



Five College Center for the Study of World Languages

Conversation Preparation Guides

Title: Languages You Speak

Topic: Interviews for Work

Level: Intermediate

Practice on Your Own

- Imagine you can speak many languages (at least six). List them. In front of each language write the country/countries where the language is spoken. In many cases several countries speak the same language; however, there are ways to modify them. For instance, English is modified when we say American English, British English, or Australian English.
- Work on questions that ask what languages someone speaks. There are two main ways to ask questions, yes/no questions and questions with question words (who/what/where/when/why/how/etc.). Prepare yes/no questions asking about specific languages and/or general questions using question words.
 - Do you speak Spanish? Do you speak Chinese? Do you speak British English? Yes, I do./No, I don't.
 - What languages do you speak? I speak X, Y, and Z.
- Now think of words or phrases that modify your ability in speaking a language, such as a little, well, very well, etc.
 - I speak Spanish well. I speak a little Chinese. I speak Russian fluently...

Practice in Conversation Session

- Imagine you are in a job interview. It is the part when you are asked about your language skills. Your conversation partner is the interviewer and you are the interviewee.
- Your conversation partner can begin with some yes/no questions about some languages that are necessary for the job. For instance:
 - Do you speak Mexican Spanish?
 - Do you speak German or French?
 - Are you fluent in French?/Do you speak French fluently?
- Now the interviewer switches to questions with question words.

- What languages do you speak?
 - How well do you speak Urdu?
 - Where did you learn Spanish?
 - Which language do you speak best? Which language do you like most?
- Then switch roles. Now you are playing the role of interviewer and your conversation partner is your interviewee. Find out about his/her language abilities. Repeat the same conversation that you had before. As always, remember that asking question is harder than answering, so pay close attention to how to form different questions.