

Language Preparation Session for programs with language requirements

- How to handle being fully immersed yet feeling lost at the beginning
 - Tips:
 - Participate in class as much as you can
 - Go out of your comfort zone
 - Everyone is in the same boat
 - Making mistakes is part of it
 - Asking questions
 - Making friends who are locals is good way to learn
 - Process of overcoming frustrations and accepting the language
 - Is similar to culture shock process
 - You need to know that it will be frustrating at times, but it will get much easier with time
 - Language fatigue: feeling frustrated and worn out from constantly thinking and speaking in a different language combined with not being able to communicate as effectively as one may want to
- Maximizing Study Abroad: A Students' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use
 - Language-Learning Strategies to prepare yourself for immersion before and during your time abroad:
 - Listening Activities beforehand:
 - watching movies/videos
 - listening to music
 - books on tape
 - listening to radio in the language
 - Strategies to Become a Better Listener
 - Distinguish separate words from a blur of sounds
 - Distinguish one sound from another, like the vowel sounds in the English words “sit” and “seat”
 - Comprehend the message without understanding every single word

- Understand the entire message
- Decipher fast speech
- Figure out the intention of the speaker
- Listen to a conversation between 2 or more people
- Recognize different types of speech according to the speaker (age, status, relationship) or setting (in school, at dinner, at a nightclub)
- Learning Vocabulary
 - Present-day Usage
 - Ask Natives about what vocabulary is used or not used
 - Know useful vocabulary
 - For traveling, restaurants, school, stores, hospitals, banks and other different settings
 - Learn vocabulary by association
 - Be aware of true and false cognates
- Speaking
 - Practice with speaking partner, over the phone, in a group, etc. beforehand
 - Overcome the fear of speaking
 - Be willing to make mistakes
 - Learn when to talk
 - Pauses, Fillers
 - What kind of speaker are you: planner or corrector?
 - Communicate more
 - Initiate conversations
 - “Practice makes perfect”
 - Use circumlocution and descriptions
 - Ask for help
 - Correct yourself and learn from mistakes
 - Speak to strangers (you will be forced to) - for directions, questions, etc.

- Make new friends
- Reading
 - News articles
 - Skim the text-context clues
 - Read between the lines
 - Background info first
 - Generate questions
 - Write summaries
- Writing
 - Repeat key phrases
 - Plan and organize what you're going to write
 - Leave a blank for words you don't know
 - Edit grammar and mechanics after your ideas are written
 - Make major revisions after your ideas are written down
 - Distance yourself from writing
 - Give yourself extra time to write
 - Feedback on written work-learn from your mistakes so you don't repeat them
- Translation
 - Choosing between mental and written translation—visually or in your head
 - Translating when languages are either very close or very far apart
 - Translating idioms, saying, and expressions
 - Translating while speaking, while writing, while reading, while listening
 - Keep grammar structure & syntax in mind when translating
 - Subject, Verb, Object –Spanish
 - Verb, Subject, Object –Arabic

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Maximizing Study Abroad. 2nd. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, 2006. Print.