tandem learning

Learning a language with Tandem means that two native speakers of different languages work together, in order to learn more about each others language and culture. To ensure that everything runs smoothly, here are a few tips:

Basic rules

1. Tandem partners meet regularly (e.g. 1 -2 times a week)
2. Each language is practiced separately.
3. An equal amount of time is spent on both languages.
4. The person, who is learning the language, decides what will be done.
5. The person, who is the native speaker, is patient, listens and is helpful.

A tandem is very successful when partners cooperate during the planning, make a conscious decision about the goals and ways of working, as well as prepare and follow up every meeting.

Planning the work

At your first meeting with your tandem partner, discuss the following questions: What do I expect from this tandem partnership? What exactly do I want to learn/practice? When, how often, how long and where can we meet? Try to arrange a time schedule.

Preparing the meetings

Before you even meet, think about what you would like to do together. Make sure you decide on the topic(s) and write down any useful words and phrases before you meet. Write out specific problems that your tandem partner can help you with.

Following up on the meetings (evaluation)

After every meeting hit your memory's 'replay' button and write down the new words and/or phrases that you've learned. If you took notes during the meeting, put the new words and/or phrases on vocabulary cards. Don't forget to also write down any questions you still have so you can talk about them next time.

Attach to each meeting any materials or products that have been created or used before, during, or after the meetings (e.g. texts you have read or written; songs, radio or video clips; your own audio recordings; pictures...).

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food for thougt

Evaluation

The following selection of "food for thougt" gives you support in step-by-step optimizing your learning process. By the end of a session, consider only a few questions to think about and take some notes. Choose different questions during the course of your tandem.

- Was the session fun? Was it useful, interesting? Why?

- How suitable have been time and time planning, place and used material? Did we respect the "basic rules" (p. 2)?

- What did I learn? Did I fully achieve today's goal or not?
  - If so, how well? Which indication (criteria) is there?
  - If not, why not?
  - Can I give any evidence ("product") in the attachment?

- How did I learn? How effective were the strategies and activities?
  - Am I pleased with my contribution / my partner's contribution today?
  - Did I receive enough help? Did I ask for help?
  - Am I copying my partner's use of grammatical structures, new expressions or pronunciation correctly?
  - Am I reusing the new vocabulary / structures I have acquired?

- Did I receive feedback on my progress / mistakes? Did I ask for feedback?

- What is my next step? Are there open questions? What do I want to consolidate or repeat?

- What else was important for me?