

**Guide
to the
Tandem E-mail & MOO Project
between**

**Université catholique de Louvain
Belgium**

&

**Trinity College, Dublin
Ireland**

The UCL/Dublin Tandem Project

During the Winter Semester this year, students will

**The UCL/Dublin
Collaboration** have the opportunity to take part in an Internet-based collaboration between learners of English from the UCL (Belgium), and learners of French from Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland. Each student taking part in the project will receive the e-mail address(es) of their 'Tandem' partner(s) in the other country and vice versa.

Tandem language learning via the Internet

**Advantages of Internet
collaboration** This form of collaboration has a number of advantages if approached in the right way:

- your partner is a native speaker of your target language (English or French) and is thus an expert not only in the language but also in the culture of their country. This expertise means that your partner is able to say what is right and what is wrong (or what sounds more like a native speaker), but it does not necessarily mean s/he is able to explain why.
- your partner is also a learner of your native language (French or English) and thus in the same situation of learning a language (your native language in which you are an expert).
- you and your partner can decide what topics of mutual interest you want to talk about.
- Tasks will also be set by the teachers of your language courses.
- you and your partner can decide what learning targets you want to achieve, what methods you want to use to achieve them, and what working arrangements you want to make.

Main Principles of Tandem learning

Major principles of Tandem learning

From these potential advantages evolve three major principles that should form the basis of Tandem learning:

- **reciprocity:** each student must benefit equally from the partnership, and can expect to receive as much help as s/he gives.
- **bilingualism:** each student should use both English and French for the same amount of time.
- **learner autonomy:** each student is responsible for his/her own learning process and must determine learning objectives and methods to achieve these. As you are in a partnership with your partner, there is also mutual responsibility to make the partnership work for your partner too.

What is required of you

There are two potential difficulties that may occur during the exchange:

- the partnership is a form of distance learning, your courses, teachers, environments, routines, facilities, term holidays etc. are different, so it requires some effort by both partners to make the partnership fruitful.
- the exchanges are in writing, and mostly in the form of (electronic) letters and exchanges in a MOO. Some students may thus mistake the Tandem partner for a pen-pal, work becomes unfocused, unbalanced, and trivial. Tandem learning, however, means much more commitment and discipline than that.

first contact

Using e-mail in Tandem

Klaus Schwienhorst (kschwien@tcd.ie), the Dublin co-ordinator, and send him an introductory e-mail in which:

1. you say who you are (name, firstname, etc.)
2. you introduce yourself (background, current studies, likes, dislikes, etc.)
3. you explain why your Dublin partner should choose you (rather than anybody else in the class!) for the e-mail partnership

The introductory e-mail should be partly in English (first part) and in French (second part) - !!! no translation, just a 'two-language' text!

Do it TODAY (04.10.01) or tomorrow at the latest (05.10.01)!

You will then receive a message from your partner in Dublin.

The message will include two parts:

- introduction of the partner in his/her own language + explanation in French of how he/she want the Tandem partnership to work (expectations of the partner, how he/she want to handle corrections, etc.).

Some Golden Rules!

- Write a mail or meet in the MOO at least once a week!
- Tell your partner if you cannot write or meet for any reason
- Write & communicate in both English AND French
- Correct each other (only a few corrections per mail)
- Ask your partner what he/she wants.
- If you have any problems with your partner tell Fanny at once!

Using the MOO

- **Multiple User Domain, Object-Oriented:** A MOO is a text-based Multiple User Virtual Reality in which the participants can communicate with each other in real time by using the keyboard. You can also move around, create objects such as your own room to meet your partner in.
- In this course you will be meeting your partner every week in the **CLCS CAMPUS MOO** which is a Virtual reality University and you will be expected to complete projects with your partner on-line and use the communication and projects to promote your language learning.

- In order to access the **CLCS Campus MOO** you need a User ID and a password (from Klaus Schwienhorst)
You should receive it pretty soon
- You can access the **CLCS Campus MOO** through NETSCAPE Communicator 4.08 or higher or Internet Explorer 4.0 or later. Cookies, Java and Javascript must be enabled.

- type in the following address:
<http://kontakt.tcd.ie:8000/>

You will then come to the log in page

Enter your User ID and your password and hit the login button.

- You should now be in the FOYER of the **CLCS Campus.**

nnected

- Once connected there are a number of things which you can do in the MOO.
- You can move around the MOO, communicate with people there and manipulate or create objects. You can make a 'date' and meet your Tandem partner in the MOO and complete the projects that you find there.
- You do these things by entering commands in the field at the bottom of the left hand side of the screen or by clicking on the links in the right hand screen or the buttons in the menu bar at the top.
- All MOO sessions are automatically logged and sent to your MOOmail account. So: **do not log your own sessions: it happens automatically!**

Important MOO commands

the MOO

Communication Commands:

To talk to people in the same room, type one of the two following lines:

say Hello
"Hello"

Everybody in the room will see:
Guest says, "Hello"

You will see:
You say, "Hello"

To talk to people in other rooms, type the following line:
-Margit Hello

You will see:
Quick Page successfully sent to Margit.

Margit will see:
Klaus pages, "Hello"

To communicate emotions (emote) in the same room, type in one of the following two lines:

emote laughs.
:laughs.

Everybody in your room will see:
Guest laughs.

You will see:
You laugh.

To communicate emotes to somebody in a different room, type:
+Margit laughs.

You will see:
Emote successfully sent to Margit.

Margit will see:
[from Student Union] Guest laughs.

To send a private message to somebody in the same room:
whisper "Hello" to Margit

You will see:
You whisper, "Hello" to Margit.

Margit will see:
Guest whispers "Hello"

OO

Navigation Commands:

*To join somebody in another room (but page first and ask!),
type:
@join Margit*

You will see:
You join Margit in Margit's Study.

Margit will see:
Guest joins you in Margit's Study.

These are just some of the commands to get you started!

Projects

– You will all have a minimum of 4 projects to complete with your partner.
Here is an example of the tasks:

Project 1 Getting to know you.....

AIM to get to know your partner
 to talk about your studies
 to use the present, past and future

TIME 1-2 sessions

a Interview your partner

What are you studying?

What did you enjoy/hate at school?

What do you want to do later when you have finished your studies?

What was your previous work experience?

What was the best/worst job you ever had?

b Find out the following information

Find out about studying in each other's colleges.

How long does it take?

What subjects are covered?

How are your studies financed?

Project 2 If looks could kill.....

AIM to get to know your partner a bit better
 to find out what your partner looks like
 to express an opinion

TIME 1 session

Look at the photos of all the participants.

Guess which of the pictures is your partner.

Interview your partner and ask him/her for information about any of the following:
their appearance, likes, dislikes, hobbies,

Can you identify your partner now?

Project 3 Computer Developments

**Aims: To discuss IT topics
To develop IT vocab
Use the past and present perfect**

Time 1-2 Sessions

Discuss with your partner

What were the three most important developments in Information Technology and Computers in the past 40 years and why?

Look at the text on the MOO and answer the attached comprehension questions.

Project 4 Computers, Communication, Language

**Aims: To discuss this type of learning
To do a web site analysis**

Time 2-3 Sessions

Discuss with your partner:

What do you think about learning on-line?

Have you ever done an on-line course?

Do you think there will ever come a time when you don't have to come to college but will be doing all your studies from home via computer?

Do you have your own website?

Visit your partner's website if he/she has one.

Web Site Analysis

What makes a good web site?

Have a look at the following On-line Language Learning sites:

<http://www.fh-rhein-sieg.de/spz/english/project/>

OR

the language learning resources at:

<http://www.tcd.ie/CLCS/languageresources.html>

Do an analysis together with your partner of both your sites:

Think about the following:

Design Navigation Help Index Quantity and Quality of Info

Tandem work

Input

Language learner and language model As we said in the introduction, you and your partner are both language learners and language models. There are a variety of means to improve your partnership and make it more effective.

- learn from the model of your partner. Read carefully through the English parts of your partner's e-mail; they provide you with a wealth of phrases and vocabulary in the right context.
- learn from the reformulation by your partner. Ask your partner how to say something particular in English. See how your partner reformulated whole phrases or paragraphs in your letters and compare them to your original effort. You may want to discuss various options and, for example, find out in what context some phrases are used and others are not.

Output

- When you are writing in the foreign language it may well be that you find it more difficult than reading what you get from your partner.
- Try to write spontaneously without looking every word up in a dictionary. Try and think in the foreign language.
- Time yourself! Give yourself 20 minutes to write as much as possible in the foreign language; over a period of time you will see the amount and the quality improve.

On correction

Learn from corrections by your partner. Agree with your partner how to correct each other and how many errors should be corrected.

Options for correction So what is the ideal way to correct? As a rule of thumb, only **ten errors maximum** should be corrected in an e-mail (try to find a similar arrangement for the MOO) and make this focussed. You could, for instance, focus on verbs, only correcting wrong tenses or wrong conjugations or any other repeated mistake.

It may be helpful for your partner if you tell him

- what the most frequent errors were,
- what errors you want your partner **always** to correct,
- and maybe later you can comment more specifically on what errors your partner could have avoided.

Technically, always the best way to correct an e-mail from your partner is to use the **Reply** function and enclose the original e-mail.

Recycling material Many students do not feed corrected errors back into their tandem work. However, you will notice that if you consciously try to recycle words, phrases or sentences, for instance by forming three sentences with the difficult expressions and asking your partner for help, you can learn to avoid errors and become more confident in the target language.

You should always print out the mails and MOO transcripts you receive and send, as well as any corrections and keep them in a folder.

This gives you the opportunity to be able to read through the exchanges again, use them to do work on grammar items which may have come up, learn vocabulary or use the information which your partner has sent you.

Participation requirement

Tandem is an integral part of the course Collaborative activities with your Tandem partner are part of this course. During the language courses, you are supposed to work closely with your partner, exchanging ideas, and exchanging cultural information.

Due to the different organisation of terms in Louvain and Dublin, you will be able to collaborate only for a limited period of time, so make good use of it!

Tandem work and privacy

All exchanges that are collected with your permission will be treated confidentially and used only for research purposes

Useful Addresses

If you have any problems or queries about the Tandem project please contact:

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