

# *Survival Language and Culture*

Presented by:

Language Resource Center  
&  
International Center

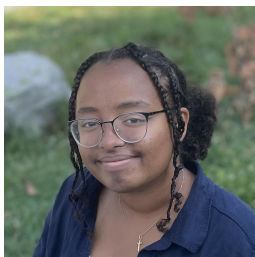


# Who We Are

## *Language Resource Center*



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## *International Center*



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Assistant Director



# Overview

- **The Importance of Survival Language**
- **How to Focus your Language Learning**
- **Key Phrases to Learn in Your Target Language**
- **Tips for Learning a Language**
- **Resources for Language Learning**
- **Managing Miscommunication**

# Ice Breaker

## Names as Stories:

- Gather into even groups of no more than 4
- Everyone take a turn to share any information you wish about how you got your name or what it means!
- If you don't know, feel free to look it up before your turn
- (fun tip - if you want to share more, you can also check how popular your name was in your birth year)

# Why Learn Before You Go?

**Learning a language can be difficult, but it will be helpful abroad and at home**

- You probably won't learn **everything**, but learning a little will **make it easier** to navigate the country you are visiting.
- It is **respectful** to learn at least a little of the language.
- Research shows that speaking another language can make you more **open-minded, curious, creative, and able to problem-solve**.

**If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart.**

Nelson Mandela



# How Should I Focus My Learning?



- Since you won't be able to learn everything before you go, it is important that you **focus** your learning on specific sets of content that will be most valuable
- Concentrate your learning by thinking about the kinds of **environments** you will be in and what you might find yourself saying
- **Identify and outline** parts of a language that you consider imperative to learn and write those down in a journal to make a DIY phrasebook
- Or follow along with **language-learning apps**, like Duolingo or Mango, which usually teach you the most important basics first (more on useful resources later)

# What Phrases Should I Learn?



Food



Health +  
Allergies



Transportation



Directions



Greetings



Weather



Emergency



Shopping



Numbers



Dates



Questions

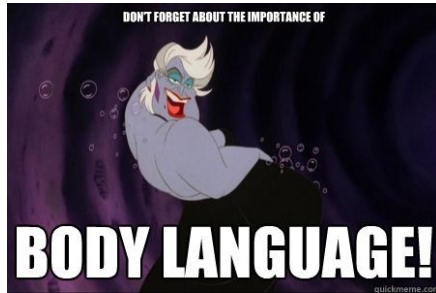


Time

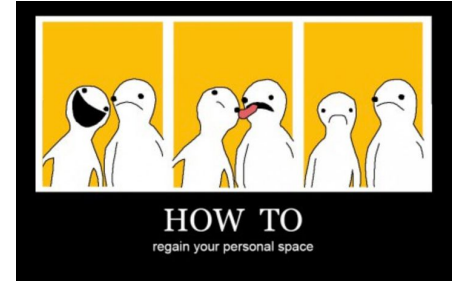
# Non-Verbal Communication

- Your body language in different countries can be a great way to communicate
- It can also be a source of miscommunication
- Some gestures and ways of carrying yourself that are completely normal in the US, are very different in other countries
- Examples: eye contact, kisses on the cheek, pointing

## Body Language



## Personal Space



- Personal space is a **social construction** — it's defined differently in different cultures
- Some cultures may stand closer to you or expect you to stand further away, and others may have different rules for queuing
- The important thing to remember is that it is not wrong, just different. Do what the locals do and try to be open-minded



# Navigating Cultures Abroad

**\*\* Withhold judgement** – just because it's different doesn't mean it's your place to criticize

## Cultural Competence

- Be curious!
- Do the research ahead of time
- Ask questions of trusted individuals
- Participate in cultural education experiences:
  - Museums
  - Historical tours
  - Immersive food labs
  - Going where locals go!

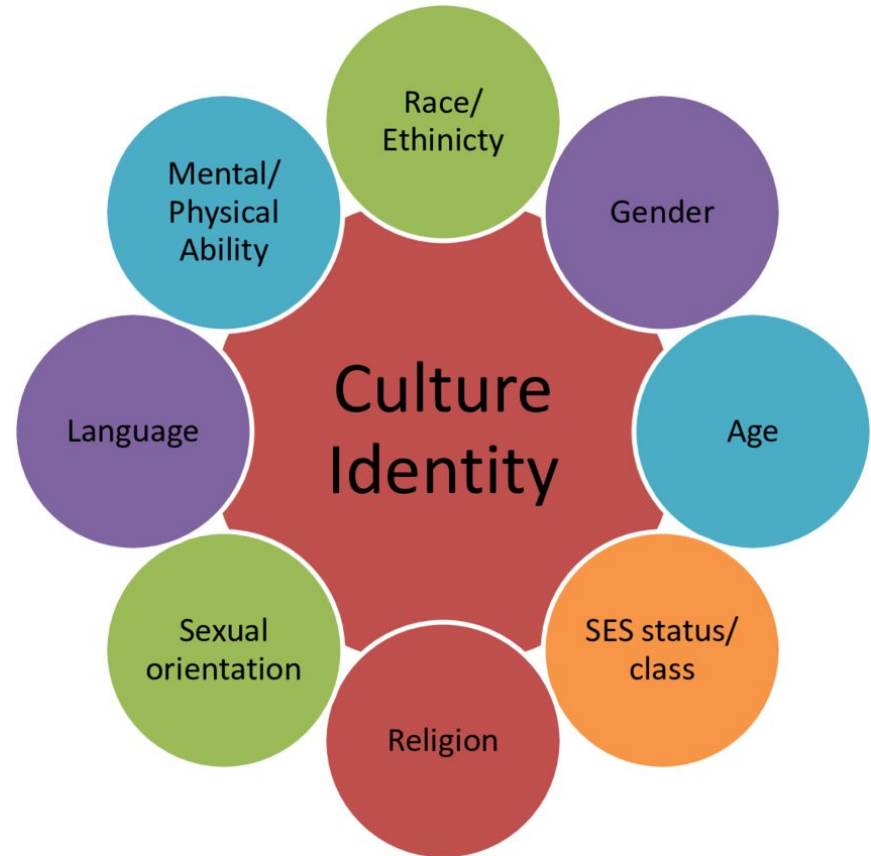
## Cultural Humility

- Acknowledge that you'll never be an expert
- Avoid making assumptions / stereotyping
- Recognize that culture is not stagnant
- Mistakes can happen, express a genuine desire to continue learning and forgive yourself

**Know Before You Go:** Laws, Politics, History, Holidays

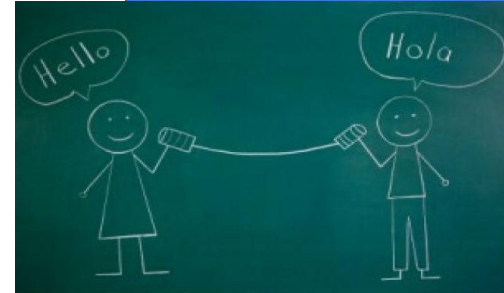
# Sharing Your Identities Abroad

- Your identities are a part of what makes you 'you'
- Many of us want to share our identities abroad. This can make it easier for us to:
  - **Make friends**
  - **Navigate social situations**
  - **Feel comfortable expressing ourselves**
  - **Keep us safe**
- Different identities have different connotations depending on the country you are visiting
  - Ex. In Japan, it is rude to make changes to your food order unless you have an allergy - in this case, it would be helpful to know how to communicate your allergy effectively



# How Can I Learn Outside the Classroom?

- Write words you want to learn on sticky notes and place them around the house
- Practice speaking to yourself in the mirror or on your way to class
- Practice in small ways everyday - don't overdo it one day and skip the next. Learning a language requires daily practice
- Find a conversation partner or a tutor
- Try listening to music or watching movies/TV in your target language



# *What Resources are Available to Me?*

## **Vocabulary / Pronunciation (practice)**

- [Forvo](#): offers useful phrases and pronunciation audio
- [Quizlet Flashcards- Chinese, Hindi, Hebrew, Italian, Kannada](#)

## **Language “lessons”**

- [Mango Languages](#)-Free through LRC subscription
- [Pimsleur](#)-Free through LRC subscription, email [lrc-reservations@umich.edu](mailto:lrc-reservations@umich.edu)
- [LRC Language kits](#)

## **Conversation Partners:**

- [Conversation Partner Platform Comparison](#)

# What Resources are Available to Me?

## Translation

- [Google Translate](#): app, download language, download keyboard! If you download a language, you can translate by typing something in, speaking it into the microphone, or taking a picture of something and selecting the text you want to translate.
  - **Tip:** Make sure to know the alphabet of the place you are traveling to so you can understand street or shop signs. If you don't though, Google Translate can help.

## Travel and navigation

- [Maps.me](#): app for downloadable off-line maps
- [Moovit](#): app for maps, shows transportation routes (bus, train, subway, etc), can call a taxi through Uber or Lyft in some areas
- [Wiki Voyage](#): worldwide travel guide, including phrasebook (no audio)
- [Worldwide tipping etiquette](#)
- [Xe currency converter](#)



# What Resources are Available to Me?

## Gestures/Culture

- [20 Foreign Hand Gestures To Watch Out For \(5 To Try Ourselves!\)](#)
- [10 Hand Signs And What They Mean In Different Countries](#)
- [Hand Gestures in Different Cultures Not Many of Us are Aware Of](#)
- [Hand gestures that could get you in serious trouble in other countries](#)

## Tips

- Use all 4 modalities: reading, writing, listening and speaking
- Use a combination of tools and strategies: flashcards, apps, conversation partner
- Imagine yourself walking in the country, where will you go?
- Do a little bit everyday

<https://myumi.ch/8eQg5>



# What Resources are Available to Me?

There are thousands of sites online. Let us know your favorites! Help us build our resources for future travelers.

[irc.contact@umich.edu](mailto:irc.contact@umich.edu)



[How to not be a jerk in Japan](#) -There's a lot to learn, but maybe the most important lesson is: don't overthink it. Just be respectful, have fun, and be open to learning new things.

# What if I Mess Up?



## Apologize

- If you make a mistake and offend somebody - either with body language or words - apologizing is an important first step
- Most people will be understanding and will help you learn from your mistake



## Ask for Help

- If you use the wrong word or say the wrong phrase, it's always a good idea to ask for help
- Many people will be excited that you are learning their language and will be happy to help you out



## Let it Go

- We all make mistakes - especially when we are learning a new language
- Think of what it was like to learn your native language. You probably made mistakes all the time, but you kept trying.

# *Upcoming Events*

# *Happening next Thursday!*

April 11  
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM  
Language Resource Center  
1500 North Quad

Scan the QR code to register!



## South Asian Language Program Event

Participate in cultural activities like Henna, origami, Rangoli, clay paintings, online calligraphy, making buttons and South Asian Games!

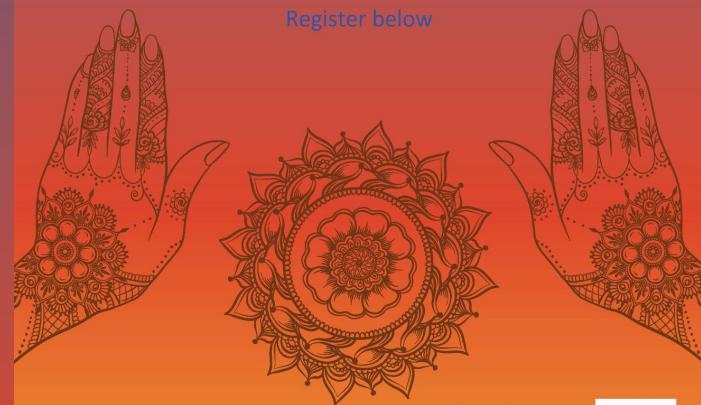
Join us to see SALP students' group video projects, enjoy snacks, desserts, tea, and coffee.

Thursday, April 11, 1:30-3:30pm

Language Resource Center, North Quad

This event is FREE!

Register below



**M** | LSA ASIAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES  
SOUTH ASIAN LANGUAGE PROGRAM  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

**M** | LSA LANGUAGE RESOURCE CENTER  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Scan here to  
register:







# ESSENTIAL TRAVEL LOGISTICS FOR STUDENTS

April 12, 1 - 2 PM

Get tips on how to prepare  
for smart and safe travel.

# 60 MINUTES AROUND THE GLOBE: IRAN



**Friday, April 12, 3:00 PM**  
**International House Ann Arbor**  
**(921 Church St.)**



# Winter 2025 Study Abroad Advising with CGIS

Are you thinking of studying abroad during the winter term but have questions?

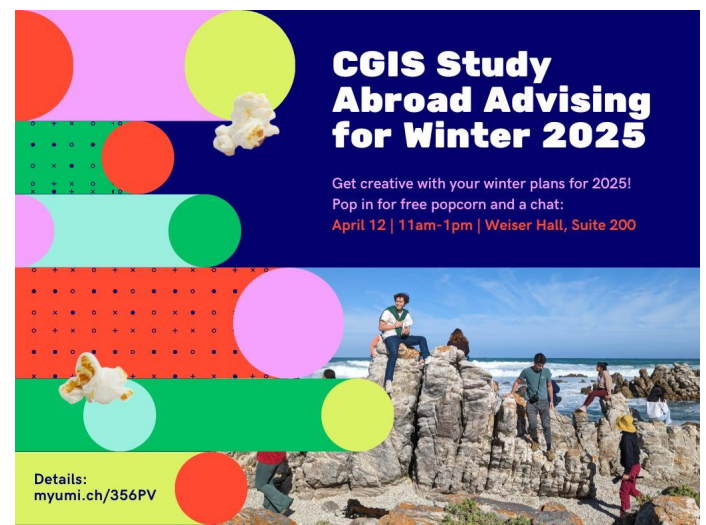
We can answer questions about Winter 2025 programs, the application process, scholarships and financial aid, and more! LSA Scholarships, the Office of Financial Aid, Newnan, PICS, and RLL will also be in attendance.

Visit our site to explore virtual info sessions offered April 15th-19th about major-specific programs such as Spanish, programs in the environment, and Humanities/Social Sciences, as well as interest-specific sessions, such as studying abroad in the UK and English-taught programs in Asia.

**4/12/24**

**11:00 am - 1:00 pm**

**CGIS Office**





**Contact info:**

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**UM LRC:**

[lrc.contact@umich.edu](mailto:lrc.contact@umich.edu)

