

Today, I had my second Talk Abroad 30 minute conversation of the semester, and it's my 4th conversation overall with a native speaker. My partner's name was Donovan. I mean no hate towards Donovan, but I think that my previous partners were much better than Donovan. Donovan was nice overall, but he was not easy to understand. Of course, this is partly on me, but usually I can catch on to what they are saying quickly. My 2nd partner last semester, Elias, was fantastic. He made sure to enunciate each and every sound so I could understand him. Elias also didn't just stick mostly to the paper and threw me some curveballs especially towards the end, but I was able to hang on. With Donovan, it was hard to understand what he was saying. Specifically, the time when he was trying to say "what specific type of history do you like/study the most?". I think this one is partly on me, because I feel that I should know how this is said in French because it's a common question that people would ask after someone says "I study history". I do feel sorry because he seemed very frustrated at this point because I wasn't giving him much input, so I wanted to give more input. I tried asking him some questions, like when I said "Qu'est-ce que arché?" He said it was hockey which I've never heard hockey like that in French, WordReference says hockey is "hockey sur glace" in French. My thinking is that if I can't understand what he's saying very well, then maybe I'll get more out of this conversation if I start asking the questions.

There were some things I could do better, for instance, slowing down my speech so I don't trample over my words so much. It's hard to think about which tense I'm using and then how to conjugate it for what I'm trying to say. I think slowing down my speech could help with that. We also didn't finish the whole paper, which I hope isn't a big deal, it's mostly because I was stuck for a long time on that one question he was asking.

In conclusion, this conversation could have gone smoother unfortunately, but it tells me that I have room for improvement, which gives me optimism. Next time, regardless of who my partner is, I'll try to give more input instead of just answering the questions they ask because it seemed to elevate the conversation to something more when I tried it here. I come away with more knowledge when I give more input.