

# eTandem Learning

Autonomous Language Learning with a Partner



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## I What is eTandem?

In eTandem you work together with a language learning partner from another country, communicating by telephone or VOIP (Internet Telephoning), e-mail, video conferencing, instant messaging or other media. Through this experience, you learn your partner's language while he or she learns your native language.

### A learning partnership

As holds true in any partnership, eTandem only works well if both partners benefit equally.

For this reason, the following applies:

Half of the time of your communication is for your benefit. Your partner speaks and/or writes in their native language, and you learn from your partner. Your partner can inform you of current events in their country, can correct your mistakes and can give you various helpful tips.

During the other half of the time, your partner learns from you. In this phase you communicate in your native language and help your partner to develop his skills in your language.

### You determine...

- **what** you want to learn
- **when** you learn it
- **how much** you learn

Your language teacher or a professional learning coach may advise you on this. It is important to discuss your learning objectives with your eTandem partner and let them know **how** they can help you achieve them. Your partner will probably be following different learning objectives and similarly will ask you to help them in turn.

### A proven learning method

Two individuals meeting regularly to learn each other's languages is a technique as old as time. However, for over 30 years, this learning method has been systematically practised under the name **tandem**.



**eTandem** is tandem at a distance usually using electronic media.

Since 1994, over 30 European universities, schools and other educational institutions have researched and successfully implemented this form of language learning.

An additional benefit is that it allows learners to set their own objectives and monitor their progress, resulting in Learner Autonomy.

## II Learning objectives for eTandem

### What can you learn from each other?

First and foremost, you learn to understand the foreign language better and to express yourself more easily in it in an authentic oral or written context.

You and your eTandem partner each possess extensive knowledge of your own country and studies / profession, and perhaps also have similar interests. When you talk about these topics in both languages, you are expanding your knowledge in these areas as well as developing your foreign language skills.

### General objectives

Many eTandem learners start out by following very general objectives, with a view to:

- refreshing language skills which were previously acquired
- practically applying skills being learnt in a present language course
- keeping up the language following a language course and expanding your knowledge

### Special skills

You can, however, also concentrate on particular language skills and practise these with the help of your partner, with a view to:

- improving comprehension when others speak or write the foreign language
- learning to speak better yourself
- expressing yourself better in writing
- improving your translation skills

### Areas of application

Maybe you would like to increase your knowledge of the foreign language for a particular reason and need the help of your partner because you are:

- planning a stay abroad, like an **international work placement**
- preparing for a **language examination**
- hoping to use the foreign language in a **professional context**

In cases such as these, you can also benefit from your eTandem partner's knowledge and experience of their country and culture. If you are, for example, a chef, lawyer, technical expert or teacher and your eTandem partner works in your field, then a professional exchange can be very effective at expanding your range of specialised vocabulary and at having meaningful exchanges.

### Additional positive effects

Both you and your learning partner will acquire and refine additional skills which can later be useful in other contexts. While learning with eTandem, you will for example, practise:

- autonomous (life-long) learning
- multilingual cooperation with others
- working with individuals who come from a different culture

## III Requirements for eTandem

### Who is eTandem suitable for?

#### For each and every foreign language learner!

eTandem is suitable for anyone who is presently learning a language or who wishes to brush up on their skills. Basic knowledge of the foreign language will generally suffice, although for lower levels a common third language is recommended.

Anyone can take part, regardless of age, profession or place of residence. Whether you are young or old, you will enjoy learning with eTandem because it is real language in context.

### Examples of where eTandem is used:

- Many **school-age** and **college students** use eTandem to try out what they have learnt or to prepare for examinations. For some students, eTandem accompanies their language class - others use eTandem independently.
- **Professionals** often find eTandem attractive because it is not bound by a particular location or timeframe. eTandem can be carried out asynchronously. And when they work with an eTandem partner who is trained in a similar profession, they can learn a great deal more from each other than just the foreign language.
- Many **senior citizens** also enjoy language learning with eTandem since it helps them meet new people and also because others are learning from them.

### Previous knowledge

Basic knowledge of the foreign language is generally sufficient, especially if you are communicating with your eTandem partner in writing.

In this case, you would start out learning from what your partner writes in their native language, and after a while you would gradually start writing in the foreign language yourself.

Even if your partner may be more proficient in the foreign language than you are, this does not present a problem. You are better at your native language than your partner, so they can also learn a great deal from you. An important part of tandem learning is that each individual learner can follow his learning objectives at his own level of proficiency and can, in turn, help his partner.

## IV Communication media for eTandem

### How can you work together?

#### 1. General Information

For your eTandem work, you and your partner can use any communication media to which you have access: e-mail, telephone, or internet telephoning (VOIP, eg Skype), video conferencing, instant messaging, SMS, chatrooms or any other form of CMC (Computer-Mediated Communication), etc.

#### Matching your learning objectives

Naturally, the media you use need to fit with your learning objectives: if you wish to improve your oral skills (listening comprehension and speaking), telephoning and video conferencing are particularly well-suited.

#### Selection of media also influences the way you work together:

With written media such as e-mail, you have enough time to read and respond to your partner's texts with the help of a dictionary and learning materials; the texts remain available later for continued work. Corrections in writing, however, take more time than if done orally.

With **oral media** such as telephoning or video conferencing, you have to react more quickly, but your eTandem partner can help you immediately if you do not understand or cannot express something. Repeated mistakes in pronunciation or in sentence structure can be relearned if your partner continually corrects you.

#### Combination of media

In many cases, combining various media with each other makes sense. Many eTandem partners, for example, work together primarily by e-mail but make their corrections by telephone, VOIP or chatrooms. This is quicker and allows for quick questions and more extensive explanations.

### 2. Tips on specific media usage

#### E-mail

##### Characteristics:

- **Written** and **asynchronous**: You can take your time reading and answering; e-mail is therefore well suited for language learners with limited proficiency.
- **Electronic**: You can write your e-mail messages with another program, such as a word processing application, eg WORD, save them onto your computer, laptop or tablet and reuse them as often as you would like. Corrections are simple since you can automatically insert your partner's written work into your reply and make comments directly.  
Any document you want can be attached to e-mails, including pictures, graphics or audio files (eg. oral messages).
- **Fast**: The message reaches the recipient's mailbox in a few minutes.

**Technical requirements:**

- A **personal e-mail address** is very important for eTandem. There are many providers who offer free e-mail addresses, although in some cases, for example with eTandem for under-age students at school, teachers and parents may be concerned about not being able to verify the identity of the learner. In such cases, the teacher's e-mail address may be used for verification.
- All standard **e-mail services** (Outlook, Gmail, Netscape Messenger, Hotmail, etc.) can be used.
- **Foreign characters** can also be used.

**Telephone/VOIP (Internet Telephoning)****Characteristics:**

- **Oral, synchronous:** Allows for oral dialogues and requires quick reactions. Telephoning is well suited as a main communication medium for eTandem if basic knowledge of the foreign language is present. Telephoning can also support eTandem by e-mail (for example, for discussing corrections or how to organise reciprocal learning around the individual objectives). If possible, it is a good idea to record an oral eTandem conversation in order to listen to it again, to make notes, etc. These days, even mobile phones are able to record audio.
- **Costs:** Although using a landline or mobile phone can incur costs, using VOIP (Voice Over Internet Provider) is free.

**Technical requirements:**

- **A telephone line**
- **Internet telephone** can be done from computer to computer and also from computer to telephone. Common applications for VOIP are Google Talk, Skype and Facetime (the last two also commonly used for Video Calls/Conferencing)

**Video conferencing****Characteristics:**

- **Oral and written, synchronous, visual:** Allows for oral dialogue, and the eTandem partners can see each other. The main advantage of video conferencing for eTandem is, however, that the partners share use of computer programmes (such as Word, Excel, etc.), following their work on the computer screen. This enables them to work together, for example, on the same text or to jointly look at Web pages and comment on these orally.
- **Costs:** Videoconferencing programmes with file sharing facilities usually come at a cost, but using VOIP with a reasonably good internet bandwidth is free. While video-calling, you can email your partner any file you wish to look at. Alternatively, Google Talk can be used and particular files shared as Google Docs with an eTandem partner.
- The following link to Pinterest shows a selection of free VOIP applications which are easy to use:

<https://www.getapp.com/collaboration-software/a/hall/>

**Technical requirements:**

- PC with webcam and microphone

## V Learning tips

### How can I learn from my partner?

You both talk and/or write about topics of interest, using both languages. You learn from what your eTandem partner writes or says in their native language, from their corrections and from help in other areas.

Neither you nor your eTandem partner are language teachers - therefore you cannot “teach” each other. Nevertheless, you are both native speakers of the language that the other person is learning. In addition, you know a great deal about life in your own country. You can thereby learn a lot from your eTandem partner, for they can:

- **Serve as a model** - you learn from what they say or write in their native language
- **Help when you don't understand something**
- **Help if you want to say something and are not sure how**
- **Correct your mistakes**
- **Give you information about life in his country**

### Individual coaching

Individual coaching by foreign language learning experts on a regular basis can improve the effectiveness of your eTandem work. Some universities, schools and language teaching institutions offer a special language learning coaching service, and many teachers advise their language students as well.

### Learning from your eTandem partner

#### 1. Learning from your partner's modelling

You can learn a great deal from what your eTandem partner says or writes in their native language. This is similar to the learning effect through textbooks or foreign language television, only with eTandem you have more of a say regarding content.

For example, you could ask your eTandem partner to:

- write or talk about topics with vocabulary that is important to you
- give you a sample CV or a sample letter of application (if you plan on working abroad)
- express himself differently (for example, more simply, using more or less slang, using more professional language, etc.).

For this to be effective, it is important to remember to adhere to the basic rule of using your native language at least half of the time!

Pay close attention not only to **what** your partner is trying to tell you but most especially to **how** they are expressing themselves.



Here are some **concrete TIPS**:

**Written eTandem** (e-mail, instant messaging, etc.)

- Make sure that you will be able to work with the texts later: save them (this goes for instant messaging as well), print them and, ideally, put them in a folder.
- Mark phrases and words that are new for you or that you had forgotten. Make sure that you will not forget what you may need again later. (Use your own system for remembering: vocabulary lists or cards, mindmaps, and by re-reading texts occasionally, etc)

**Oral eTandem** (telephone, video conferencing, etc)

- Your partner's words are soon gone, but there are still ways for you to keep what is important: interrupt your partner if you did not hear or understand something correctly. Ask them to repeat and/or explain themselves
- Repeat passages that are important to you in order to remember them better, and ask your partner to correct you - pronunciation and intonation as well
- Record the conversation
- Take notes to avoid forgetting important expressions.



*eTandem partners from Spain, Holland and Denmark: lots of learning tips from your eTandem partners.*

## 2. Learning through your partner's help, through comprehension aids, explanations and information

If you do not understand something, you can ask your eTandem partner to:

- translate it into your native language – your partner will learn from this, too
- express the same thing with different words
- give additional examples, explanations or background information

Here are some **concrete TIPS**:

**Written eTandem** (e-mail, instant messaging, etc)

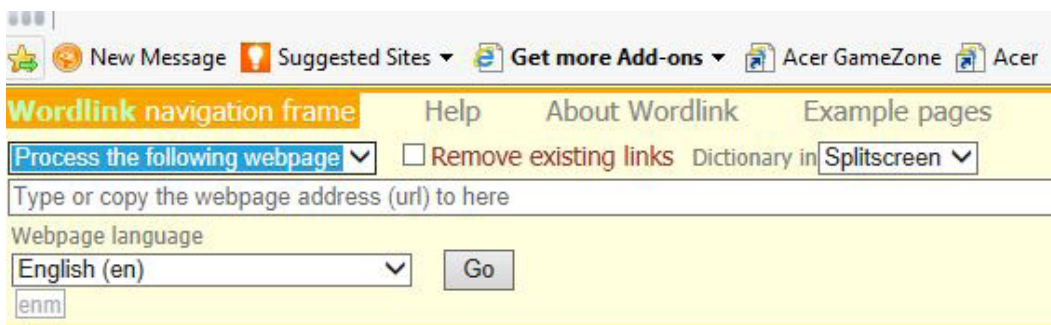
- Your eTandem partner cannot answer your questions until they write their next message. Therefore, it is a good idea to start out by using your dictionary; certain things will become clearer after reading the message more than once.

An excellent tool for looking up words in a text is Wordlink. Go to:

<http://multidict.net/wordlink/>

Click on the dropdown menu where it says:

Process the following webpage, and select Compose a page



Wordlink can link most webpages word-by-word to online dictionaries.  
Copy and paste a url into the box above, specify the language, and click Go.

See Help for more information.

Select the language of the text in your file.

Click on Go and then paste the text in the box.

**Wordlink navigation frame**   Help   About Wordlink   Example pages  
 Process the following webpage ▾   ☐ Remove existing links   Dictionary in ▾ Splitscreen ▾  
 {compose}  
 Webpage language  
 English (en) ▾   Go  
 enm

---

Or else compose a new page now

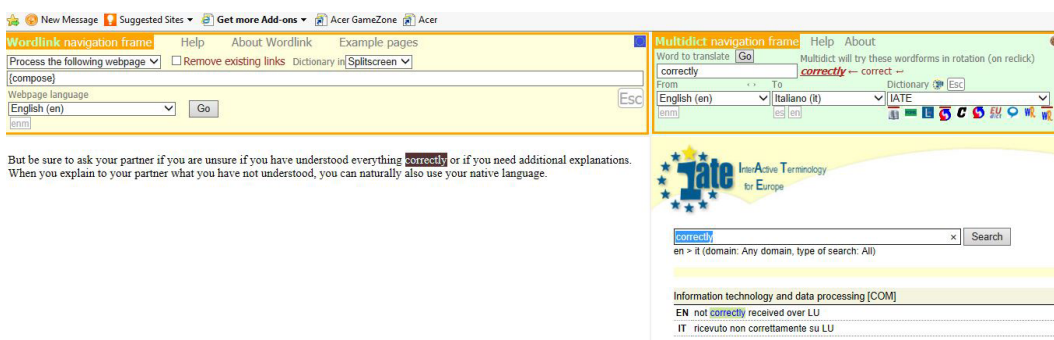
**Title**

**Text**

But be sure to ask your partner if you are unsure if you have understood everything correctly or if you need additional explanations.  
When you explain to your partner what you have not understood, you can naturally also use your native language.

Scroll down and click on Compose.

You can hover over any word and when you click on it, a dictionary opens up on the right. You can now select which language to translate to, and which dictionary.



The screenshot shows the Wordlink interface with a hover dictionary open for the word "correctly". The dictionary shows the word in English (en) and Italian (it), with the Italian translation "correttamente". It also shows the word in a different context: "correctly received over LU" and "ricevuto non correttamente su LU".

One particularly useful dictionary if you are discussing your studies/profession is the IATE, which has technical words.

However, be sure to ask your partner if you are unsure if you have understood everything correctly or if you need additional explanations.  
When you explain to your partner what you have not understood, you can naturally also use your native language.

### Oral eTandem (telephone, video conferencing, etc.)

- Interrupt your eTandem partner if you have not heard or understood something correctly. This is the only way you can learn something new and simultaneously make sure that you can keep up with the conversation.

Ask questions (it is fine if you do so in your native language) like:

"Could you please repeat that?"

"What does that mean in English?"

"Is that the same as ... in English?"

"Can that be used in other contexts?"

Occasionally you will not understand something because, for example, you are not familiar with the country-specific connotations or of a particular idiom. Ask your eTandem partner about them.

Your eTandem partner may not be able to answer all of your questions, yet you can still learn new things from their explanations.

### 3. Learning from your partner's help with phrasing, gestures etc.



If you would like to say something (in the foreign language) and do not know how, then you first have to try and somehow make yourself understood.

To help you with this, you can follow these steps:

#### Step 1:

- Say it in your native language (which your partner is learning)
- Try to somehow express what you want to say in the foreign language and don't be afraid to risk making mistakes
- Use other aids such as drawings, **gestures**, etc if using video-calling

It is important not to be content with your partner just understanding what you mean, for then you have not learned anything new and will be confronted with the same problem the next time around.

**Step 2:** Ask your partner to tell you how he would have expressed himself in your position.

**Step 3:** Make sure that you remember the new phrases next time (by making notes, highlighting the text, by saying them over and over again, etc).

Here are some **concrete TIPS**:

#### **Written eTandem** (e-mail, instant messaging, etc)

- If you do not know a certain expression, rewrite it in the foreign language or replace it in your native language. You can ask your partner to give you the correct way of saying it by using an agreed upon system of marking (eg using brackets [...]).



- If you are unsure as to whether you have expressed something correctly or not, mark this place with your agreed upon mark (for example, [?]). If you want to make sure that what you have written is not only understandable but also stylistically perfect, you can also ask your partner to rewrite entire paragraphs as he would have expressed them in your place. In this way, your Output Language will move closer to Native Speaker Target Language.

#### **Oral eTandem** (telephone, video conferencing, etc)

- Don't be afraid to interrupt the flow of conversation with questions - this is the way you learn.
- If you still feel quite unsure of yourself, then first try saying the entire sentence in your native language and then ask your partner for a translation.
- If you can already say quite a bit in the foreign language, then stop every time there is something that you cannot express. Try to find another way of saying it in the foreign language or say it in your own language and ask your partner for help.
- If you ask your partner to repeat the entire sentence, then you can pay close attention to the right intonation and pronunciation.

Later, you should repeat the entire sentence as often as possible until you can say it correctly and fluently.

#### **4. Learning from your partner's corrections**

You can only learn from your mistakes if you are made aware of them - otherwise the wrong way of saying something becomes ingrained. Therefore, it is very important that you ask your eTandem partner to correct your mistakes.

Please remember in this regard that your eTandem partner is not a language teacher. He will usually not be able to explain grammatical rules to you, just as you might find this difficult to do in your native language.

However, you can both say with a good deal of certainty if a sentence in your language is correct or incorrect and how you would express something yourself.

In eTandem, each learner determines what they want to learn and how. Regarding corrections, this means:

- It is your responsibility to let your eTandem partner know what and how they should make corrections for you (eg by marking spelling mistakes with an \*, paying particular attention to verb forms or pronunciation, etc.).
- You should only correct what your partner wants you to correct.

Here are some **concrete TIPS**:

Pay attention to the **indirect** corrections your partner makes: if he expresses the same thing to you in a different way, you may have used an incorrect or awkwardly-worded form.

#### **Written eTandem** (e-mail, letters, instant messaging, etc.)

- If you have a text from your eTandem partner in front of you and can read it as many times as you would like, then it is often tempting to want to correct all of the mistakes. This is, however, not only time-consuming for the person making

the corrections, but it can also discourage the partner who is learning.

Therefore, ask your eTandem partner to concentrate on a certain type of mistake or to correct a limited number of mistakes (for example, 8-10), the ones they consider most important.

If you have the opportunity, use the telephone/VOIP for making corrections: this allows for more thorough explanations and follow-up questions and usually saves time.

#### **Oral eTandem** (telephone, video conferencing, etc)

- With oral etandem, your partner has to pay attention to what you are saying and how you are saying it simultaneously - and this is not always easy. Also, you can easily get used to mistakes and then not register them any more.
- Perhaps your partner does not like to interrupt you, thinking it might upset you. Or they plan to bring the mistakes you make to your attention afterwards. Agree on how you both find you learn best from correction – immediate or after speaking for some time. If after some time, be sure to make some notes as you hear your partner's mistakes.
- If you wish to be corrected more, you should make a point of encouraging your partner to do so.

Some mistakes are just slips. You really know how to say it correctly, but in a conversation you make the same mistakes again and again.

These mistakes - wrong pronunciation and incorrect sentence structure, for example - can be put right if they are consistently brought to your attention.

Corrections do not necessarily need to interfere with the flow of conversation. You will quickly learn to pay attention to your partner's corrections and to correct them immediately, if they wish you to do so immediately.

### **5. Learning from information about your partner's life in their country**

When communicating with your eTandem partner, you not only learn their language - you also learn a great deal about their daily life, experiences from their profession/school and free time, their opinions and views, etc. Some of this information is only relevant to your partner as an individual, but it will definitely expand your knowledge about life and culture in their country.

On the other hand, your partner cannot replace a dictionary. Your partner does not know everything and can make mistakes, just as you can.

You will be able to learn most if you take your partner's personal experiences and opinions into account: Questions such as "What are the differences between the policies of the parties X and Y?" or "What do people in your country think about ...?" may put your eTandem partner under pressure as they may not know the answer to such questions. Therefore, the following questions may be more appropriate:

What do you know about the parties X and Y or What do you think about ...?"

If the topics of discussion are, for example, their profession, their favourite sport or music, then you can certainly regard your eTandem partner as an expert.

## VI Starting out

### Initial Steps in an eTandem partnership

Do you have a new eTandem partner? Here you can find out how to start out.

#### Initial contact

It is best to make contact - by writing a short, friendly email in your native language - with your eTandem partner as soon as possible to let them know that you have received his address.

#### First e-mail

As soon as you can, write a more extensive message by e-mail:

- Write something about yourself, what you do, where you live, etc.
- Mention what you are hoping to get out of your eTandem partnership and how much time you can and want to invest (for example, once a week, more often, less often).
- If you want to work together by **telephone or other media**, give your partner the necessary technical information (telephone number, Skype Username, etc...), and let them know when you can be reached, etc.

#### Important

Write **at least half of every message in your native language!**

- Your eTandem partner learns from this - and you learn from what your partner writes in their language.

In this way, your exchanges will be even more fun. In your native language you can both express more interesting topics in a more complex way, keeping your correspondence at a higher level.

If you are a beginner, you can start out by writing everything in your native language. Then you can gradually move into the foreign language - but always allowing your partner at least 50%.

The same of course also applies to **oral tandem: half of your time for each language.**

You may find the first **telephone conversations** somewhat strenuous - in this case, they should only last a few minutes. If you switch languages regularly, then each of you can rest a bit while using your native language.



**If your partner doesn't answer –  
don't give up**

... but don't wait longer than a week  
before finding a new eTandem  
partner!

**Changing partners** after working  
together for a while, as well as  
working with more than one partner,  
is not only allowed, it can make a lot  
of sense, for you can learn something  
new from every eTandem partner.  
However, it is not always easy to find  
partners. Your teacher might be able  
to help find you a partner through a  
website called eTwinning.

## VII eTandem for language teachers

### Information for foreign language teachers

For many years tandem and eTandem have been the focus of research and development efforts in which foreign language teachers from secondary and post-secondary schools as well as from other educational (language teaching) organizations have been substantially involved.

The question in particular as to how eTandem can be integrated into existing curricula has been often discussed. As a result, very concrete suggestions and experience reports are now available for various countries and institutions.

### Language courses and tandem

eTandem can enrich and supplement any language course.

Each and every language learner can **expand what he is learning on a language course** through work in an eTandem partnership - this is because the learner can:

- apply newly-learned material in real communication situations
- concentrate on their individual learning needs and objectives
- also benefit in the bilingual work with their partner from the partner's professional, cultural and other knowledge
- prepare for life-long learning through this self-directed work (learner autonomy)

The increase in their **learning motivation** will also positively influence class work.

### Integration in the classroom

As a teacher, you have various opportunities to integrate eTandem into your class. You can, for example:



- make your course participants aware of the possibility of practising the foreign language outside of class in an eTandem partnership
- occasionally have students bring their eTandem experiences into the classroom
- make the students' eTandem work more effective through individual learner coaching
- systematically prepare the students in your course for independent, life-long learning and use eTandem as a possibility for practising this.

An excellent website for finding teachers interested in eTandem learning is the eTwinning site, where you can post your request to find a partner class.

[www.etwinning.net](http://www.etwinning.net)



*Sometimes eTandem partners strike up the most remarkable relationships!!!*

## VIII Example tasks for face to face tandem learning

**Level** : Absolute beginners (A1 level, EFCR)  
**Common language** : English or German  
**Target languages** : Dutch <—> Danish  
**Medium** : Face 2 Face

### Exercise: “Hangman”

**Aim: to practise simple words, vowels and consonants**

A: Giv mig et “i”:	B: OK __ i __ (stik) (plug)
A: Er det .....?	B: Nej, det er ikke .....!

A knows structures such as:	Det er...(this is)... ikke....(not)
	Er det....? (is that...?)
	Giv mig et..... (Give me a ....)

### - Ten Questions:

**Aim: to practise simple questions: asking about tools**

B: Is het een schroevendraaier?	A: Nee, het is geen schroevendraaier.
B: What are “pliers” in Dutch?	A: Pliers are : een tang
B: Is het een tang?	A: Ja, het is een tang. Gefeliciteerd!

B knows structures such as:	Is het een.....? (is it a...?)
	Zijn het.....? (are they...?)
	Gefeliciteerd! (Congratulations!)

### Beginners to Pre-intermediate (A1-A2.2 level, CEFR)

**Common language** : English or German  
**Target languages** : Dutch <--> Danish  
**Medium** : Face-2-Face

**Aim** : to practise simple instructions  
**Aid** : a room with objects

A: Rejs dig op!  
 B: (gets up) Hvad skal jeg gøre nu?  
 A: Tag vasen og sæt den på gulvet.  
 B: Tag ..... Hvad er "vasen"?  
 A: Man sætter blomster i vasen.  
 B: Ok. Hvad skal jeg gøre nu?  
 A: Tag vasen og sæt den på gulvet  
 B: Tag vasen og ... sæt den...? Hvad betyder ... sæt den..?  
 A: Pick up the vase and place it...  
 B: Nåh,..ok.. sæt den... på gulvet... (picks up the vase and puts it on the floor)

Language material: Instruction words: (Rejs dig op! Tag....! Sæt den..!)

Question words: (Hvad skal jeg gøre nu  
 Hvad betyder ....?

**Level** : Beginners - Pre-intermediate (A1-A2.2 level, CEFR)  
**Common language** : English or German  
**Target languages** : (Dutch <--> Danish)  
**Medium** : Face-to-face  
**Aims** :

Learning the names of tools  
 Saying you need another tool, if handed the wrong tool  
 Passing somebody the required tool

**Aid** : Toolbox with tools

A: Kun je mij de tang aangeven? (Can you pass me the pliers, please?)  
 B: Is dit de tang? (Are these the pliers?)  
  
 A: Nee, dat is een klauwhamer! (No, that's a claw hammer!)  
 Ik heb de tang nodig! (I need the pliers!)  
 B: Is dit de tang? (Are these the pliers?)  
 A: Nee, dat is een schaaf! (No, that's a plane!)  
 Ik heb de tang nodig! (I need the pliers!)  
 B: Is dit de tang? (Are these the pliers?)  
 B: Ja, dank je! (Yes, thank you!)  
 A: Graag gedaan! (You're welcome!)

**Level** : Pre-intermediate – Intermediate (A2.2-B1 level, CEFR)  
**Common language** : English or German  
**Target languages** : (Dutch <=> Danish)  
**Medium** : Face to face

**Aims** : Asking about function  
 Describing the function

**Aid** : Toolbar, taskbar

- A: Sla ik met deze knop het document op?  
 (Do I save the document with this button?)  
 B: Nee, met deze knop verwijder je het document!  
 (No, with this button you delete the document!)  
 A: Kan ik met deze knop het document ophalen?  
 (Can I bring the document back with this button?)  
 B: Nee, dat is de functie van dié knop.  
 (No, that's the function of that button)  
 A: Wat is de functie van deze knop?  
 (What is the function of this button?)  
 B: Met deze knop sla je het document op!  
 (With this button you save the document!)  
 A: Ah, dank je wel. Ik moet deze knop gebruiken!  
 (Ah, thanks. I must use this button)

**Language material:**

nouns	(knop, document, functie)
verbs	(sla op, verwijder, ophalen,gebruiken)
demonstrative pronouns	(deze, die, dat)
prepositions	(met, van, (op))
auxiliaries	(kan, moet)
questions	(Sla ik.... , kan ik..., wat is...,)

<b>Level</b>	:	<b>Advanced (C1 – C2 level, EFCR)</b>
<b>Common language</b>	:	<b>German</b>
<b>Target language</b>	:	<b>English</b>
<b>Medium</b>	:	<b>Face-to-face      OR video-conferencing</b>

## 1. Language learning partnerships for engineers

### Role Play1:

(A) You attend a job interview. Your partner/teacher/assistant is the owner of the company. They have to ask you about your studies, your experience, your skills for the job. You ask them about the salary, working hours, holidays and/or possibilities of promotion.

(B) You work in an office. One day the director (your partner) calls you to let you know that they want to promote you. This means you would have to work in another town, far from your family, friends ... and your girlfriend/boyfriend. The director tells you about the advantages, you tell them about the difficulties you will have to take a decision.

(C) You work in a factory. One day your union representative (your partner) calls you to inform you that they want to organise a strike: the management attempts to dismiss some workers for disciplinary reasons - they were caught stealing something. The representative insists on going on strike in order to save your workmates; you refuse, since you need the salary and you do not want to put your own post in jeopardy.

(D) You work in a clothes-shop; one day the owner (your partner) offers a promotion to another employee of the opposite gender. You know that they have much less experience than you, that they do not work properly when the owners are not looking, and that they do not get on well with the customers. You protest about it and tell the owners that you should be promoted instead, that it is a question of prejudices/sexual discrimination.



## Roleplay 2

### Finding accommodation

Together with your partner, choose an advert for a flat in the UK / the USA / Australia. Agree on the town / city the role-play is supposed to take place in.

#### Tenant

You are on a year abroad and want to rent a flat, which you intend to share with a couple of friends. The landlord/landlady seems to be prejudiced against German/French/Spanish students. Convince the landlord/landlady that you are harmless and well-behaved. You need to find out some details for your friends about kitchen facilities. You will need to persuade the landlord/landlady to put in at least one extra bed. Make inquiries about details of the flat, eg: price, deposit, furniture, kind of contract you can get, etc...

#### Landlord/Landlady

You own a flat in a British / US / Australian university town which you want to rent out to a responsible and reliable family tenant.

You have advertised it in the local paper. Unfortunately your first would-be tenant is a German/French/Spanish student. You have heard very negative things about German/French/Spanish students. They are thought to be noisy, get drunk, have wild parties and smash up the furniture. Sometimes they don't pay the rent. Question your would-be tenant to make sure he/she is the kind of person to whom you want to let your flat.

How can you protect yourself in the event of a disaster?

You may also have to give some information about the flat. Eg: price, deposit, furniture, the kind of contract you offer, etc...



### Roleplay 3

#### Giving a damage report

##### Tenant

You have been away for the weekend and let a couple of English/German/French/Spanish friends stay at your expensive flat. When you come home, the flat is a mess. In the living room, the chandelier lies on the floor - in pieces. Where it once had been fastened, there is a rather large hole in the ceiling. In the kitchen you find an enormous number of empty bottles and the whole place smells of cigarettes and alcohol. Your friends are nowhere to be seen, and you begin to feel a little uneasy. You find a note attached to your telephone. It is obviously from your landlord/landlady and they demand that you ring them immediately.

You have not had any previous altercations with your landlord/landlady, in fact, you have always found them quite nice, but now you fear they might be more than a little upset. Whatever they accuse you of, you feel completely innocent of what happened and are not willing to take any responsibility for the behaviour of your friends who, by the looks of it, have departed as soon as possible.

The rent for the flat takes up any money you have got, and you cannot afford to pay any damages or compensation. You will only be in town for another two months, and you would like to stay on at the flat because it is ideally situated, very quiet and (at least until recently) has been nicely furnished.

##### **Task: Prepare what you will say to your landlord/landlady.**

Decide on the stand you will take concerning the damages and the responsibility for it. Think of some demands or accusations your landlady/landlord might make and prepare answers for them.



### Roleplay 3 continued

#### Landlord/Landlady

*You receive a phone-call from your tenant, with whom you have a rather serious matter to discuss. This is the situation:*

You own a very nice flat in a university town which you have rented out to a student. Originally, you were reluctant to let it to students, but they convinced you that they were very harmless and well-behaved. In fact, this student seemed quite pleasant.

Last Sunday, though, you received a phone call from the police, asking you to come to your flat immediately. When you arrived there, the place was a shambles and your tenant was nowhere to be seen. Some young English/German/French/Spanish louts stood in the hall, terribly drunk and unable to answer your questions. The police reported that they had been called in by the neighbours because of the terrible noise that had been going on all evening. When they questioned the young people they found out that they were obviously friends of your tenant who was away for the weekend.

You decide to throw them out immediately and ask the police to help you with it. Later, when you inspect the flat, you find to your horror that the chandelier has been torn down and is completely shattered. It was a very expensive piece and you liked it a lot. Now you want your tenant to own up to the damage and pay for it, or at least for part of it. And you would also like them to move out immediately. You are very upset and blame your tenant and their friends for all that has been going on.

**Task: Find out what your tenant has to say for themselves. Give them a chance to defend themselves, but don't be too lenient on them.**



## IX Example tasks for tandem learning at a distance

<b>Level</b>	:	<b>Beginners (A1 level, CEFR)</b>
<b>Common language</b>	:	<b>English or German</b>
<b>Target languages</b>	:	<b>Dutch &lt;→&gt; Danish</b>
<b>Medium</b>	:	<b>Chat or SKYPE</b>
<b>Aim</b>	:	<b>To improve written Danish and Dutch</b>

### Example of Chat (FirstClass):



Ellen : Skal jeg tale dansk med dig lige nu?

Frans : Ja, det skal du. Jeg vil gerne tale dansk.  
Jeg har et ... what is a *question* in Danish?

Ellen : a question = et spørgsmål

Frans : Tak. Jeg har et spørgsmål: Hvor bor du?

Ellen : Jeg bor i Holland. Og du?

Frans : Nåh, jeg bor ossa i Holland.

Ellen : også, Frans, ikke "ossa"

Frans : Undskyld, ok, jeg bor også i Holland.

Frans : Nu spreken we Nederlands,ok?

Ellen : Ja, dat is goed.  
Ik heb nu een ...what is *question* in Dutch again?

Frans : question = vraag

Ellen : Oh ja, ok, ik heb nu een vraag vor jou.

Frans : voor, Ellen, niet "vor": *voor jou*

Ellen : OK, ik heb nu een vraag voor jou:  
Waar werk je?

Frans : Ik werk in Hoorn. En jij?

Ellen : Ik werk in Bergen.

Frans : Ik ga nu naar mijn werk. Doe!

Ellen : OK, tot morgen. Doe!

### Vocabulary:

Danish	English
skal jeg?	must I?
tale dansk	talk Danish
med	with
dig	you
lige nu	right now
det	that
skal du	must you
jeg vil	I want
gerne	very much
spørgsmål	question
tak	thanks
jeg har	I have
hvor	where
bor	live
i Holland	in Holland
også	also
ikke	not
undskyld	sorry
Dutch	English
spreken	talk
dat is goed	that's good
ik heb nu	I have now
vraag	question
voor jou	for you
waar	where
werk je	do you work
in Hoorn	in Hoorn
en jij?	and you?
naar	to
mijn werk	my work
doei	cheerio!
tot morgen!	See you tomorrow!

Level : pre-intermediate (A2 – B1 level, CEFR)  
 Common language : English or German  
 Target languages : Dutch <=> Danish  
**Medium** : **Chat or SKYPE**  
**Aim** : **To give technical instructions in Danish and Dutch**  
**Aid** : **Plug and screwdriver**



Soren : Hoe demonteer je een stekker?  
 Frans : Verwijder eerst het middelste schroefje.  
 Soren : schroefje? Wat betekent "schroefje"  
 Frans : Schroefje = (little) screw  
         Vaak maak je iets kleiner door er –je achter te zetten. Bijvoorbeeld: kat – katje; lamp – lampje  
 Soren : Verwijder = remove?  
 Frans : Ja, verwijder het schroefje = remove the screw  
 Soren : Tak...dank je. Ok, ik heb de schroefje verwijderen  
 Frans : Het schroefje.  
 Soren : OK, ik heb het schroefje verwijderen  
 Frans : Verwijderd. Ik heb het schroefje verwijderd  
 Soren : Dank je. Verwijderd. Ik onthou het. Wat moet ik nu doen?  
 Frans : Verwijder het kapje.  
 Soren : Nah, kapje. Little cover, ok?  
 Frans : Ja, kap, kapje. ok!  
 Soren : Ik heb het kapje verwijderd. Goed?  
 Frans : Prima.  
 Soren : Wat moet ik nu doen?  
 Frans : Vervang de zekering!  
 Soren : zekering? Wat is dat?  
 Frans : zekering = fuse. Weet je het weer?  
 Soren : Ja, dank je. Ik weet het weer!

#### Vocabulary:

Dutch	English
hoe	how
demonteer	disassemble
een stekker	a plug
verwijder	remove
eerst	first
middelste	center
schroef	screw
vaak	often
maak	make
kleiner	smaller
achter	at the end
te zetten	to put
dank je	thank you
ik heb	I have
verwijderd	removed
ik onthou	I remember
goed	good
prima	fine
vervang	replace
zekering	fuse
weet je..?	do you know..?
weer	again

## X Portfolios in eTandem

### 1. The European Language Portfolio for Vocational Education

Information related to the European Language Portfolio can be found at the following site. Examples of complete language portfolios can be downloaded from the Portfolios tab.

<http://elp.ecml.at/UsingtheELP/Understandingtheportfolio/tabid/2745/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>

### 2. Reading at A2, B1 and B2 level (EFCR)

Below are described the levels of reading competence students need to achieve at A2 (pre-intermediate), B2 (intermediate) and B1 (pre-advanced) level. Many situations have been taken from an **International Work Placement** context.

eTandem learners could select a list of situations from the table below, and work on trying to achieve these tasks. The grid allows learners to be able to self-assess their performance, and for their eTandem partner to also feedback on how capable they were.

#### A2 Reading

Situation	Extra information	I can do this:			I want to learn this
		not yet	with difficulty	with ease	
1. You are working for a company that supplies foreign customers with parts. You are able to understand an order.	<i>This concerns routine orders that you regularly handle.</i>				
2. You are doing an internship abroad for three months. There is only a table with some chairs in your room. You would like to have a couch. You look for one in the 'for sale'-section of the local newspaper.	<i>First you have to find the right section, then you have to find an ad offering what you need. The ads will be very short, using abbreviations.</i>				
3. You have to buy a ticket from a machine at a train station abroad. You are able to read the instructions.	<i>Keep in mind that there often are illustrations explaining the text.</i>				
4. At your work you see a memo in the foreign language about asking for days off and calling in sick. You read the memo and understand the rules.	<i>This is about simple instructions with explanations and not long pieces of text.</i>				

Situation	Extra information	I can do this:			I want to learn this
		not yet	with difficulty	with ease	
5. You use a machine that only has instructions in the foreign language. There is a defect. By reading the manual you are able to find the problem.	<i>It is important that you do not read the entire manual. You have to look quickly at the contents and find the right place.</i>				
6. There is a fax from a foreign customer asking for information about your company's product. You understand enough of the fax to send the proper information.	<i>All you have to do is understand which information is asked for.</i>				
7. Your school is going on a trip to a foreign country. You are able to make a simple day programme using the information you have found in tourist brochures.	<i>Tourist information is often simple, short and compact such as opening times, group discounts etc.</i>				
8. Imagine you are staying in a foreign country. You want to go to a cinema. You read a short description about a film. Are you able to understand it?	<i>The description is short and compact. It is written in every day language. The subject is familiar to you.</i>				
9. Your manager has seen a folder about a conference and wants to go. You can read the folder and summarize the most important information in a memo.	<i>You do not have to translate the text literally. You have to extract the headlines: where is it, on which date, which important companies are participating, what are the costs, how one can subscribe?</i>				

## B1 Reading

Situation	Extra information	I can do this:			I want to learn this
		not yet	with difficulty	with ease	
1 You are on a work experience project abroad. When you arrive in the morning you find a note by the head of the night service team. Can you understand such a note?	<i>Think of worksheets you have to understand in your own language. Would you be able to understand them in a foreign language?</i>				
2. Your company has bought some new furniture (or machines). The instructions for assembly are in the foreign language. Would you be able to follow the instructions?	<i>Manuals and instructions often have illustrations. You might have experience with similar furniture or machines. That would make it easier.</i>				
3. During a stay abroad you unfortunately experience some stomach problems. You get some medicine at a chemist's. The medicine comes with instructions for use. Can you understand the most important information in such instructions?	<i>You do not need to understand everything, but it is important to understand when to take the pills, how many pills a day, what to do if the symptoms persist etc. Do you know what instructions like these look like in your own language? Try to imagine what you would understand in such a text in a foreign language.</i>				
4. A letter of complaint in the foreign language has arrived at your department. It is about not adhering to certain terms of delivery. Your boss has asked you to read the contents of the letter globally and give a summary. Can you do that?	<i>The object is to pick out the most important complaints and report them to your boss. You do not need to translate the letter perfectly.</i>				
5. You receive a long e-mail by someone you have worked with intensively during an international school project. You understand enough of its contents to reply in a short message, answering the information in the e-mail.	<i>You do not need to understand all the details but enough to write a pleasant reply.</i>				

Situation	Extra information	I can do this:			I want to learn this
		not yet	with difficulty	with ease	
6. You are on a work experience project and your boss has asked you to read the brochures for two products and recapitulate the most important differences. The brochures are in the foreign language. Can you do that?	<i>You already know the products and their effects. The object is to understand and process the information you read in the foreign language.</i>				
7. You want to apply for a job at a foreign company with a branch in your own country. The job advert has the exact information on how to go about the application, but it is in the foreign language. Can you understand this information?	<i>The information is on matters like contents, requirements, training, experience and the procedure to follow.</i>				
8. Your company exports products abroad. The export documents are in the foreign language. Can you understand the documents?	<i>Sometimes official language is difficult to understand. Here the object is for you to understand the main points and to know which information has to be entered where.</i>				
9. At your work experience placement there is a team meeting every week. A written report of it is made, containing the most important decisions. Can you understand the report?	<i>The report is about familiar matters. After all you are in the team yourself.</i>				
10. You have attended a demonstration of a new product or computer programme or a new machine and you have taken along some background information. The information is in the foreign language. Can you pick out the main points from the information and explain them to colleagues who were not present at the demonstration?	<i>You have seen the demonstration, so the subject is familiar to you.</i>				

## B2 Reading

Situation	Extra information	I can do this:			I want to learn this
		not yet	with difficulty	with ease	
1. You are installing a new machine or using it for the first time. You are able to understand and use the instructions in the manual.	<i>This concerns safely installing machines using a manual in the foreign language. The texts and instructions are often complicated, but they deal with your field of work. You can use a dictionary.</i>				
2. You handle a lot of correspondence at work. You receive a complicated letter containing several complaints. You have to write a suitable answer.	<i>This concerns a letter of complaint. The text is complicated and the complaints have to be properly understood.</i>				
3. You work in an area that changes and progresses quickly. You can read and understand with ease professional literature in the foreign language.	<i>This concerns professional literature you find in reports, magazines and company brochures. If necessary, you can look up words in a dictionary.</i>				
4. You want to finish studying in a foreign country. You have asked for and received detailed information from several colleges. You can understand and compare the information and make a decision.	<i>Think of information on scholarships, courses and where to live. You have to be able to find the relevant details in these often long and complicated texts.</i>				
5. Your company received a quote in a foreign language. Your manager has asked you to read it and look for possible mistakes. It is a difficult text. But you can understand enough to see that there are a few unclear points. You suggest that your manager definitely has to consult an expert.	<i>This concerns services in your field of work that you often do yourself. Therefore you have the knowledge. If necessary, you can use a dictionary in order to understand all the details.</i>				

Situation	Extra information	I can do this:			I want to learn this
		not yet	with difficulty	with ease	
6. You are working or doing an internship abroad. You are able to understand the formal reports of your department.	<i>At this level you have to be able to understand formal memos and reports of a company, especially if you are familiar with the subject.</i>				
7. Your boss came across an interesting article in a textbook in the foreign language. His/her knowledge of the language is poor. He/she asks you to make a short summary.	<i>Are you able to understand a textbook about your own field of work and pass the knowledge on to someone else? If necessary, you can use a dictionary.</i>				
8. You have to do some research on a subject that is familiar to you. The information is stated in the foreign language. You are able to quickly make a selection from the articles you have found.	<i>Do not worry about exact details, as long as you are able to quickly and effectively look for information relevant to your research.</i>				
9. Your company is working together with other companies from the EU. You are able to understand most correspondence, reports and professional information in the foreign language.	<i>You are able to understand most texts concerning your field of work. You can quickly select the relevant details. You also know what you do not understand and you can ask for help from experts.</i>				
10. Your boss has an important meeting in a foreign country. He/she asks you to collect a few interesting articles about the country, dealing with background information like culture, politics, etc. He/she would like to have something to talk about with the foreign business partners. Most information is in the foreign language.	<i>You are able to quickly select and read a few articles on general subjects. You can quickly select the most interesting articles in order to better read those.</i>				