



Five College Center for the Study of World Languages

Conversation Preparation Guides

Title: Useful Expressions for Conversation Sessions

Topic: Useful Expressions

Level: Novice

Practice on Your Own

Conversation sessions should be conducted as close to 100% as possible in the language you are learning. If you spend a little time learning some useful classroom expressions in the language you are studying, it will be easier to avoid the temptation to switch into English.

- Be prepared to greet your conversation partner and fellow students in the language you are learning at the start of every conversation session. Also prepare to use inquiries of wellbeing (How are you?) and respond appropriately.
- Be prepared to use an appropriate parting expression at the end of each session (Goodbye, See you next week, etc.).
- Think about phrases that might be useful during your conversation sessions. For example:
 - I don't understand.
 - Please repeat.
 - More slowly please.
 - What does ... mean?
 - How do you say ...?
 - What is this called in [language]? (while pointing to an object or picture)

Have you learned how to say any of these useful phrases in the language you are learning? If not, look them up or ask your conversation partner.

- You may think of questions you want to ask as you are studying throughout the week or during the conversation session. If you do not know how to ask a particular question in the language you are learning, hold onto your question until the last five minutes of the session. You can use the last five minutes for asking and answering questions in English.

Practice in Conversation Session

- Be prepared to greet your conversation partner and fellow students in the language you are studying, and to exchange inquiries of wellbeing (How are you? I am fine, thank you.).

- Practice phrases that will be useful during the conversation sessions (Please repeat, What does ... mean?, etc.). Repeat the phrases multiple times to practice pronunciation and help them stick in your memory.
- Your conversation partner might need to make occasional short explanations in English regarding cultural etiquette and norms, but otherwise she/he will stay in the language you are studying.
- Reserve the last five minutes of the conversation session for asking and answering questions in English.
- Be prepared to use an appropriate parting expression at the end of the session (Goodbye, See you next week, etc.).