



Buddy Talk

Project description

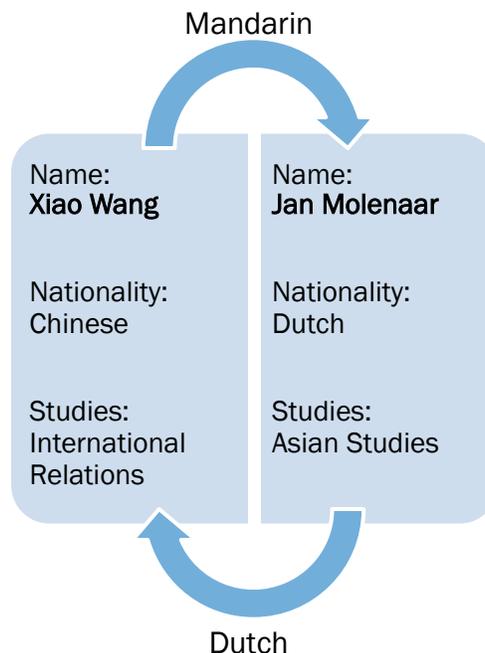
Leiden University hosts a large number of international students. When an international student arrives in the Netherlands, (s)he takes a leap of faith; to live and study in a country that is completely foreign to you, can be pretty challenging. In turn, it is also a challenge for Dutch students to get to know their international peers and understand their culture, habits and identity.

One of the key tools (and obstacles) when it comes to understanding one another is **language**. However, taking a language course requires two things students usually do not have: money and time. In order to facilitate cultural exchange and understanding through language, we introduce: **Buddy Talk**.

The basics

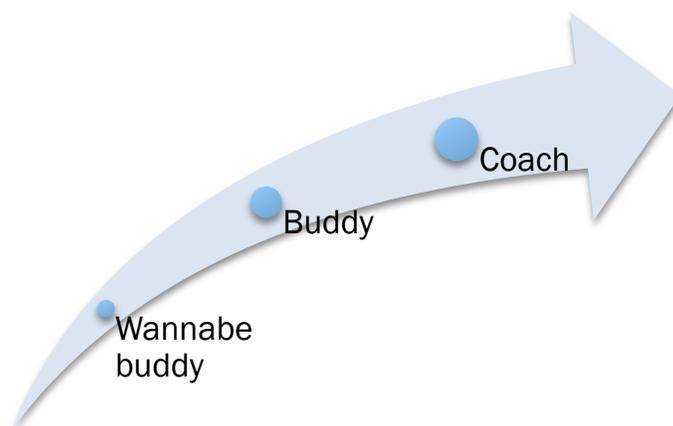
Buddy Talk is a language exchange platform for international and Dutch students of Leiden University. Students can sign up to join Buddy Talk, after which they will be registered in a database. By means of a Buddy Scan (questionnaire), students will specify which language(s) they speak and wish to learn. Guided by the students' backgrounds and preferences, a match will be made with a fellow student. In pairs, buddies will **teach each other their language**.

For example:



Throughout the academic year, Buddy Talk will host several **events** where members can come together and exchange experiences (or even buddies). In addition, Buddy Talk will establish an online community through its website and social media, where students can communicate and ask questions effortlessly.

Buddy Talk has a **development model**, which stimulates students to grow and improve. When a member has gained experience with teaching a language, (s)he can advance further towards the status of 'coach'. In this role, (s)he can assist other buddies, at the same time enhancing their teaching skills and expanding their network.



The perks

Buddy Talk combines **cultural exchange, teaching, learning and having fun** at the same time. Besides learning a foreign language, the platform involves other advantages for the students: it can also add to their personal skills and even their resume. Some perks:

International student	Dutch student
Improve chances of finding job in the Netherlands	Improve chances of finding a job abroad
Develop and improve teaching skills	
To better understand the Dutch culture and feel more at home	Work together with people from various backgrounds in an international environment
Learn about different study methods	
Meet new people and expand their network within the Leiden University community	

Approach and execution

The objective of Buddy Talk is:

Enhancing cultural exchange and understanding through language

Start

To start off, we will organize a launch event around end of September 2015. In order to build the Buddy Talk network, we will promote the project during the Leiden University EL-CID Introduction Week (Dutch students) and Orientation Week (international students).

After the launch event, the first buddy pairs can be established. Buddies will be matched on the basis of (language) preferences, interests and background. During the launch event, an activity can be organised to further facilitate the matching process.

Coordination

We, ms. Qing-yi Fan and ms. Kim-Lan Jong Baw, are both committed to spending effort and time into this project. Cultural exchange and diversity issues in the Netherlands are subjects we feel passionate about. We both have an academic background in the fields of language and communication and are currently university employees. Hence, we believe that we have the knowledge and experience to successfully coordinate Buddy Talk.

To evaluate and improve quality, a 'feedback council' of students will be established in the first year. The council will evaluate Buddy Talk and advise us on what might be improved.

Activities

Although it is the student's own responsibility to actively work with his/her buddy, events will be hosted throughout the academic year in order to keep the Buddy Talk network alive and growing. These events will not only focus on networking and exchanging buddies, but also on personal and professional development through lectures and workshops. The students will also be encouraged to organize events for their fellow peers.

For example:

Buddy Talk will organize an interactive intercultural communication workshop with one or more keynote speaker(s). During this workshop, buddies will have the opportunity to exchange ideas about cultural differences and problems they have encountered while teaching each other their language.

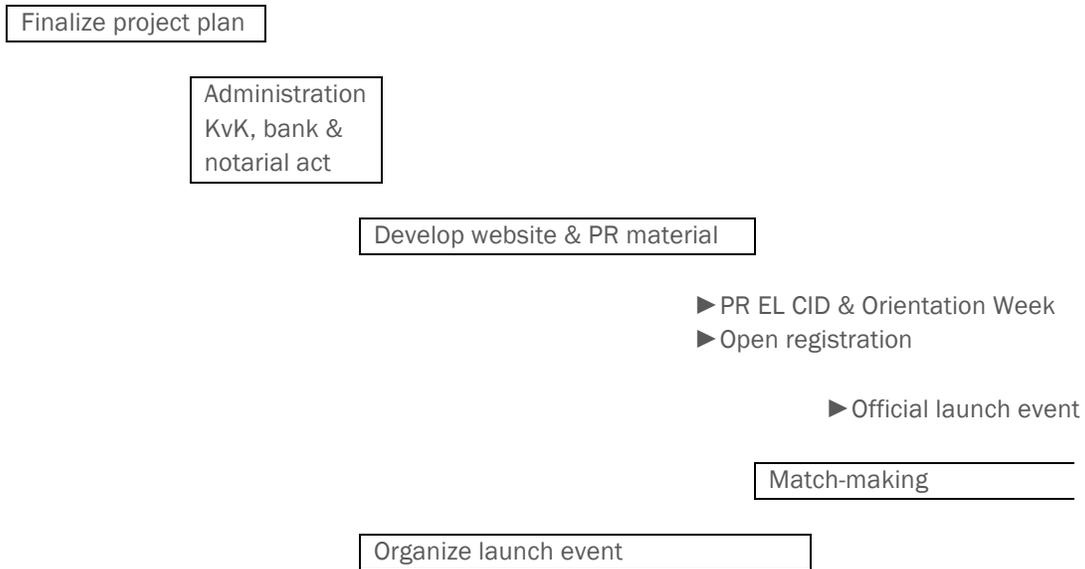
Long term ideas

Buddy Talk is a project without an end. The goal, which is to **enhance cultural exchange and understanding through language**, is a continuous ambition rather than a destination. The more Buddy Talk grows in terms of members, the more value will be added to the network of students throughout the Leiden University community.

The objective is to make Buddy Talk a self-supporting concept by January 2016. Funding for the activities can be realised by charging annual membership fees and/or entrance fees for events. Furthermore, we would like to investigate possibilities to cooperate with relevant third parties, such as the Academic Language Centre or student association SIB-Leiden (Leidse Studentenvereniging voor Internationale Betrekkingen).

Time schedule

2015											
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec



Budget estimate 2015

	€
<u>Income</u>	
Registration fees membership	0
Van Bergen Fund*	5000
Total income	5000
<u>Expenses</u>	
Targets	
Event organization	2000
Workshops/lectures	1000
	<u>3000</u>
Administration	
<i>General costs</i>	
Notarial act	400
Enrolment KvK	50
Bank account costs	150
Office utilities	500
Telephone expenses	100
	<u>1200</u>
<i>PR costs</i>	
Flyers and advertisement materials	200
Website development	300
	<u>500</u>
<i>Personnel expenses</i>	
Travelling expenses	300
	<u>300</u>
Total expenses	5000

*€5000 is taken into account as the seed capital. However, this amount can easily be reduced by reducing target expenses (event organization and workshops/lectures), without harming the positive outcomes of Buddy Talk.