

HELPFUL HINTS TO PREPARE YOURSELF FOR YOUR YEAR ABROAD IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The following was prepared for Bordeaux participants by Michael Harney, a graduate student and former Assistant to the Bordeaux Director. This preparation exercise will apply well to any target language. Please substitute your target language, (TL), in the appropriate spaces.

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TO BE DONE EVERY DAY (or at least 5 times a week) for 45 minutes:
(...but, DO FIND THE TIME!!!)

Read aloud: Anything in your target language for 20 minutes.
Strive for correct pronunciation; read progressively faster, maintaining correct pronunciation.

Read 2 magazines: Read them from cover to cover, using an all (TL) dictionary. Using such a dictionary is painful at first, requiring a certain amount of discipline. But it will pay off in BIG DIVIDENDS when you get to the host country.

Read 2 difficult books: Read one fiction, one non-fiction. Give your (TL) comprehension a work-out; the harder you work here, the easier your year will be there.

Go to the movies in (TL) : buy and listen to (TL) records; seek out (TL)-speaking people.

Keep a diary in (TL).

Keep a journal of phrases, expressions, whole sentences--
in short, a collection of structures that strike you as desirable elements in your own personal repertoire of the language.

REMEMBER: the better your (TL) gets, the more you become a (TL) speaker, just like any other native born or university-taught.

*ABOVE ALL ELSE: Language improvement requires frequent, brief sessions, rather than infrequent, lengthy ones. Keep after it over several months' time--have FAITH in yourself even when you feel Bone-Headed, Crazy, Confused, or just plain tired. You will be absolutely amazed by your progress, and you will be the marvel of your foreign professors!!

GOOD LUCK AND HAVE FUN WITH YOUR NEW LANGUAGE.