

Conversation Partner Appointment Techniques

A Handout by Kate F.

OVERVIEW

Keep in mind that a student's background in English can affect how they view the learning done during a conversation partner appointment - managing expectations and agenda items is key! Building rapport at the beginning of the appointment can help, as well as allowing you to investigate a student's background in English.

Setting Goals with an EAL Student

Here are some ways to try and set the agenda for what you might speak about while also 'going meta' about how they use their language (more suggestions can be found on pages 194-197 in the UCWbL Handbook):

1. "Do you plan on using your English after you graduate?"
2. "What type of things do you think you'll talk about next week in class?"
3. "Are there any topics that you're interested in and want to know more about?"
4. "How did you first start learning English?"
5. "Do you think you might use English for a job in the future?"

Can be used to set up future goals and next steps!

Communication Troubles

Remember that there are different ways that people can misunderstand one another

- **Simple misinterpretation** (requires a *quick* explanation) vs **Incomplete understanding** (requires *exploration* of what the student is attempting to say)

Resources for More Information

Tutoring Second Language Writers edited by Shanti Bruce and Ben Raforth

The Speaking-Writing Connection in Second Language and Academic Literacy Development by Jessica Williams

Multilingual Writers and Writing Centers by Ben Raforth

Breaking Ice and Setting Goals: Tips for Getting Started by Shanti Bruce