

Communicating Across Language Barriers Don'ts and Dos

DON'TS

When you're the speaker

- Don't assume the listener can't understand you.
- Don't raise your voice.
- Don't use cultural information the speaker may not have.
- Don't use complicated vocabulary, idioms or slang.

When you're the listener

- Don't assume the speaker doesn't know the grammar rules.
- Don't correct the speaker.
- Don't interpret or evaluate negatively.
- Don't laugh even if the speaker laughs at him /herself.
- Don't be impatient.
- Don't interrupt.

DOs

When you're the speaker

- Say things in different ways.
- Ask information questions instead of yes/no questions.
- Say *yes/no* rather than *uh-huh/uh-uh*.
- Simplify if necessary.
- Use pauses.
- Speak clearly (don't slur words (waddyathink)).
- Use a calm and respectful tone.
- Slow down if necessary.
- Use gestures if necessary.

When you're the listener

- Use your knowledge of different pronunciations.
- Remember your own experience.
- Remember that everyone wants to be understood.
- Expect to understand.
- Admit if you don't understand. Apologize.
- Ask for speaker to speak more slowly.
- Watch speaker's lips.
- Listen to whole statement.
- Ask for repetition.
- Repeat what you heard.
- Ask the speaker to write or draw information.

BE FRIENDLY.

Vietnamese

Stress is difficult. (Vietnamese is not a language with stress.)

Rise and fall of the voice is difficult.

(Vietnamese is a tone language (6)ma=ghost, mother, that horse, tomb & grow)

Vietnamese words are not linked.

Vietnamese has no verb tenses.

Vowel sounds

cot, caught, cat, coat = cot

Consonant sounds

- **f = p** (full = pull)
- **z = c** (maze = mace)
- **p = b** (pear = bear)
- **t = d** (ten = den)
- **k = g** (could = good)
- **th = t** (think = tink)
- **th = d** (then = den)

Many consonants are dropped at the ends of words.

Consonant clusters may be left out.

The Vietnamese glottal doesn't exist in English.