Guidelines for the Talk Abroad Conversations and Responses

During the course of the semester, you will have three conversations with a vetted conversation partner from the Francophone world using Talk Abroad. After the conversation, you will re-listen to it and write two responses (in French) to the things you heard and/or said in the conversation.

You should create an account at www.talkabroad.com. The tutorial for how to sign up and find the interview time with your conversation partner can be found on Moodle.

1. Conversation 1 – Un conte de votre culture.

In this first conversation, in groups of two students with the partner, you will discuss some of the stories you have read in class with your conversation partner and ask him/her to tell you a story that they liked as a child (or that is popular or well known in their country). You might ask them if there are any traditional words or phrases that typically appear in stories from their country or region. Ask them who typically tells stories in their culture. Ask them what they think the purpose of stories is in their culture. What are the main morals and values that didactic stories for children often share? In your response, work with your partners to write a summary or paraphrase of the story you heard. For example, if you were to do that of one of the stories we read, you might say: " 'La tuque percée' est un conte québécois dans lequel un homme fait un marché avec le diable. Il promet de donner son âme au diable au bout d'un an et un jour si le diable lui donne de l'argent et ne se montre pas. A la fin, il est plus intelligent que le diable, et le diable perd. Il gagne beaucoup d'argent et finit ses jours riche et content. » Next, you'll talk about the cultural perspective that your partner shared with you, using one of the prompts below.

2. Conversation 2 – Comment imaginez-vous la culture américaine ?

In this second conversation, you and a partner will discuss with your TalkAbroad partner the question above. You will ask your conversation partner for his/her perspective on life in the United States of America. This may be uncomfortable or odd for you (and it may be uncomfortable or odd for your conversation partner if he/she has negative opinions on it). It should, however, give you valuable insight into the ways in which members of other cultures perceive your own culture.

3. Conversation 3 – A votre avis, quel est (ou quels sont) le ou les plus grand(s) défi(s) au(x)quel(s) votre pays fait face aujourd'hui ? Pourquoi ?

In your final conversation, you will learn about the societal questions that most preoccupy your TalkAbroad partner in their own culture. This should prompt you to think about the similarities and differences in daily life and in politics and society that might exist between American culture and other cultures.

Responses:

You will re-listen to each of your conversations at least twice, and you will write two responses (of 300-350 words) to those conversations. Your first response, to the first "Conte" conversation, will be a summary of the conte your partner shared with you followed by a response to one of the **prompts below**. For each of the following conversations, you will write one response immediately after the conversation. You will then write a second response 7-10 days later (having listened to the conversation again). Each response should focus on a different prompt (below). When responding to your conversation partner, you should cite them, noting the time in the recording when a particular conversational element appears. For example : « J'étais un peu surprise quand notre partenaire a dit … parce que je n'avais jamais pensé à cela avant (2:15). »

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FRE 222
Prompts:

1. Complete the following sentence and elaborate: « Une chose que j'ai trouvée intéressante dans cette conversation était la façon dont mon/ma partenaire a parlé de…. parce que… . » ("One thing I found interesting in this conversation was the way that my partner spoke about … because…")

2. Complete the following sentence and elaborate: « Cette conversation m'a donné envie de savoir plus sur … parce que … . » ("This conversation made me want to know more about … because …")

3. Complete the following sentence and elaborate: « Une chose qui m'a dérangé(e) dans cette conversation était … parce que … » ("One thing that bothered me in this conversation was … because …")

4. Est-ce que quelque chose dans la conversation t'a fait penser à ta propre perspective culturelle ? Quoi ? Essaie d'expliquer pourquoi ta perspective, en tant qu'Américain(e) (ou membre d'une autre nationalité), diffère de celle de votre partenaire. (Did something in the conversation make you think about your own cultural perspective? What? Try to explain why your perspective, as an American (or member of another nationality), is different from that of your conversation partner.)

5. Résume les points principaux du discours de ton partenaire et dit s'il semble avoir un engagement particulier? Quels éléments de la conversation ont montré son engagement?

(Summarize the main points of your partner's discourse and say whether you think he or she has a particular bias. What elements of the conversation show his/her bias?)

For your short responses, you will be graded on the quality of your reflection (20 pts) and your grammatical accuracy (10 pts). I am looking for proof that you are grappling with the issues we discuss in class, not for a "right" answer.

Excellent	Comments	Deficient/Unacceptable
Your response clearly addresses one of the prompts and engages with the *words* of your conversation partner in order to demonstrate deep reflection.		Your response fails to address one of the prompts and/or shows little effort to reflect deeply on the question and/or fails to take into account the words and context of your conversation partner.
Your writing accurately incorporates the grammar, vocabulary and syntactical structures we have studied. There are not careless errors. Errors in expression never get in the way of your reader understanding what you are trying to say.		There are many unacceptable errors in grammar, vocabulary and/or syntax, frequently careless errors. It is sometimes impossible to determine what you are trying to say.