



Five College Center for the Study of World Languages

Conversation Preparation Guides

Title: Nationality

Topic: Getting Acquainted

Level: Novice

Practice on Your Own

- In a language class, you are not from one place but multiple places; this is because you need to learn the names of different countries and how those names are changed into nationalities. For instance, the country is “France” but the nationality is “French.” Keep in mind that you need to practice pretending to be from different places for the sake of learning a language.
- Go to Google Maps (or another atlas) and zoom out so you can see countries all around the world. Write down the names of ten countries in the target language. If you use Google Maps, you can change the language to the target language.
- Now change the names of the countries you have written down into nationalities. For instance, change “Russia” into “Russian” or “China” into “Chinese,” “Poland” into “Polish,” etc.
 - Do you see one or more patterns in changing a country’s name to a nationality?
 - Not every language necessarily expresses nationality by changing the name of the country into an adjective (“France” to “French,” etc.). Is this the case in the language you are learning? How is it different?
- Pronounce the names of the countries and nationalities you have written several times. Record your voice and listen to yourself. You can later compare your pronunciation before and after your conversation session.
- Write down questions that ask about nationality. What are the different ways in which people ask about nationality in the target language? How different are the responses? For instance, in English one might ask “Where are you from?”/“What is your nationality?”/“What country are you from?”/etc. Pay close attention to which interrogatives are used and ask your conversation partner which questions are most common.
- Is there any use of prepositions/postpositions? If you are not sure, prepare questions to ask your conversation partner.

Practice in Conversation Session

- Answer your conversation partner’s question about your nationality by pointing at different countries on a map. (This could be a paper map or a digital one.) Use the name of the country and nationality in two different sentences:

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- Conversation Partner: Where are you from?
 - Student: I am from **Mexico**. I am **Mexican**.
- Conversation Partner: Where are you from?
 - Student: I am from **Japan**. I am **Japanese**.
- Conversation Partner: Where are you from?
 - Student: I am from **Afghanistan**. I am **Afghan**.
- Conversation Partner: Where are you from?
 - Student: I am from **Switzerland**. I am **Swiss**.
- Now switch roles. You ask your conversation partner about where he/she is from and he/she responds similarly. Randomly ask about 12 countries other than the ones you have already worked on.
 - What different patterns came up? Take note of them as your conversation partner talks so you can ask him/her about them.
- Practice talking about nationalities in the third person as well.
 - She is from the United States. She is American.
 - They are from Senegal. They are Senegalese.
- How can you say in the target language that you are from Amherst or Hadley? Practice asking where someone is from at the local level, cities and towns. Is it different to ask about the city/town someone is from as opposed to nationality?