



Five College Center for the Study of World Languages

Conversation Preparation Guides

Title: Exchanging Money

Topic: Financial Matters

Level: Novice-Intermediate

Practice on Your Own

Imagine that you are studying or traveling in a country where the language is spoken, and you need to exchange some U.S. dollars for the local currency.

- What are your options for exchanging money in that country? Can you exchange money in the airport, at banks, and/or in other locations? Where are you likely to get the best exchange rates and the lowest fees? Do you need to watch out for people who may give you counterfeit currency? Do some research online and prepare to ask your conversation partner if you have questions.
- Are you familiar with the bills and coins that are used in that country? If not, look for information and pictures online. You should also have an idea of typical prices for food, lodging, etc. so you know how much money to exchange.
- Plan ahead for what you need to say to the employee at the bank/airport kiosk/etc. How will you greet her/him? How can you ask about the exchange rate and fees? Be prepared to say how much money you want to exchange and to count the money you are given in the local currency to make sure it is the right amount. You may want to ask for a mix of smaller and larger bills.

Practice in Conversation Session

- Be prepared to tell your conversation partner and fellow students how much money you want to exchange and where you will exchange it. If you are not sure about the best place to exchange money, ask your conversation partner for advice.
- Be prepared to role play exchanging money. Remember to use culturally appropriate greetings, ask about the exchange rate and fees, and count the local currency that is given to you. Use polite expressions ("please," "thank you," etc.) as appropriate.
- Discuss typical prices for goods and services such as food, lodging, toothpaste, etc.