I will continue to learn Czech there or not. What's also a little bit strange (but also normal I think) is that every time that I try to speak Czech here, people just answer me in English so I can't really practice my very basic knowledge with Czech people. But with the other classmates, we sometimes use basic expression that we learn in class and that's really fun! But not so useful in the everyday life but even if I don't really speak Czech with Czech people, I'm really happy to learn a little bit of this language!

08/11 I can see that I'm a little bit more comfortable in Czech when I'm in public places because I can understand some words in conversations or on advertisements. The only Czech persons I speak Czech with are the person in supermarket so that's always very brief, so I hope I will have more opportunities to speak more Czech, in other context that in supermarket or restaurant. But even if I don't really speak with lot of Czech people, I really like to learn it!

13/11: Today I realized that it's easier to read Czech than to speak Czech. I think that I have no problem anymore (or just no problem anymore) with reading and pronouncing the Czech but when Czech people speak to me, it going always so fast so that's really difficult to understand, even when they seems to say logical sentences. When people says me how much I have to pay, I always try to understand the number they are saying to me before reading it but they pronounce it so quick that much of the time, I understand it wrong!... But I think that it's a good learning.

22/M: So much things happened with czech in the last days! I was in Prague observatory and there, I understood some words the specialist says because it was about dissection (ulevo, napravo, nahore, dole ...) and I was so excited to understand it! I also learn czech in the common transport to prepare myself for the exam and some people who sit next to me saw that I was learning basic czech words and we begin to talk together in english about my practice of the language and why I was learning it but also a little bit in czech and that was really nice! The conclusion of it, is that it is really usefull to learn czech in the metro ☺. I found that the test went well, I didn't know everything but it was good to see that in 2 month, we learn so many things!

27/M: Today, the lesson was quite hard and I feel quite completely lost but with some review of all the "today's information", it will perhaps be better! It's sometimes quite difficult to remember all the vocabulary we learn especially ~~when~~ when we stop using it for quite a long time.

29/M: Wednesday evening, I had to go to the post to take a letter for someone else and I try to explain the situation in english after the traditional "dobry den, memluvim moc cesty" and the lady there didn't speak any english so we couldn't communicate well and she beccomes really angry because of that so this wasn't a nice moment because I really made effort to communicate with her and I tried to explain the situation also in czech but she just replies so fast. So I really realized that to communicate we have to be 2 and making both efforts (so I knew it before but I never experimented it like that)

04/12: I'm a little bit confused with all the verbs and the different way to conjugate them but it is already more clear than last week! I hope I will not be completely lost when we will start the past form ☺. This week I speak a little bit czech with a guy in the metro (and then, when I couldn't answer in czech anymore because I haven't enough knowledge in czech for it, we just continue in english) and that was really nice! I feel at the same time that we learn so many but also so few things, that's a really strange feeling and I'm already sad to leave Prague and Czech Republic quite soon because I knew that I will not learn czech and have opportunities to practice it anymore!...

06/12: I don't have any new experiences with czech since wednesday, but every week, I'm so happy to have czech class and to learn new things, even if I don't have so much opportunities - or I don't created so much opportunities - to use it.

11/12: I met a really nice czech girl and I told her that I was learning czech so she brought me one of her childhood's book with really simple stories in czech and we read some of them together. However, I didn't understand everything it was really nice! And I also joined a christmas choral and there we had learn 2 christmas song in czech. I also didn't understand everything in it but I recognized some past verbs form and understand few czech words. It was really interesting to have new contact with the czech language (I mean in a different

way and in a different context than in class). In today's lecture, I really appreciated the new exercise forms (to memorize sentences ...) even if I have some problems with the irregular past form. I will train again these forms for the test! And I can't believe that I have so few Czech lessons, it ~~was~~ had passed so fast! But it was completely amazing! G.

13/12: It was interesting to speak Czech with the student of the other group because we don't have the same level of knowledge so it was an interesting experiment. I'm also amazed to see that now, we are able to have a little discussion in Czech about common topics!

FHS Elem. 2019

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: French

Mother tongue French

Age 20

Major: Humanities

Czech is the 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 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!

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