

Example of a successful learning journal for EOTO tandem programme

Juuli (Urban landscape): Learning Taiwanese Chinese/Tutoring English

Date and time

20 Oct, 1,5hrs

My learning goal for the session:

Practising the correct pronunciation of the most common phrases, e.g. 我喜歡學習中文。你叫什麼名字？ And pronunciation of the sounds I find especially difficult, e.g. zh, ch, qu, ji, ci.

Learning activities:

We practised many different phrases and sounds. We paid attention to the different parts of mouth that sounds are formed in and the shape of the lips while making the sounds. For example, pronouncing 住 and 去 requires the lips to stay in the shape of o the whole time without relaxing them.

My tandem also taught me new phrases about how to tell if you have met someone. I knew 看 is means to see someone, but did not know how to say "I met Jhong-yun yesterday" I learned, I can use the verb-object structure 見面: "昨天我跟仲芸見面了。"

Evaluation:

I learned a lot especially about the pronunciation and how important the different parts of the mouth are when trying to make the right kind of sound. I was surprised how hard it was - even though it sounded correct to me, Jhong-yun did not think so, haha! It was very helpful as in class, the teacher simply cannot help each of us students individually.

Reinforcing learning:

I believe it important to talk a lot in the following meetings as well so that my mouth and brain will automatically start pronouncing in the correct way. In addition, I will practise talking at home, I think that way I can learn to activate the different parts of my mouth better.

Date and time

23 Oct, 2hrs

My learning goal for the session:

Study a chapter from my Taiwanese textbook. The theme of the chapter is directions.

Learning activities:

I read the two text of the chapter out loud and translated them. I practised the characters that I was not familiar with and did exercises from the book.

Evaluation:

I learned a lot of useful vocabulary that is essential in everyday life. Learning how to use the words implying direction: 前面, 後面, 右邊, 左邊, 上面, 下面/低下, 外面, 裡面 are important when wanting to give/receive directions to some place or describing events.

Reinforcing learning:

I plan on practising the use of the direction words next time I meet with my partner. I want practise real life cases of asking for directions to some place.

Date and time

27 Oct, 2hrs

My learning goal for the session:

Learn more about giving directions and different forms of transportations that I had self-studied a few days ago. In addition, I had some question about grammar, especially the use of 過 and 就.

Learning activities:

I made up some situations and talked about how to give directions to some places. We discussed different transportation methods and I practised the correct pronunciation.

In addition we talked about the difference between 要 and 想要. I think it was interesting and important to discuss it, as using the more certain level (not adding 想) could give wrong impressions in some situations.

Evaluation:

Having self-studied the vocabulary before, I was able to ask questions about the unclear parts of the vocabulary. It felt like the vocabulary and grammar we studied was important and I now have better understanding for example about the use of 邊 and 面.

Reinforcing learning:

The vocabulary related to directions is common and therefore I will surely come across with it often in the future. I think this will be enough to reinforce the learning.

Date and time

30 Oct, 1hr

My learning goal for the session:

Learn pronunciation and ask some questions regarding comparing things in Chinese.

Learning activities:

I had chosen a chapter from my textbook that I read out loud. Jhong-yun corrected my pronunciation when needed. I had learned grammar structures about comparing things in class. I had questions I wanted to ask about that and Jhong-yun helped me.

Evaluation:

It was a nice short session and I felt like I learned a lot, although some words are very difficult. I often can't hear whether my pronunciation is correct or not. We had practised these difficult words already before. These words sound very similar to me are 去, 住, 出. Most of the words starting with ch, zh, q and j seem difficult, I'm going to keep on practising!

Reinforcing learning:

I need to keep on practising and ask Jhong-yun if I'm pronouncing the words right. I believe that eventually I can feel the difference myself, too.

Date and time

9 Nov, 1hr

My learning goal for the session:

We

decided to bake some Finnish pulla together with Jhong-yun. During that I wanted to learn different vocabulary regarding kitchen as well as hear about the culture in Taiwan.

Learning activities:

We baked together and talked about our cultures from the perspective of kitchen and cuisine. Where we learn to cook, it is important for a woman to know some basic cooking etc. Jhong-yun taught me new vocabulary regarding food and kitchen. An interesting word that is very "Chinese" to me because of the logic behind the word is 打火機 : hit fire machine = lighter.

Evaluation:

We had a lot of fun teaching each other new vocabulary and comparing the cultures. It was a nice change for the usual sessions, when we sit by the table and read, write and concentrate on the topic. Learning by doing stuff is efficient while relaxing and fun!

Date and time

16 Nov, 1,5hrs

My learning goal for the session:

I wanted to study a new chapter from my Taiwanese book. I read the chapter about being sick and did exercises from the book.

Learning activities:

I wanted to learn new Chinese vocabulary related to health; both characters and pronunciation. There were a lot of familiar words but also something new.

Learned new vocabulary and revisited already learnt grammar.

Date and time

22 Nov, 2.5hrs

My learning goal for the session:

I wanted to practice my pronunciation and learn about when to use guo and le (過 and 了).

Learning activities:

This time we met at a café with Zhong-yun. We talked about the media culture and how the media differs in our countries.

In addition, Zhong-yun was listening to me read texts out loud from my textbook and corrected my pronunciation. We, once again, practiced q,c,zh and j together. So hard!!

Furthermore, we talked about 過 and 了. Zhong-yun promised to find some new examples and explain me more next time as the difference between them and when to use each of them is still unclear to me.

We also talked about the colours and she taught me the colours of the rainbow in writing and pinyin.

Evaluation:

I always enjoy practicing pronunciation, even though it sometimes feels frustrating when it just doesn't go write. I look forward to next time Zhong-yun will tell me more about guo and le (過 and 了).

Date and time

28 Nov, 2hrs

My learning goal for the session:

I studied a chapter from my textbook. I read out loud texts from my textbook, trying to practise pronunciation. This time I wanted to put more emphasis on the pronunciation than learning the characters. Luckily most of the vocabulary was already familiar to me. I enjoy reading texts from the other book because reading the book I can see how I'm improving in Chinese. I know more and more vocabulary without looking at the vocabulary list.

Evaluation:

I learned new words that are very useful. Mostly related to being sick and going to the doctor.

I also prepared for tutoring. I watched a TED talk chosen by Zhong-yun that was related to urban planning.

Date and time

17 Nov, 2.5hrs

My learning goal for the session:

I wanted to ask Zhong-yun questions I had about the chapter I had studied the day before and also from class.

This time we mostly focused on the TED talk. We talk about the video, what we thought about the ideas it represented and how to do similar things in Finland and Taiwan.

Date and time

20 Nov, 2hrs

My learning goal for the session:

I wanted to study a new chapter from my Taiwanese book, the topic is: 你幾點鐘下課? The two texts I studied are about going to class and talking at the hotel counter. The grammar is about time.

Learning activities:

I learned some new vocabulary and revisited the expressions of time. I find studying from this other Chinese text book interesting and useful because it lets me learn new words as well as recap what I've already learned in the book we use in class.

Evaluation:

Date and time

1 Dec, 2hrs

My learning goal for the session:

Hear more about 過 and 了. Ask some questions about the chapters I had self-studied.

Learning activities:

Zhong-yun had prepared some examples about 過 and 了. She explained me how to use them and what differences there can be depending on how which one is used in a sentence.

Evaluation:

I think I can now understand the difference better. I think Zhong-yun was really good at teaching and I'm grateful she went through all the trouble to find the information.

We had also chosen beforehand a more academic topic we would discuss. Our topic was death penalty and we talked about our opinions and the laws in our countries as well as the common arguments for and against.

Date and time

6 Dec, 4hrs

This was our last session. We decided to have it on the Independence Day of Finland. We baked pipari, Finnish Christmas cookies and even made a house.

While doing the construction work, we talked about cultural things, such as gay marriage (which is a hot potato in the politics in both Finland and Taiwan), about Independence / National Day traditions in our countries and about the history behind the days.