

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ASSIGNMENT

Restaurant and Market Trip

During the first week of language learning you should visit a local market area of town (where the local people do their regular shopping) and eat lunch at one of the cafes, restaurants or kiosks, as well as tour the market area. Plan a session with your language helper or tutor for debriefing, review or practice, as necessary.

Goals: To introduce you to the local economy and commodities in the market.

To give you some experience in dealing with the new situation of the local market system.

To enable you meet people in the market and learn what is available in a local market setting.

To help you practice your initial language phrases in

- (1) greeting people and introducing yourself and
- (2) ordering food, basic survival skills.

Instructions: In preparation, be sure you have learned texts to cover the situations explained below. These are basic survival skills, so you will need these from the very first.

1. Go into the open market area. Walk all through and just observe what types of things are available.
 - a. Write a brief list of **types** or **categories** of items you have observed being offered for sale. (You might take a file card or small paper on which to make initial notes.) E.g., household, garden implements, vegetables, fruits, clothes, etc. Mention one or two examples of each.
 - b. Introduce yourself to 2 traders and get their names also. List what they sell. Then you can return to them each time you visit--to purchase food items, or to practice the language.
2. After surveying the area and walking about some, choose a cafe, kiosk or market stall where you will eat.
 - a. Go through your greetings as usual.
 - b. Practice your phrases for "hotel" settings and order a simple meal. Try some of the local delicacies. If your place has a menu take some names of dishes.
 - c. Note any problems in ordering, new words for foods you haven't learned, etc.

3. Review and discuss the experience with a language helper. If you are learning in a group, compare notes with other learners.

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ASSIGNMENT

Bus Trip

By the end of your second week of language learning, you should take a trip on the local bus system. Get assistance and instructions concerning prices, waiting in line, stopping the bus, routes, destination, bus number, connections and other specifics. As part of the assignment you should spend some time becoming familiar with the area you visit, eat lunch there and fulfill any other interests, then return to your learning site or to your residence on an afternoon bus. This should help you enter into the local perspective on time, travel and community contacts of ordinary people.

Goals: To introduce you to the cultural experience of bus travel in the local setting.

To help you appreciate the time required for travel by public transport, and its value (price in reference to local economy).

To help you gain practical skill for travel by learning:
What bus to take from your location to some other area of town and back;
What factors must be taken into account when travelling by bus;
How much you can do in town in a specific period of time when walking (after arriving at your destination by bus).
How different the city or countryside looks from the bus stop, on back streets and on foot!

To introduce you to the people on the bus and in town as language learning resources, for community-oriented learning and practice.

To help you gain pleasure and confidence from "insider" (normal) networks in the society. (You won't be isolated in a car, in the tourist or foreigner part of town).

In non-Western countries, to expand your awareness of the less European side of life and give you some time for exploration and adventure.

Instructions: Get assistance from your language helper in planning your experience. Get information on your assigned destination and any special activities or observations for the trip. Travel to your destination, eat lunch and look around, making some general observations on the area. (You will want to mention them in the de-briefing time!) Return in the afternoon either to your learning site, or to your residence.

1. Get information on bus numbers, confer with various resource persons concerning routes, connections, etc.
 - a. Remember you should walk from the language centre (or home) to the bus stop. Gauge your walking time by asking some local friends how long it takes. **THIS IS PART OF YOUR LEARNING IN THIS EXPERIENCE.**

b. Bring appropriate amounts and denominations of notes and coins for fare and incidental expenses. Get information on fares so you will be prepared. Find out if you need to bring a basket to carry purchases you may make. Do some of your regular shopping on this trip.

c. Find out about pickpockets or other public hazards at the bus stop or station.

d. Find out about seating arrangements. Rules on this vary.

2. Talk to the people around you, use the amount of local language you know. Learn as you converse.

3. Upon arrival, you are free to roam. You might want to take an area map with you. Take in the local sights and sounds. Eat lunch in a local restaurant. (Please, not the Hilton on this trip.) Be ready to tell, in the target language, where you went, what you saw, what you did, when you report to your language helper or fellow learners.

5. Debrief the experience with your language helper in your next session. Try to tell a little about your trip **in the target language**: Use what you **know** to say what you **can**. Ask about any strange experiences or words you need, or any observations you have made.

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ASSIGNMENT

Market Purchase Trip

During your second or third week of language learning you should go to a market again to make some **specific** purchases (or at least get the prices of the items) as explained below. You may already be buying such articles, but it is important that you purchase them or get the current prices on this assignment at this particular stage in your language development. Go to a place where local people shop, not the international supermarket!

Goals: To expand your familiarity with market purchasing and build upon your early visit(s) to a market.

To enable you to gain confidence in that situation and build your relationship with traders you have met and choose to trade with.

To help you become more aware of local prices and values through shopping and purchasing and comparing of prices.

Instructions: Go to some market during week three. Take your children along as well, if you like. Be sure to find out if you must take a **basket** or bag to collect your purchases.

1. You should go to an **open market** (or comparable local shop, depending on your country and setting), possibly to one of the traders you have already met, and make a **usable** purchase of some type of vegetable for your family's meals.
2. You should purchase in the **open market** (or someplace where the local people shop other than a supermarket) **at least one** of the following staple goods:
 - a. a loaf of bread (compare sliced and unsliced, different brands).
 - b. a bag of flour
 - c. a bag of sugar (compare prices of different sizes).
 - d. any other items which interest you.
3. Note names of foods you are not familiar with. Get further information on these from your language helper in debriefing.
4. **Note prices** you are quoted and what you finally agreed to pay. Bring notes to debrief with your language helper. If you are learning in a group, compare your experience and prices you paid with other learners. Find out if there is a "controlled price" on any particular food items.

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ASSIGNMENT

Investigation of Family Relations

At about weeks 12 to 13, conduct research with an informant into the structure of social relationships within the family system of the target language group. Try to get names representing members of the family. You should seek to find out from some informant what relationship or relationships this word refers to. Follow the instruction below.

Goals: To learn the relationships within the ethnic family organization, clarifying the responsibilities and limitations of relationships between different members of the family -
- who wields power in relation to whom.

To gain experience in learning cultural information from an informant.

To gain an insight into the family ties and sense of identity of the individual in this society, and social obligations and requirements he/she must fulfill.

Instructions: Systematically investigate all the relationships in the immediate and extended family, eliciting the term and then carefully defining what persons it can refer to. For instance, the English word "aunt" might be explained as representing the following relations within the European family system:

1. My father's sister
2. My mother's sister
3. The wife of my father's brother
4. The wife of my mother's brother

In this way, you should learn who are all the different people whom an individual in this society calls by a certain name.

After completing your research with various informants, review your research with a trusted resource person for correction. It might be helpful to **construct a family tree** with the names of each member of the family in reference yourself as the individual. That is, construct the chart around "me" and name the various people in the chart as your relatives. Then answer the questions in the Family Review Exam to check yourself.

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ASSIGNMENT

Self-Introduction

In the early days of your language learning, develop a self-introduction. To get into a situation you need to exchange personal information to some degree. Your presence and relationship to other people in a society entails the role they assign you.

You need to be able to introduce yourself to people, and present a basic explanation of who you are in social and family terms, as expected by your particular host society. Some of these phrases you will already have learned in your earliest language text sequence, but some will be new. You will need to arrange them into an oral presentation for an individual or group each time you meet someone new.

How much you are expected to share in any particular situation will be determined by the social expectations of the particular host society. This will part of your learning experience as you progress in language and social experience in your new society.

You should include the following items:

- Your name, (age if you wish), home state and country
- Where you lived and what you did before coming to Africa
- What you are doing now
- What you intend to do upon finishing basic language learning
- Where you will be living and/or working
- Some facts about your immediate family (no. of children, parents, brothers & sisters, etc.)
- Expression of gratitude for being in the country, and in the particular church where you will give your self-introduction

You should arrange to give your self-introduction in some church no later than the 12th week of language learning.

This self-introduction can serve as the foundation for the personal testimony which you will develop later.

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ASSIGNMENT

Cultural Interview

You should interview various people whom you seek out or meet, to get certain information, detailed below. This will give you some practice in setting up learning situations in the context of everyday occurrences with ordinary people. You will have to learn from the people you normally come into contact with, if you want to continue learning and improving in the language.

Some of these phrases will have already been learned in early language texts, if the sequence of *Guidelines for Barefoot Language Learning* is followed. Your emphasis here is on the social aspects.

Your tutors or regular conversants can help you prepare and give you suggestions of places or people to try in the area. This assignment should be carried out between weeks six and eight of language learning.

Goals: To learn how to learn from ordinary people, establishing your role as a learner willing to learn from those you come into contact with.

To help you become independent thereby, from special people (such as teachers and other experts) and from special resources (such as reference materials) so that you can direct and continue your own language development.

To give you practice in dealing with and overcoming the reluctance to put yourself into awkward and difficult positions in language learning and meeting people through a new language and in a strange cultural context (to you as an alien). (Each such experience makes the next a bit easier, though feeling comfortable is at the end of a long process.)

Instructions:

1. Preparation: Since people are indispensable to your learning, you will want them to understand that you sincerely appreciate the help they give you. Just as important is your approach to the person whom you are interviewing. Explain that you are learning the language and want to practice it. Help the person to know that you are the learner and he the teacher.

If you have not already, develop a text with your conversant that will show a variety of ways to:

- a. state your role as learner,
- b. ask someone to help you, and
- c. express your deep appreciation.

You will use these phrases in engaging the people with whom you will conduct the interview.

2. Interview:

Part I: Greeting and leave-taking: You know some ways of opening and closing conversations. Now you should expand and systematize your "encounter competence." Learn the different ways friends, casual acquaintances and strangers greet each other. The following question may be helpful in discovering different greeting settings:

- a. Can this greeting be used any time of day?
- b. Should women be greeted the same way as men?
- c. Does a woman say the greeting the same way a man does?
- d. Is an older person greeted the same as a younger person?
- e. Can you greet a more important person the same as you greet a peer?
- f. Can this greeting be used for children?
- g. Is this greeting appropriate for friends as well as for strangers?
- h. Does the activity of the speaker or hearer influence the form of the greeting?
- i. Are there any other common factors that should cause a change in the greeting?

Part II: Social conventions: Find the appropriate polite expressions you should use in these settings:

- a. How do you announce your presence if a door is open?
- b. What should you say if you bump into a person, or step on his toe, or commit some other social blunder?
- c. What do you say when someone is about to bump into you?
- d. What if you want to pass by someone who is blocking your way?
- e. Should you express some kind of concern when a small mishap occurs to someone near you -- he stumbles; drops something; sneezes, etc.? When someone tells you he/she is sick?
- f. How do you get the attention of a stranger when you need help?
- g. How do you politely excuse yourself after having talked with someone for a while?

3. Reporting and evaluating: Bring your written findings to a session with your tutor. On each of the items investigated, you can compare your findings with those of other learners, and discuss them with your tutor or conversant. This will enable you to find valid variations, incomplete or limited usages, your errors in transcription or meaning.