FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES

**Flash Cards**

Flash cards are a great way to learn new alphabets, vocabulary translations, singular-plural forms of nouns, lists, and verb conjugations for foreign languages.

**Alphabets and Symbols**

Some languages, like Chinese and Arabic, have symbols in the alphabet that must be mastered in order to learn the language. Flash cards may be used to this end. Put the new symbol or character on one side of a flash card and put the English translation or the meaning on the other side.

**Vocabulary**

Make flash cards for learning translations for new vocabulary words. The English word will go on one side and the foreign translation on the other side. Color coding is especially helpful when learning vocabulary.

Color coding the flash cards can help in learning new vocabulary. Develop three sets of cards: one for masculine words, one for feminine words, and one for neutral words. Write the masculine words on blue cards or with blue ink, the feminine words on pink cards or with pink ink, and the neutral words on green or yellow cards or with green or yellow ink.

**Singular - Plural**

The singular and plural forms of nouns may be learned using flash cards. Write the singular form on one side of the card and the plural form on the other side.

**Lists**

Make flash cards for learning translations of lists of related words. For example, the foreign words and English translations for numbers, colors, days of the week, or months of the year may be written on flash cards.

**Verb Conjugations**

Different verb tenses and persons may be summarized on flash cards. Write the verb stem on one side and the various conjugations on the other side.

**Repetition and Practice**

One of the best ways to gain proficiency in a foreign language is repetition and practice (D. Hurst, CAL). Repetition aids both written and verbal language skills. Some ideas are provided below.

**Repetitive Writing**

Write translated words and phrases over and over again to get practice with recognizing the written language.

**Workbook or Textbook Exercises**

Do extra exercises in the workbook or textbook. Ask the instructor or language assistant to check your work.

**Computer**

Explore various websites and utilize software programs to practice the language. Check with the Modern Languages Department to get referrals to credible websites and available software programs.

**Audio Tapes**

If a listening lab is not available, make up your own tapes of the spoken language and translations. Or, check at school and public libraries for foreign language tapes or novels recorded in foreign languages. Listen to the tapes periodically.

**Nonacademic Sources**

Locate foreign language publications (newspapers, magazines, etc.) or watch foreign language television shows to practice reading or listening to the language.

**Study/Conversation Groups**

Work with other students in the class on any of the tasks listed above. Practice speaking the language with each other. Make up short texts to be translated into English or from English by the members of the study group. The Learning Assistance Program coordinates Language Conversation groups for specific courses each quarter so be sure to check our website for information.

206.398.4450

www.seattleu.edu/SAS/LearningAssistance

rev 0806