

Bernadette Murphy

TalkAbroad Reflection

Span311 Fall '19

For my first TalkAbroad experience, I scheduled a conversation with a young woman named Daniela. She is 24, from Bogota, Colombia, and is a student! I chose her because we are similar in age and we are both college students. While I feel like I speak well, the conversational aspect can be difficult and scary. I was a little worried about this assignment. I can converse well with other students in my class, but I felt as though speaking with a native speaker must be so much more difficult. However, I am so glad to be among the first students to have the opportunity to use TalkAbroad.

Once we started, Daniela introduced herself and asked me a lot of introductory questions. We covered a lot of information quickly! I just tried to remind myself to think about what kinds of questions and responses I would use if I was meeting someone for the first time in English. We got to talk about our classes, our families, where we lived, and what we like to do for fun. We ended up having a lot in common! It was great to talk to another student and see that so many of our experiences are universal. It was a great reminder that although we speak different native languages, we are both young women getting an education in the same world; even though our cultures may differ, we still love Netflix and food. We then spent some time going over the assignment topic: technology and our world. We talked about everything from how we liked online classes, how much we use our phones, and how our cultures are dependent on technology and social media.

In preparation, I tried to stay on top of my daily Spanish study. I do all my homework on time, and I try to study outside of my homework as well. I also try to use Duolingo for 15-30 minutes every day! This is mainly really great vocabulary study. Going forward, I will work on trying to use a wider variety of tenses in my conversations. I think I spoke a lot in present tense, and only some in other tenses. I also would like to work on basic conversational phrases and asking more questions in return. We learn a lot of basic conversation stuff so early on in our Spanish learning that it can sometimes be forgotten. In asking more questions in return, I will be able to help the conversation flow better.