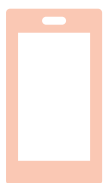




COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY ACROSS LANGUAGES

TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY ACROSS LANGUAGES

- Pay close attention to your tone and facial expressions. Smiles and kindness are world languages!
- Speak slowly and in short sentences
- Use simple vocabulary
- Try explaining something in multiple ways
- Include significant wait time: when you ask a question, wait several seconds before asking a second and third, or rephrasing your words. Often, people are translating your words into another language for comprehension and this takes time
- Avoid idioms
- Use body language / gestures
- Draw a picture or pull up a photo/video on your phone
- Get a foreign language dictionary/phrasebook/mobile app. Learn key words in other languages
- Avoid the temptation to talk louder when someone doesn't understand you (*the person can hear you, they just don't understand you* 😊)
- Learn about cultures. Languages are constructed and live within a cultural context. Many misunderstandings can occur because of cultural missteps, not language. For example:
 - How much personal space is acceptable in a conversation?
 - Is direct eye contact appropriate? When and when not? What about casual touch? Hand and facial gestures (did you know in some cultures the 'thumbs up' gesture is considered vulgar)?
 - What are the norms regarding communication between same sex versus opposite sex participants?
 - Are there conversation topics that are considered culturally taboo? Culturally or politically insensitive?
 - Are there cultural/language norms that exist in one culture but not another?
 - Is direct or indirect communication more widely practiced among the people with whom you are communicating?



PROFESSIONALS VERSUS COMPUTER AND PHONE APPS?

Nothing will ever take the place of a professionally trained interpreter/translator. And, there are critical moments where a trained professional is not only helpful, it is life saving and also the law (see [Title XI of the Civil Rights Act](#) and national origin discrimination). For professionally trained staff, please consider contacting locally founded and owned, [7C Lingo](#).



In a pinch, the below can help get a basic message across to someone speaking another language. Again, please take the below with a grain of salt as true communication across languages a trained skill.

TRANSLATION APPS

Translation Apps are great for **single word concepts** (not translating long complicated ideas). While there are a number of apps on the market, not all contain the specialized languages of our newcomer communities. Here are a few that do.

Of special note: Most Afghans speak Dari and/or Pashto. If you cannot find Dari in an app, check for Farsi or Persian which are synonymous. Dari is a dialect of Farsi/Persian and in written form, are mutually intelligible to readers.

[Google Translate](#) is one of the most popular translation apps. It hosts 103 languages and is very user friendly. It also contains a Word Lens which allows the user to point their phone at a text and have it translated. Go into conversation mode and you can speak into the app and your conversation partner by extension (only available in the app).

[Microsoft Translator](#) allows you to translate into 60 languages using your voice, keyboard, or camera. It also contains a phrasebook and the ability to speak with a person and have their words immediately translated. A [list of languages supported](#) can be found here.

[TextGrabber](#) allows you to point your phone's camera at a text and have that text translated into one of 60 languages. [Check here](#) for languages the app supports.

What about other opportunities to translate messages?



[YouTube Translation Tools](#)

[Translating a post or comment in Facebook](#): When you write a message in English in a posting, users can translate that message into any number of languages. The feature is not possible, however, with uploaded images containing text. To support language access, always write a post so users can switch languages.

And what about learning another language?

[Forbes: 10 of the Best Language Learning Apps for Every Learning Style](#)

[Good Housekeeping: 9 Best Language Apps to Broaden Your Horizons](#)

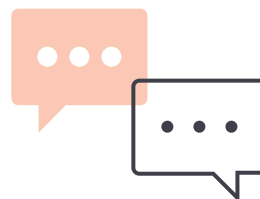
And plenty more.....

About the IRRC

[IRRC Website](#)

[Facebook Page](#)

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We envision a community where those new to the country, and those who have been here for generations, are able to access opportunity and impact change