

TANDEM TUTORIALS – SCRIPTS



04 – CORRECTIONS

1. Welcome to our video on corrections.
2. In this video, we will focus on oral exchange and talk about mistakes, corrections and support from your partner. You will get to know answers to the three main questions of
 - *What* to correct,
 - *when* to correct, and
 - *how* to deal with corrections.
3. Making mistakes is completely normal and simply shows that Tina and her partner are making progress because mistakes are a sign of the learning process.
4. Tandems should try to find a balanced way in their communication to focus either on **content and meaning** of their message or on its **form**. Tina, for example, agrees with the statement “the more corrective feedback I get, the better it is” and thus tries to get enough feedback on *how* she’s expressing herself.
That does *not*, at the same time, mean, that corrections have to occur very *often*.
5. There are three simple questions on corrections and mistakes they have to consider: *What? When? and How?* they prefer to be corrected.
Answering the questions can be a bit more difficult, but they are worth discussing together nonetheless: The clearer Tina and her partner are about how to deal with mistakes and corrections, the more they will ease into learning together and the more confident they will get. Not only in communicating in the target language with *each other*, but also in other situations they encounter in the future.
6. However, some learners consider their partner to be a friend and don’t want to make him feel uncomfortable by correcting too much. The other way round, some learners don’t dare ask for being corrected by their partner.
Tina and her partner acted similar in the beginning, but they have found common ground suiting both by following these **tips**:
7. If you already know which area you’re likely to make mistakes in (for example, word order, or tenses), you can help your partner so that he can support you better: tell him about your difficulties. It is easier for him if he has an idea of what to focus on and he will be even more willing to help you.

.....
.....
.....

8. If you have **no idea** yet of your difficulties, you could make a **recording** and listen to it afterwards with your partner. Together, find out, what types of mistakes mainly occur: grammatical errors, pronunciation errors, or vocabulary and phrase errors. Pick out the ones that are most important to you, for example because they hinder mutual understanding.

.....
.....
.....

9. Speaking about **grammar**: In the beginning, Tina believed that her tandem partner could tell her *why* something is correct or incorrect. But he reminded her of what was being said about the principle of reciprocity in the video with Tandem basics: tandem partners are *no language teachers*, but *conversation* partners. So if she wants to acquire grammar and its rules, she takes a textbook or software parallel to having sessions with her tandem partner.

Tina *practices* these acquired structures in the sessions, though, as nothing is better than a native speaker as a learning partner for doing so.

In a minute, we will suggest ways of dealing with grammar mistakes in a tandem session. (→ 12.)

10. **When**. Discuss with your eTandem partner when you would like to receive corrections: every time or only with specific mistakes (for example: ones that you repeat often)? Do you want to get the correction immediately or when you are finished with your sentence? Or only if your partner cannot fully understand you?

.....
.....
.....

11. You can even choose to give or ask for a **global, general feedback** at the very end of your session. In a global feedback you emphasise the positive aspects you have noticed and correct some common mistakes.

If you'd like to practise specific expressions or sentence patterns, you can ask for **selective correction** only. Arrange a short time during which you will correct your partner in detail (between 5 min. for beginners and about 15 min. for advanced learners).

Whatever you choose, don't forget to **encourage** your partner at the end of your session by complimenting him on his risk taking and improvement.

.....
.....
.....

12. Last, but definitely not least, discuss with your partner **how** you would like to be corrected: Should your tandem partner tell you the mistake explicitly and give you the correct answer? Or would you prefer to guess the correct solution on your own and thus have the chance to self-repair your message?

Do you need corrections in a written way or are you fine with just oral corrections? Or does it irritate you to be interrupted and you prefer your tandem partner to write down the mistakes first and make the corrections later, as you would do in a global feedback?

.....
.....
.....

13. Tina for example prefers to receive the corrective feedback of her wrong version in the form of the correct repetition from her partner. He has given her a so-called “recast”. Recasts are newly drafted expressions which are considered to be easy to provide, time-saving, and don’t disturb the flow of interaction too much.

If Tina realizes that she has received a recast, she tries to repeat the correct version to remember the correction.

She observes during and after the sessions with her partner whether this is the way both of them like giving and receiving corrective feedback. If it turned out you have the same preferences – that’s perfect! If Tina’s partner had a different preference, it would be **more important to respect the learner’s preference** of receiving feedback.

14. Sometimes Tina and her partner are not able to understand each other’s corrections if they stay in the target language, even if they try to. In these cases, they feel confident enough by now simply using a common language both understand – like English. They have some tips for you in an extra video called “Lingua franca”.

15. In oral sessions (for example via Skype), it requires some practice for Tina and her partner to concentrate on *content* respectively *meaning* of the conversation (*what* is being said?) *and* on the form (*was it correct?*) at the same time. A **recording** of their session made it easier.

When they are working on a concrete task though, they focus more on communication rather than on linguistic correctness.

16. Last but not least, Tina’s tandem partner is always a model for her and vice versa – **“How would you have expressed this in my position?”** turned out to be Tina’s most important question to her partner in case she wants to get corrective feedback, for example by asking for these “recasts”.

17. We hope you benefit from these tips on how to deal with mistakes, corrections, and support from your partner. Good luck discussing them and trying them out!

© Paderborn University, Centre for Language Studies (ZfS). References:

Akiyama, Y. (2017): Learner beliefs and corrective feedback in telecollaboration. A longitudinal investigation. In: System 64, S. 58-73

Augustin, W. (2011): Kooperativer Fremdspracherwerb im Teletandem. Grundlagen der Lehr- und Lernmethode. Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz.

Brammerts, H. & Kleppin, K. (Eds.) (2005): Selbstgesteuertes Sprachenlernen im Tandem. Tübingen: Stauffenburg.

Grümpel, C. et al. (2017): Telecollaboration and Use of English between Learners of German and Spanish in an Institutional Context of a Spanish University. In: Funk et al. (Eds.): Handbook for Foreign Language Learning in Online Tandems and Educational Settings. Frankfurt a.M: Peter Lang

Lewis, T. & Walker, L. (Eds.) (2003): Autonomous language learning in tandem. Sheffield: Academy Electronic Publications
SEAGULL – Smart Educational Autonomy through Guided Language Learning <http://seagull-tandem.eu/tips/>

Telles, J. A. & Vassallo, M. L. (2006): Foreign Language Learning In-Tandem: Teletandem As An Alternative Proposal In CALLT. In: the ESPecialist 27 (2), S. 189-212