

TANDEM

Neuigkeiten



NEWS - BERRIAK - NOVEDADES

MATERIAL DIDACTICO E INFORMACIONES PARA PROFESORADO DE IDIOMAS

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Er erschien ursprünglich mit je etwa 30 Seiten dreimal jährlich (Januar, April, Oktober). Die Seitenzahl wurde schrittweise zugunsten von Internetpublikation reduziert. Inzwischen verlangt die spanische Post, die TN als Brief zu frankieren. Daher werden sie seit Nr. 26 nur noch als PDF versandt. Den Acrobat Reader kann mensch kostenlos bei www.adobe.de, www.adobe.es, www.adobe.com bekommen.

Jedes Mitglied/Lizenzinhaber erhält zwei Exemplare (für Verwaltung und LehrerInnen/TandemvermittlerInnen). Die PDF-Version kann und sollte innerhalb der Tandem-Einrichtungen massenhaft weiterverendet werden.

Beiträge mit einer Länge von bis zu 10 Seiten (müssen nicht auf Deutsch sein) sind uns willkommen, wenn sie auf einer Diskette (DOS/Windows, für IBM-kompatible, Formate: Word 6, RTF) oder per E-Mail (bitte nur Rich Text Format !) eingeschickt werden. Wir lektorieren die Artikel nur 'sanft' und schicken dem/r AutorIn ein Exemplar des nächsten Rundbriefs mit seinem/ihrer Artikel zu. Auch Beiträge von ausserhalb des Tandem-Netzes sind willkommen.

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*Die Tandem-Neuigkeiten haben eine
ISSN-Nummer und Artikel in ihnen
sind eine Zeitschriftenveröffentlichung.*

Die Hauptsprache des Rundbriefs ist Deutsch, wir nehmen aber sehr gern auch Artikel in anderen Sprachen an.

Redaktion Nr. 36: Jürgen Wolff

Die Verantwortung für die in Artikeln ausgedrückten Meinungen liegt bei ihren AutorInnen, bei Nachdrucken aus anderen Zeitschriften bei deren Redaktion oder AutorInnen.

1. Deutsch und andere verbreitete Sprachen

1.1. Der Schnabelwetter



Nicht kommerzielles Lehrmittel für Deutsch als Zweit- oder Fremdsprache für Kinder (ab 11 Jahren):

www.schnabelwetter.ch

1.2. FAGE / GERN: DeutschlehrerInnenkongress in Spanien

BESTANDSAUFNAHME UND BLICK NACH VORN - Überlegungen zur Vermittlung der deutschen Sprache und Kultur in Spanien; Vitoria-Gasteiz; 20.-22. September 2007

Programm auf: www.fage.es/vitoria07

2. *Euskara eta beste hizkuntzak* / Baskisch und andere Minderheitensprachen

2.1. Webhinweise

Zum Übersetzen von Einzelsätzen Deutsch>Baskisch:

www.euskomedia.org/esku-eskura/id_ger/Dw_dok/MARKOAK.htm

Info der Einrichtung, die mit einer 'Baskischen Akademie der Wissenschaften' vergleichbar ist:

www.euskosare.org

Liste von Baskischlernmöglichkeiten:

www.euskalkultura.com

3. Formación / Fortbildung

3.1. The Tandem partner Intermediation* (Standard Procedure)

* This word, which is used as a translation of a German word 'Vermittlung', was coined in order to facilitate the understanding of the idea.

Jürgen Wolff, translated by Monika Zatylny/Krakow, revised by Ron Schmitz/Budapest

Helpful questions before reading the text

Have you or one of your friends already experienced a language exchange?

If yes, was your partner intermediated or did you find him/her on your own?

What do you associate with a 'tandem' ?

Learning aims

In this chapter you will learn:

What are the benefits of tandem partners intermediation

Who can take part in it

What the organisational requirements are

What you have to consider to do a good intermediation

How you introduce the partners to each other and how you advise them

2.1.1.0 Tandem - an idea is in the air

In 1979, a German language teacher at the Cultural Institute Madrid (a branch of Goethe-Institute) was in a dilemma, which practically all foreign language teachers face from time to time: The Spanish course participants complained that they were 'saturated' with knowledge about the German language, but had no possibility to use this knowledge. At the same time, he often met German students who wanted to learn Spanish in Madrid, but were angry about overcrowded courses that reminded them more of lectures.

His reaction was the only logical one: Any time it was possible, he brought the 'real' Germans to class increasing the possibility for the course participants to use 'Where are you from' and 'What do you do here' in real life situations with a personal interest.

However, in the long run it was not enough. The packed programme left no space for such ‘excursions for reality’ and, what is more, it shortly became apparent that the Germans had more prior knowledge of the foreign language than the Spaniards; and therefore, ‘Castellano’ (Spanish) was soon imposed as the lingua franca. This short experience posed some questions that were going around in his mind:

To what extent can a language course prepare a person for the use of a language in reality? Apart from the often criticised fact that a great part of the utterances come only from the mouth of a teacher, is it a problem that all the corrections are only made by one person? Despite his/her good intentions, is this person, not hopelessly over challenged when he/she tries to establish genuine communication in a target language with all the participants who are so different from each other?

Isn’t a lesson, of necessity, always a simulation; can a foreign language lesson with all its resources ever be more than a presentation and consumption of ‘slices cut out of the linguistic reality, deeply-frozen and defrosted on occasion’?

Isn’t it nothing more than an absurdity that each year, hundreds of German students toddle speechlessly around Madrid, while at the same time hundreds of inhabitants of Madrid try to snatch ‘a smattering of authentic German’ in language laboratories by practicing more or less artificial dialogues, listening comprehension exercises and tests?

Why are we constantly looking for ways to bring the in-class conditions closer to reality by all possible means? Why don’t we, at least once, try to change the reality in such a way that it facilitates language learning?

In the last years, some solutions in many fields were taken from the experts and were passed down to the concerned. If it is possible even in psychiatry (self-help groups) why not in language teaching?

Exercise

Go through the questions once again, please.

Do any of them apply to your teaching establishment?

And so the teacher of German started matching Spaniards learning German and Germans learning Spanish in exchange pairs. After conducting detailed interviews with the first pairs,

the dependent elements for success were revealed. With the help of the former course participants and the first tandem pairs, various didactic materials were developed. That is how the tandem intermediation came into being.

Since it was operating for three years and the enrolment was constantly increasing, the time for the next step had come: parallel tandem courses for Spaniards and Germans that started in 1982, hosted in the Cultural Institute's rooms. As far as previous experience was concerned, there was only one article known (by Nükhet Cimilli and Klaus Liebe-Harkort). It was in regards to a course in 1973, with Turkish workers and interested Germans in Munich. None of the pioneering projects of the Deutsch-Französisches Jugendwerk (German-French Youth Association) had reached Madrid. Nevertheless, the principles were approved and after some time an informal group of German and Spanish teachers with tandem experience was established. Then, in the summer of 1983, they tried to apply the same procedure working with youth at a youth meeting in Sigüenza. The majority of these teachers were present when the 'Centro Cultural Hispano-Alemán TANDEM' (Hispanic-German Cultural Centre TANDEM) was established. Now there is a wide net of cooperating initiatives in many continents that use the brand 'TANDEM®' as a common recognition sign.

However, after this historical outline, we come back to the question of what a foreign language teacher can do on the spot with this model of learning.

First, the tandem intermediation will be discussed since it constitutes an essence and a precondition for the courses. It does not matter if they take place with youth, students or foreign workers. Namely, this article is about the standard version of the pair intermediation, the 'Tandem-Cocktail' for the simultaneous intermediation of bigger groups is described in another chapter.

2.1.1.1 Tandem partners intermediation

The contribution of TANDEM to finding a partner is as follows: a person who looks for a partner for learning and practicing fills in a "Personal Data" questionnaire. They give their information such as residential area, age, sex, education and profession, hobbies and interests, reasons and motivation for learning, level of knowledge, planned time and intensity of participation, requirements for a tandem partner, learning experience and available time.

(Questionnaire on www.tandem-fundazioa.info, members area)

The application questionnaires of both national groups are compared by a specialist. Possible partners are at first asked separately if they are interested in a meeting, whereby certain alternatives exist for them. After that, the chosen partners are introduced to each other. The intermediary initiates a short chat in both languages and then he gives a few hints based on his

general experience and his knowledge of the interests of both candidates. Both get the questionnaires back (which are known only to the intermediary and not by the other partner) and they receive the supporting didactic materials. From then on, they prepare their own schedule with the intermediary as an advisor in the background, but who is not present during the following meetings.

When many tandems are matched simultaneously and this 'craft-like' procedure is too time consuming and too slow, e.g. at the universities at the beginning of a semester or in a language school at the beginning of courses, there is a 'Tandem-Cocktail'. In this way many 'candidates' are given an introduction to criteria for choosing a partner and the tandem methodology; they choose a partner on their own.

For those who want a tandem without the intermediary's intervention, there is also Blackboard or Internet intermediation. However, tandem pairs created in such a way are more dependent on coincidence and are not as long-lasting as those described here.

Exercise

What advantages does intermediation have over searching on one's own using notice boards/ the Web?

2.1.1.2 Who is the participation in tandems sensible for?

Tandem participation is sensible for everybody who learns a foreign language and is interested in a country, in which citizens of both countries are in the same city. That means that German/Spanish tandems can be carried out in all of the cities of Germany, Austria and Switzerland where one can find Spanish speaking foreigners and in all of the big cities of the Spanish speaking countries where one can find Germans, Austrians or Swiss.

The participants of tandems that work without the assistance of a language course should already know the past forms of the verbs and be able to build sentences with a direct and an indirect object.

In social movements or similar groups, where the participants come from various nations, the building of an 'inner network' through building many tandems can positively influence the work effectiveness.

Exercise

Why is it impossible for the beginners to take part in a tandem?

What language combinations do you think would be possible in your city?

2.1.1.3 Who can establish a tandem intermediation centre?

People who work in a language-teaching establishment and/or have many connections in the area where potential participants live, would be the best. It is also more sensible to have a small collective of people belonging to all language groups concerned, who have teaching

experience or have graduated from some language-related studies. Each of the intermediators has to be bilingual. A clear division of responsibilities and a low labor turnover among the intermediators is important.

2.1.1.4 What exactly does intermediation involve?

The basis for a good tandem is a genuine interest and mutual understanding between the partners, which prompts them to speak, making it easier for them. This is why a careful choice and a personal knowledge of the participants before an intermediation are the most important steps of the intermediation centre. This possibility of making a choice is what distinguishes tandem from a haphazardly made conversation.

Now we will go through the meaning of the criteria, which appears in the same order as on the 'Personal Data' list.

Residency/workplace

Hopefully, this is not far away from each other, according to the time of day when the meetings are to take place.

Studies/profession

The same occupation is important only for people who do tandem for professional reasons. A comparable level of education is more important.

Age

Normally, the difference of 5 years is acceptable, but 10 years are too much. However, the meaning of age loses its importance from a certain point; a difference between a 40 and a 50-year old is not as significant as between a 16 and a 26-year old.

Interests

Asking about their interests rather serves the purpose of giving the intermediary an impression of the future tandem partners when he/she does not know them personally. As experience shows, it is enough to have one common interest to have something to talk about while getting to know each other. There are good tandems not only with identical, but also with completely different or opposite interests; mutual understanding is more important than concrete interests.

Motivation for learning

Here, some specific professional interests should be required. Otherwise, the answers most often give little meaningful information.

Language proficiency level

Including a learning biography is important for two reasons:

1. It is possible to tell if a participant needs organised classes outside tandem

2. It is necessary that the participants are at a comparable level. If they are not, a great deal of patience is required by the advanced participant when explaining to the partner. Thus, this undermines the participants' interest after some time. Moreover, the language of the spontaneous communication shifts for the benefit of the advanced participant's language ('the language of the effortless communication') which causes the gap to grow.

Also in the case of a temporary lack of people of a certain nationality interested in tandem, the rule of equal proficiency levels should not be ignored. It is better not to intermediate any tandem than to do one, which condemns its participants to failure or continuous frustration. Small inequalities are possible only out of consideration for some culture specific peculiarities of learning or the country where a tandem takes place. For example, the Spanish tend to think that they will make fools of themselves if they make a mistake. In addition to that, the Germans in Madrid normally learn faster during the same time, because staying in a target-language environment offers additional possibilities to practice. This is why in Madrid the Germans are principally matched with Spaniards who are at a more advanced level.

Duration

Tandems, which last for less than two weeks, do not seem to make much sense, unless the meetings take place almost every day and in this way, the beginning phase is shortened.

An average duration of a tandem is between three and six months, but there are also some perennial ones.

Time

Usually the one who comes to another country to learn a language needs significantly more hours than the one who works in the country while learning the language as an aside to daily living. Regulate this by enabling the former to work with many independent partners.

The minimum time is more meaningful for the intermediation than the maximum limit; however, it is often exceeded if there is mutual liking between the partners.

Additional learning

The knowledge of where the participants learn a language and what contact they have with it helps to determine which proficiency areas tandem can include or exclude, while appropriate hints are given during the interview.

Interests and other characteristics

The answers provided in this field help the intermediary to get a more refined idea of the future partners. What is more, they may provide some clues about possible incompatibility or aversion.

Political interests

Generally, the conservative participants have no interest in such information and want to perceive learning languages as something detached from it. Liberal participants tend to

consider it as a part of a lesson. If no agreement can be achieved, the intermediary can sometimes help with hints about other information sources.

Sex

The statements under this heading should be interpreted carefully. For instance, it can happen that somebody would find a partner of the opposite sex more interesting, but he/she does not indicate it for fear that the intermediary would misinterpret their intent. Also during work in a tandem, some difficulties resulting from the ambiguities in communication between men and women may arise. According to the experience in Madrid and Bielefeld, tandems between two women are the most productive if those women have similar cultural backgrounds.

Teaching experience

If one of the participants is a beginner, it is almost necessary that the other has teaching experience so that systematic and even learning is possible.

Schedule

Referring to a schedule makes the intermediation considerably easier; availability is often named as one of more important factors for a successful tandem.

Miscellanies

A concern about the possibility of breaking off an inappropriate partnership and finding a new partner is often expressed here. According to the surveys, the mutual liking or openness comes before the common interests. The relationship between the future partners is difficult to foresee having only a questionnaire, but this question can give us some hints.

Exercise

Make a list of the 7 most important factors:

- a-
- b-
- c-
- d-
- e-
- f-
- g-

Then specify in what order you would put them.

When intermediating, it is easier not to compare all the answers one by one, but to analyse them in this order: schedule, knowledge, age and interests.

The questionnaires of the interim pairs matched in that way are put together and checked according to the following factors: sex, other characteristics, and political interests. At the end the 'blocking factors' like smoking and particularities are checked.

At this point, the pre-selection is completed, but there can be other possible combinations. Now one of the candidates is called and a meeting is arranged to shortly describe to him/her the possible partner/s (without showing him/her the questionnaires). Line them up according

to his/her wishes. Two or three proposals of appointments are made. Then the intermediary calls the other partner/s, lets them choose a final meeting date and informs the other person about it. Then the actual introduction follows.

Exercise

Write down all the phone calls/mail necessary to intermediate a tandem pair and their content in points.

Think how you could reduce this number.

2.1.1.5 What is the function of an interview?

Introduction

As experience shows, the names are not remembered after the first introduction so they should be repeated once again, later during the conversation, or on the telephone, before the introduction takes place.

Relaxation

The situation is sometimes embarrassing for both participants. The intermediary should absolutely avoid a situation in which the introduced partners have to wait for him/her or even sit together at the meeting point waiting and exchanging shy looks. It means coming on time or a bit early so that there is already somebody to talk with. Leaving both partners alone for 5 minutes after the introduction so that they can chat in private and then coming back to continue with the exact hints has also proven to be successful.

Informal test

In case the intermediary does not know the foreign language proficiency level of the involved or the questionnaires do not evidently state it, the conversation provides a possibility for a better overview. That is why the intermediary moderates the conversation sometimes in one language then the other. As an exception, he/she begins in the language of the participant who is probably less relaxed and more inhibited. The language has to be changed inconspicuously so that the situation does not seem like an exam.

Establishing direct communication between the partners

The aim of the introduction is to establish direct communication between the partners and to initiate the gradual withdrawal of the intermediary. That is why the partners trying to ask each other questions through the intermediary have to be gradually redirected. Good reasons for direct conversation are arranging the place, time and frequency of the meetings, etc.

Organisational clarification

At the end of the conversation, each of the participants needs to have:

- Name, address, phone number of the partner
- Phone number of the intermediating organisation
- Time and place of, at least, the first meeting

Attention should be given to the fact that the partners have the same travel distance to their meeting point. In the beginning, there should not be more than 3 meetings a week. The intermediary writes the charged fee and the name of the partner with a date, down on the questionnaires, and gives them back to the partners. He/she keeps a sheet with all the data. Then he/she explains the procedure for getting an extra tandem or a subsequent one in case any of the partners would like to do so.

Introduction into materials

Introduction to the existing supporting materials can be given at the beginning as an ice-breaker. As experience shows, these materials are only partially used. They should be nonetheless given as placebo for fright of 'anxiety during the first meeting'.

Tips on course of a tandem

According to his observations during the meeting and his prior knowledge, the intermediary can give hints about possible topics, peculiarities and risks of a TANDEM. In any case, he/she should emphatically point out the necessity of separating both languages and show a few examples as to how things can be explained monolingually. He should also offer his help in case of any difficulties or questions that may possibly arise. If he has a feeling that either of the partners is not satisfied with the other, he can suggest that tandem begins less intensively and offers the partners on an individual basis, a different partner.

Exercise

Draw a possible sitting arrangement for the three during a meeting.

Write how you would 'give an opening for change' for partners who do not suit each other.

2.1.1.6 How should tandems be taken care of later on?

Basically, a tandem is a device for the participants and after a successful matching, the intermediary should be available in the background or disappear. However, it would not be disadvantageous to ask the participants occasionally about their satisfaction. In chapter 'Tandem Cocktail' we describe various forms of individual guidance, group meetings and e-mail / Internet support that were intensively tested and researched at alphabeta in Alto Adige/South Tyrol. In general, the offers for telephone guidance are almost never taken seriously. The need for feedback is especially high in the first weeks immediately after starting; later it declines and can be satisfied by the group meetings where experiences are compared.

At least in the first year of intermediation activity, it is strongly advised for the intermediary to organise an appraisal session with both partners together or separately at the end of each tandem. It broadens his experience and makes the future intermediations better.

Exercise

After what period of time would you:
offer individual guidance?
organise a group meeting?

2.1.1.7 What is needed for the organisation?

- a telephone
- a post office box or a postal address
- a place where the introduction can be held. It should be quiet, but not too stiff

A place for the 'classes' is not necessarily needed since the partners take turns at their homes or in a third place.

2.1.1.8 What are the costs?

- Printing advertisements and supporting materials
- Envelopes
- Postage
- Phone (about 5 calls to intermediate a pair)

Exercise

Who would you willingly work with as an intermediation team?
What prerequisites do you still need?

2.1.1.9 What difficulties and problems can occur during intermediation?

Rush

The central office can be inundated with a torrent of enquiries, a minority of which will later actually be intermediated. This is inevitable and answering such enquiries should be planned for in advance. It can also happen that there are many enquiries from a certain nation and there are not enough interested people from other countries, which leads to a long waiting time for when a potential partner can finally be introduced; people cancel their enquiries. That is why a guarantee for an immediate intermediation cannot be given.

Time

It is related to the problem of a 'season'. Depending on holidays, accumulation of exams, summer courses at the university, etc., a concentration of enquiries occur from various nationals at various times. The intermediation centre gets to know these periods over time and needs to balance them as much as possible. For instance, more advertising can be directed at the sparse group and less at the 'majority' group.

Job of intermediary

Intermediators are basically rejected when they increase the price of a product, but do not contribute anything positive for it. That is why, apart from an intermediation centre, there has to be a possibility of an independent choice through a blackboard or Internet system to let the interested choose if they want to call in an intermediary. However, experience has shown that when intermediation utilizes all of the fundamental elements of practice, tandems have been found to be more fruitful and long lasting. That is why the intervention of an intermediary or a 'Tandem- Cocktail' has a factual justification.

Exercise

Who should take over the role of an intermediary-
a teacher/ a secretary/ somebody responsible for the cultural programme/ a manager?

The intermediators' advantage over the participants is in what they know about the partners, but is also, what remains problematic. For instance, in Madrid the participants do not see the questionnaires of their partners before the first meeting in order not to hinder their curiosity about the other person and openness when answering. Such procedures sometimes cause difficulties when choosing among many possible partners who are only briefly described by the intermediary (their approximate age, residence, occupation, some interests, skills). Of course, after the introduction, the participants are free to exchange the questionnaires (if they were not collected by the intermediation centre).

A good solution would surely be an intercultural centre where not only tandem-partner notice boards are hanging, but also materials were sold along with the descriptions of the fundamentals of doing a successful tandem, which are displayed in a clear manner.

When the intermediators team gains enough experience in this field, they can start organising entire courses.

Exercise (to be sent in to those who want to become the 'Acknowledged Tandem Intermediators')

(This text is an edited version of: *Manuela Estevez, Begoña Llovet (Madrid), Jürgen Wolff (Donostia / San Sebastian)*, The 'TANDEM' model and the intercultural communication in multinational language schools)

For corrections of the exercises or information about the other chapters, please address questions to formacio@tandem-f.org

3.2. The Tandempartner-Intermediation (Cocktail)

Carmen Symalla + Jürgen Wolff, with comments by Sina Braun, translation by Monika Zatylny / Krakow, revision by Mateusz Samulewski / Krakow

Preliminary considerations

How many tandem pairs can be intermediated in your organisation per year?

Is the procedure described in the previous paragraph feasible with a greater number of participants?

Is it not enough to simply bring the people together and let them do the rest themselves?

Learning aims

In this paragraph you will come to understand answers to the following questions:

What possibilities exist when a large number of intermediations makes the application of the questionnaires method impossible?

How does a practical introduction, sensible for both small and large number of Tandem pairs, look like?

Whould the Cocktail produce more negative results than the questionnaires?

What forms are preferred by the participants ?

2.2.1 Why was it developed ?

The experience of intermediation shows that the selected, intermediated, and supervised tandem pairs are more successful than ‘the blackboard acquaintances.’ The ‘craft’ of intermediation (see paragraph 2.1) is, indeed, very time consuming. Thus some alternative forms of intermediation, which would be cheaper, but would also maintain the pedagogical quality standard, are sought. One such alternative method is the ‘Tandem-Cocktail’ which guarantees the same successful results in the field of learning languages as intermediation. This has been proven by the investigations carried out in Sevilla (The University Institute of Languages, the results taken from the courses conducted by Carmen Symalla in 2004).

2.2.2 What is the procedure?

0- Invitations to Cocktail are distributed among the locals and the native speakers of a language (posters, leaflets, advertisements in the courses and websites);

1- All interested in the chosen language combination (e.g. Spaniards who learn German and the German Erasmus students) meet in a bar, refectory, etc.;

2a – All participants should wear a singular A4-sized sheet of paper on the their chests with the following information: name/ foreign language proficiency level/ hobbies/available free time/motto *or*;

2b – The native speakers of one of the languages sit at tables in groups of 5-10 and are divided according to their foreign language proficiency levels. Native speakers of the other language sit or stand in a separate group which is not divided according to the foreign language proficiency levels;

- 3 – The intermediators make a short introduction in both languages regarding the criteria for beneficial partnerships and they ensure that the persons who do not find partners will have the possibility to fill in a questionnaire (this should be mentioned at the beginning of the meeting in order to lower the levels of feelings of stress and exclusion);
- 4 – Both language groups mix and the search for partners begins - in the case of 2a, by running around and speaking with each other. In the case of 2b, by interviews at the tables where people with the suitable language proficiency level sit. A change follows after a given time ('Powerdate');
- 5 – The so-created pairs sit together, the others sit scattered, everybody listens further;
- 6 – The intermediators make a practical introduction to inform all present of the most important rules (see the table in 2.2.2.1);
- 7 – The pairs arrange their first meeting and are supplied with material outlining the most important tips regarding their endeavours. Those who are left without a partner hand their questionnaires in.

Exercise

How many people can be paired simultaneously?

Why are the people sitting at the tables divided into groups according to their language proficiency levels?

How should the participants be informed about the eventual possibility of handing in the questionnaires?

2.2.2.1 What are the contents? *(with the ideas of the alphabeta-Intermediators-Team)*

It is assumed that the pairs created before the practical introduction in the abovementioned 6th point will become tandem partners.

The opening

In order to create a relaxed atmosphere, 5-10 minute long interviews in both languages without an intermediary are sufficient. It is adequate if the intermediators go to the other side of the room during the interviews.

Intermediators undertake the explanation of the meaning of the 'fifty-fifty' rule of fairness and elucidate the tendency to simplify the language and explain through translation.

Advanced students learn more in this case, hence:

The emphasis is placed on being monolingual (except for translation training or preparation for bilingual examinations, etc.)

In order to make it possible to maintain being monolingual, the explanation techniques are practiced. The procedure is always the same:

- 1- Assigning an exercise in one language. From experience, this will be carried out spontaneously and predominantly through a specific technique (e.g. most people would explain the word 'big' by spreading their arms wide apart and the word 'small' by making a movement with a thumb and a forefinger);
- 2- Listing and outlining what technique was used;
- 3- Providing a similar task for the other language with the use of the same explanation technique.

Technique	Example in English	Example in other language
Facial Expression	big	
Contrast	big <-> small	
Synonym	speak = chat	
Subordination	a bird > a parrot	
In ascending order	an apple < a fruit	
A list	orange - mandarin	
Derivation	air > airport	
Decomposition	mailbox = mail + box	
Showing/Drawing	cage	
Personal reference	laughter	

A short introduction follows:

Error correction techniques:

A short sketch: intermediary A corrects what intermediary B says lock, stock and barrel, B jumps out of the window crying;

Conclusion: it is all about reasonable correction without hindering the fluency which is the main objective of a tandem. Grammar - why? - questions should be eliminated. The main aims are: vocabulary + fluency + intercultural experience;

The following techniques are recommended: recording with a small walkman/ producing a list of mistakes that the learners should write down and repeat (Rost- Roth)/ subliminal input which means the use of the correct form in the answer without disturbing the stream of thoughts. Afterwards, some advice about the tandem-tips or tandem-diary follows (see xxxx) and a 'find-it-yourself' game concerning one part so that the partners can start practicing them.

2.2.2.2 Other hints

Below are some other handy tips on organising one of the possible kinds of 'Tandem-Cocktail in Bars' supplied by Carmen Symalla. This variant is particularly suitable for the exchange

partners with some previous experience since there is less information about the way of carrying out a tandem.

About two or three weeks after the beginning of the courses in October, as soon as the approximate number of students is known, start looking for a suitable *meeting point*. A non-binding survey in the courses can give some clues for the possible number of participants so that enough space is available in any case. An ideal meeting would take place in the early afternoon (after the classes) in a students' bar near the language institute. Another important requirement is a lot of standing space around the bar to enable the students to make acquaintances freely.

Factors such as intimacy of the meeting place, e.g., subdued light, not too loud background music, and a possibility of holding a glass of beer or a cigarette (however objectionable this might be) contribute to keeping the *level of inhibition* low during the first meeting.

The *date* has to be agreed on with the owner of the premise, who usually shows readiness for collaboration because of the expected sales. There should not be a large audience, the noise level should enable a pleasant talk, and the bar service should be prepared for the expected liveliness at a certain point.

About two weeks before the meeting, posters in the language classrooms, on the information board, in the refectory and cafeteria of the university should be made visible. It is also useful to remind students about the meeting in class one or two days earlier.

On the evening of the meeting at least two of the organisers should act as intermediators. The only necessary things to be deposited at the entrance to the bar are the badges by means of which the participants will be identified as the native speakers of German or Spanish. 2-3 rolls of sellotape on a firm holder should also be present in order to fix the badges comfortably and fast them to participants' chests. The people looking for an exchange partner can be recognised relatively easily by their confused look; they have to be intuitively and directly approached by the organisers. Later the badges and sellotape can be deposited behind the bar and the bar service often takes the role of the advisors.

Simultaneously with attaching the badges, organisers invite the participants to establish contact with the maximum number of people whose language they learn and to determine in open and personal discussions if someone is a suitable exchange partner. It requires self-initiative which surely gives advantage to those who are determined or have previous experience.

By their discreet presence, the organisers can only try to diplomatically and empathetically introduce the uncertain and active participants to each other and withdraw discreetly as soon as the talk comes about.

Exercise

How long does the practical introduction last?

How many pairs can be made?

How high is the expenditure per pair?

Are the explanation techniques different from those used by the teachers?

Why should the first meeting be arranged before leaving the room?

2.2.3 Comparison of advantages and disadvantages of 'craft intermediation' and Cocktail party

Some considerations of Carmen Symalla will be presented regarding the advantages and the disadvantages of different intermediation forms based on the situation in the University Language Institute in Sevilla where each term 50-80 Spaniards interested in language exchange are matched with vast numbers of 80-150 German Erasmus students.

Model I:

Controlled

intermediation

with

questionnaires for big groups (>Standard)	
<i>Advantages:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All the participants (including the shy and introvert) certainly become partnered with at least one of the desired characteristics; - Guaranteed common free time for the exchange by matching the timetables/schedules; - Partners can also be contacted outside the meeting due to the available phone numbers list.
<i>Disadvantages:</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A great amount of work for the intermediary/s; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rigorous matching of the partners ‘on paper’, personal preferences at first sight are not considered, there is no chance for a change; - Uncertainty in what way the most suitable person of the great number of possibilities will be found; - There can always be some questionnaires left that haven’t been matched clearly: either no or deficient matching. 2. Uneven number of Spaniards and Germans thus often matching in a proportion of 1:2 . 3. Irregular participation in meetings (problems with time, forgetting); spontaneous participation of students without questionnaires (i.e. persons not on the list). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consequence: a large number of participants without partners; spontaneous matching of ‘alternative’ partners, who are not always suitable, is necessary; Lack of order and silence during the meetings.
Model II: Free intermediation by “Cocktail-Party”	
<i>Advantages:</i>	<p>Small amount of work Autonomous choice of a partner by liking and first impression. Possibility of a greater choice and/or finding more partners.</p>
<i>Disadvantages:</i>	<p>The number of participants cannot be foreseen and controlled; a risk of having a disproportion between the numbers of Germans and Spaniards. Discrimination against less outgoing, shy and introvert participants. Dissatisfaction and frustration of the participants who are left ‘free’ at the end.</p>

2.2.4 Are there any other possibilities ?

<p><i>Exercise</i></p> <p>What models have you learned about so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard intermediation with questionnaires Standard intermediation with questionnaires for big groups Cocktail in a bar Cocktail at a table Cocktail on a terrace ?

Given the role of the intermediators as something between a ‘party organiser’ and an ‘intermediation organisation’, Carmen Symalla asked herself: “Does an optimal solution exist

that is somewhere between quasi-matchmaking and a far too open relaxed and easy-going party?” This is how the idea of a *half-controlled meeting* (*III*) was born: as an attempt in mixing the positive aspects of *model I* and *model II*. But what should still be made clear is what happens if the preliminary choice is not made on the basis of the schedule and the decisions about what time is left to the small groups.

Model III: The half-controlled intermediation in small groups

Preliminary considerations:

1. Spanish and German students fill in questionnaires with information concerning their interests and hobbies as well as indicating their preferences with alluding to age/sex/common interests.
2. The intermediary forms small tandem groups of approximately 4-7 people after having taken into consideration the following criteria: the same age group (maximum 12 years of difference in age), the preferences indicated in the questionnaire, same-sex or mixed participants with the greatest possible variety of interests and hobbies.
3. All the participants meet at a given time in front of the entrance to a room. At the entranceway are the lists of the small groups with their descriptions and names of their members. Each group is given its own number.
4. The tables in the room are numbered; all the participants take a seat with the other members of the group at the tables corresponding to the group number. Displayed on the table are characteristics of the group (age, interests, etc.).
5. All participants receive a sheet of paper with terms of reference for interviews; each person partakes in a short interview with other members of their group, whereby the number of possible partners becomes limited due to their unsuitable schedules.

An important hint: A partner should not be sought only within the small groups, but among all the participants and thus permanent small tandem groups of 3-4 can be created. After a short introduction to the function of a tandem, the small tandem groups begin their first trial: in two 20 minute phases all the group members get to know each other in pair or group discussions in both languages. They make the first appointment and plan their first undertakings.

The students appear to be exceptionally grateful for the simulation of the language exchange with given topics in both languages offered in 2.2.2. For most, this is their first experience with an exchange partner, hence all the theoretical explanations, instructions and possible problems can be experienced and understood in a compressed form. The trial run is a point of reference for the later meetings and saves the participants from a great deal of uncertainty during the first meeting.

At the exit there are take-away information materials about tandem activities and leaflets with consultation time, etc. In Sevilla they are called “*10 Rules of a Successful Language Exchange*” and tips on “*Choosing Topics*” and “*Correcting Errors*”.

Time: Up to 1-2 weeks before the deadline for interview sheets and the group meeting (in that way the questionnaires that were given back later can be taken into consideration). Anticipated considerably small expenditure on classifying the questionnaires, like in Model I, because only creating small groups is necessary and the time planning factor doesn't apply- Duration of the meeting: 1.5h

Premises: A big room with flexible, island-like arranged seating arrangements for small groups. A possibility to eat and drink encourages a relaxed atmosphere.

Advantages: In small groups the participants have a chance to find at least one partner in their age group who suits their interests. In small groups the participants can decide for themselves to make one or more contacts according to their preferences during or, eventually, after the meeting. Small groups can easily make up for those who did not come to the event or integrate with participants who appear spontaneously. The lists of small groups' participants with the specific group characteristics on the tables enable fast and smooth integration and if necessary even a possibility of changing the group.

Disadvantages: There could be some discrimination against the less outgoing and less integrative participants.

Exercise

What is an important difference between Model III and Cocktail in 2.2.2 ?

How does your model look like:

Blackboard

In the case of this approach everything is left to the potential tandem partners. To increase the quality of creating pairs and team work, tandem tips should be outlined on the blackboard. These should also be prepared in the form of leaflets that can be provided for at the event.

Database

The databases on the Internet are a time-saver in regards to both searching for an e-mail tandem partner in a different country (e.g. Bochum which, however, doesn't consider any criteria) and a tandem partner for face-to-face meetings in the same city (e.g. Romance Studies in Munich). A link to websites that delineate the criteria for choosing a partner and forms of common work should be given.

2.2.5 Some results of an accompanying research

Participants' opinions about different forms were revealed by a long-term survey among tandem pairs looked after by alpha-beta in Alto Adige/ South Tyrol 2004. The following comments are some of the results of a written poll (each letter stands for a person, two letters for a tandem pair):

A: she would choose intermediation because it's more comfortable

B+C: searching on one's own is risky because one decides on the basis of superficial impulses;
it is more serious with a structure also for participants

the rules given by a third party are more easily obeyed

E: the intermediary knew one personally and the other through questionnaire, it was OK;
he cannot judge other forms;

in case of the Internet survey doubt about the truthfulness of information, Cocktail is interesting for the extroverts but the questionnaires should be sustained for the others

F: because of the time imbalance fast intermediation is important which gives the craft intermediation advantage over Cocktails

Internet database isn't a problem, in case of blackboard there were certain discretion problems and a tendency to give similar information;

anyway more tries have to be possible

G: intermediation was OK, it should stay like that

Cocktail: OK, a possibility to find common ground with somebody quickly;

Blackboard/the Internet: prefers not to know anything, it is better if somebody else makes the choice and then people get to know each other

H: in this organisation the intermediation was ideal, they meet in bars, in the Italian phase people often join in (tridems), they do the German phase alone

Cocktail: it's good to be able to choose from many people, for the older it is energy overexpenditure;

The Internet: rather for the young who use computers more

I: the intermediators knew both partners so it went fast; if the partners are matched well, everything is easy;

Cocktail: it reminds of matchmaking, no

Blackboard/ the Internet: OK;

in case of a bad choice an 'exchange' should be possible

J: everything was OK;

intermediation is more serious also for the pair work, a contract gives a mutual promise and a guarantee;

he knows blackboard from Vienna, it functions well at big universities

K: intermediation is very good;

Cocktail: it gives more choice, rather for universities;

Internet: too strange, impersonal

L: Cocktail interesting because of the possibility of looking on one's own;

Blackboard: it is found similar to a 'blind date', rather to be rejected;

Internet database: good because it is possible to make acquaintance by email

M+N: in small towns women have to be matched with other women due to social control;

Cocktail: wide choice was good but in small towns there are too few native speakers of other languages which may lead to long time of waiting;

The Internet: too impersonal

O: current method is good for a small number of people who are known personally;

Cocktail: ideal for students or people of the same age;

Blackboard/the Internet: assumes it functions only if there are enough participants

The following opinions were expressed in the accompanying oral survey :

Intermediation as so far

It was generally seen as more serious because a 'mutual promise' is made and rules imposed by a third party are more willingly obeyed. Besides that, it is faster if there are inequalities in number of the language groups or smaller numbers of people.

Individual search

Some participants described individual search as 'risky' because one follows their impulses, while others preferred to know nothing and leave the choice to somebody else.

Cocktail

In the case of this method the following advantages were mentioned:

A good way of finding a common ground with somebody quickly, more choice, a possibility to choose on one's own;

However there are also some limitations and disadvantages:

Only for the extroverts; too exhausting for older participants; rather for the universities and people of the same age; not suitable for small towns due to long waiting time; "matchmaking-no"

Blackboard

Is partly accepted, especially in regards for universities; some doubts concerning discretion, comparisons to a 'blind date'; a presumption it functions only if there are enough participants.

Internet-Database

Is partly accepted, especially for the young using computers and because of a chance to communicate via email before the first meeting. Others find it impersonal and there also is a presumption it functions only if there are enough participants.

Many participants agree that multiple choice or an 'exchange' must be possible in the case of all the models.

Exercise

What were your answers?

The research in Sevilla concerned mostly students. What age group do you think was concerned in South Tyrol?

How will the preferences shift in the next years?

In another research experiment, the intermediated pairs in Gießen and the German and Spanish Cocktail-pairs from Sevilla were compared in order to estimate the effectiveness of tandems based on the self-evaluation of the achieved goals. The results were as follows:

Aim achievement of objectives	Cocktail-Ger	Cocktail-Sp	Intermed. Gieß.	without anything-Ger	without anything -Sp
<i>Linguistic</i>	67,5	63,6	66	58,3	35
<i>Cultural</i>	78,3	61,1	55	80	70

All in all, the intermediation supported by looking on one's own was assessed equally effective in the linguistic field as with the intermediation with questionnaires and an introduction.

Achieving cultural aims seems to be strongly dependent on other factors, it reaches equally high results with people who were not intermediated.

The low results in Giessen can be explained by the fact that the Germans in a German environment learn less about culture than the Germans abroad.

The results of people without any support are worse in terms of language achievement. This coincides with what the intermediation experience shows. It is, however, to be rated carefully since the number of statements in these language groups was only 2-3 people.

In terms of the course of tandem work if a partner was found on one's own, from one-third to one-half of the members of each group supposed that tandem would be the same regardless of intermediation. However, a certain difference is seen when it comes to looking for a partner: though they do not perceive intermediation/introduction as a guarantee of success, they find it as a helpful factor in finding a partner.

In a nutshell, it can be said that questionnaire-intermediation is more suitable for small organisations with constantly small numbers of intermediation, whereas other forms are advisable for e.g. universities with an accumulation of people at certain times. Regardless of the intermediation form, the possibility of having a 'second or third chance' has to be maintained and moreover, in case of finding a partner on one's own a form with binding rules/ personal commitment made in the presence of a witness/ third party should be available.

'Cocktail' is considered to be better for big groups of people of the same age, blackboard-intermediation awakes some reservations and the Internet database, with an email preliminary phase, is advised more for young people who use computers.

Considering different target groups it seems to be the best combine various intermediation forms, e.g. questionnaire-intermediation as a standard and 'Cocktail' at the beginning of big projects or in case of big number of participants applying different models one after another.

To compare intermediated and not intermediated tandems another research with a greater number of participants should be conducted to provide stronger statistical basis for the hypothesis that learning languages in coincidentally matched tandem pairs brings worse results.

Exercise

What changes would you implement in your organisation after reading this article?

For corrections of the exercises or information about the other chapters, please address questions to formacio@tandem-f.org

3.3 CEDEFOP: Datenbank für die Berufsbildung / Data base for vocational training

This data base focuses on vocational training, at the moment only in English:

<http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu>

3.4 Webhinweise

Wikiversidad

Die kleine, aber schnell wachsende Schwester von Wikipedia, eine Fernlehruniversität in verschiedenen Sprachen als 'open source' Projekt. Internetsuche mit '*wikiversidad*'.

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4. Tandem en el mundo / Tandem in der Welt / Tandem worldwide

4.1. A transatlantic e-Tandem - an account of how English as a foreign language teaching was supported by tandem through video-conferencing.

Jemma Prior

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Tandem and the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano

I am an EFL and ESP teacher at the trilingual Free University of Bozen-Bolzano in north-east Italy. Our students have to follow courses in three languages: English, German and Italian; and by the end of their three years, not only do they have a degree in economics, computer science, design or engineering, but they should also have a high level of competence in their second and third languages. Given that the university is situated in a German-speaking area of Italy, where many people have a good command of both languages and from where the vast majority of our students come, tandem activities, which have been integrated into the services of the university's Language Centre to complement standard language courses, have been used successfully to foster language acquisition.

However, because tandem is language learning where authentic communication with a native speaker takes place, one of the keys to successful tandem exchanges is of course that the participants should be native or near-native speakers of the language that they are giving, as well as the fact that the principle of reciprocity is adhered to, whereby equal time is spent on both languages.

Therefore tandem is an excellent means to foster Italian and German-language learning at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, but how can a trilingual university in northern Italy, with very few native or near-native English-speaking students and academic staff, find enough English speakers to partner eager Italian- and German-speaking students?

The English tandem problem - and solution

Tandem is usually conducted orally face to face, although over the last few years with the more ready availability of email and internet in schools and universities, there has been a growth in the number of e-Tandem written exchanges. However, my students - Italians, but all native German speakers - had plenty of opportunity to write English as part of their university studies. What they wanted to do was to speak English with native speakers who were not just their language or subject teachers. As it is extremely difficult to encourage our students to spend time abroad learning English, the solution presented itself quite by chance with the arrival of a visiting professor from the United States, who not only happened to be a lecturer in computer graphics, but was also interested in language learning and had come over with the idea of creating some kind of language exchange with some of his American students who were learning German. And so the scene was set: we would embark on an e-Tandem exchange, not by email, but by video conferencing, in which my students would practise their spoken English with the American students, and they, in turn, would practise their German with my students.

How our *transatlantic* tandem was organised

Intense activity ensued over several months as we set up the exchanges. I contacted the Americans' German teacher, who had never heard of tandem before, and after various email exchanges and trial chats using the video conferencing equipment, we decided to organise four afternoons of an hour each when our two lessons coincided (the American college is in Pennsylvania, six hours behind Italy). We wanted to have several exchanges but knew that as this project was taking place in the middle of the academic year, we could not take too much time away from each class's planned course schedule. Four weeks, with a week break for the Americans' semester break, seemed ideal - enough time to develop relationships between the students, but not too many sessions as that might make the whole enterprise too laborious.

Following the principle of reciprocity, it was decided that the students would speak for the first 30 minutes in English, and then swap so that everyone would speak German. The second session would start in German and then change to English, and so on. In Italy, we set up a video camera in such a way that each time a student spoke, the camera could move from face to face, and of course we had the opportunity to have a group shot. The Americans were equipped with a webcam on their classroom computer, which meant that each student had to come to the camera to

talk. We were also equipped with a projector in our classroom so we could see the Americans on a big screen.

The tandem sessions and their content

The first exchange was dedicated to 'getting to know you' activities in which my students introduced themselves to the American students in English and then the Americans introduced themselves in German, with a question and answer session at the end of each 30-minute slot.

The following three sessions were based on topics that the students wanted to talk about, which were established through brainstorming activities and negotiation in the two classrooms. Consequently, the second session was dedicated to presenting the students' local area, traditions and customs, and was followed by a third very interesting session on national habits and pastimes. My Italian students were shocked at how much higher education costs in the USA; the Americans envied the Italians' ability to go out for a drink.

Most exchanges were accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation, prepared and sent via email prior to the actual exchange. This facilitated comprehension and made the sessions more than just a listening comprehension exercise. These PowerPoint presentations were shown on a second computer in the classroom so that the students could see both the image of the Americans on the big screen, and the presentation on the smaller screen.

The final, and probably most successful, meeting was a general and mostly spontaneous question and answer session in which we achieved conversation as near to 'real' as possible. By that time, my students had built up quite a good relationship with their American counterparts, and the session was characterised by informal, friendly exchanges about sport, attitudes to life and even George W. Bush.

Various problems that were experienced and how they were solved

Of course, despite careful planning and a succession of trial hook-ups before the first classroom exchange, we encountered a series of problems that almost scuppered the whole project before the students even saw each other. Problems mainly concerned technical aspects, such as very poor audio quality in the classroom. This was finally put right by using the computer's portable speakers instead of those incorporated in the projector that was showing the image. We also had problems with insufficient bandwidth which frustratingly interrupted the first two sessions. A further problem, which caused the final session to be postponed by a week, occurred when the clocks went forward an hour in Europe one week before Daylight Saving Time in the States and thus the lessons no longer coincided. This had not been foreseen - but then you do not normally have this kind of problem with face-to-face tandem exchanges!

Reflections on and reactions to the exchange

All in all, the whole exchange was a very positive experience for both us as teachers and for the students themselves. In a questionnaire that I distributed to my students afterwards, they commented that the most enjoyable and worthwhile part was that they were able to improve their English by speaking to real English speakers face to face about topics that interested them and were relevant to their

daily lives. Many expressed a desire to continue corresponding with the Americans via email, and a couple even wanted to continue talking to them via the internet.

As a teacher, I was delighted to witness my students interacting naturally and fluently with the Americans in English, and was impressed by the very professional presentations in English that they sent to the States. They were also very accommodating when speaking German and used conversational strategies, such as rephrasing and checking for comprehension, to facilitate communication when the American students had difficulties understanding what was being asked of them in German.

It seems likely that our university will continue to attract relatively few English-speaking students, so our "Transatlantic e-Tandem" might very well be one of the only ways for our students to engage in authentic communication with native speakers of English. It could also be considered in other similar situations where there are few native speakers available for tandem exchanges.

4.3 *jetzt/SZ*: Partner zum Sprachenlernen gesucht, Liebe gefunden: Drei Geschichten zum Valentinstag

<http://jetzt.sueddeutsche.de/texte/anzeigen/364420>

Ein ähnlicher Artikel erschien in der Papierausgabe der SZ vom 12.2.2007 unter dem Titel "Febrazinha" oder: Mein kleines Stück Lieblingsfleisch

Der Hinweis, die Webliste um www.tandemcity zu erweitern, wurde ignoriert ...

5. Tandem[®] Fundazioa / Die Tandem[®]-Stiftung

5.1 *Move* / Adressenänderung / *Mudanza*

old / alt / *antiguo*: Paseo Duque de Mandas, 21-4-B

after / ab / *a partir del* 16-5-2007: Paseo Duque de Mandas, **19-B-4-B**

Unchanged / bleibt gleich / *sigue igual*:

Apdo/Pk 864

E-20080 Donostia / San Sebastián

Tel+Fax 0034 943322062 (10-13 h)

tandem@tandem-f.org + network@tandem-f.org

5.2. Das Letzte: Mit Tandem ins Paradies

<http://www.tandem-tours.com/indexBaixa.html>