

## Conversation with 39 year old male, Virginia (Transcription)

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I: Do you have any ideas what might be helpful because you know there are a lot of older people here from Vietnam that seem that that is the case. They don't seem to be able to go out and they don't know English very well. I've wondered what people do.

S: I don't know I think because the language problem it's kinda like a barrier for the ... between the local people and those old people so I don't think they can get involved with society what I am talking is the old <unintelligible text> the aging you know but in order to solve their problem the Vietnamese community they have the what they call the middle or the old aged association. So whoever, if age at 59 or 55 or older they will be a member of the association and they will have activities every weekend, socialize bring them together and let them talk or do something. That help.

I: What kind of things do they do?

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S: Ok, I can give you some example like mostly every week they have a birthday celebration for the people and its is an opportunity for people having lunch or dinner together and sometimes on some of the Vietnamese festival they can do some kind of traditional festival together and sometimes they hav trips like charter a bus and go to Ocean City and even to New Jersey, Atlantic City, not gambling but all those people up there on the bus everybody... \$9 and <unintelligible text>... upthere.

I: My mother did the same thing, from Pennsylvania, they did the same thing...

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S: If you have a group of about more than 40 people they would send a bus to the location of where everybody get together and then get on the bus and go to to Atlantic City.

I: I didn't realize they came this far down from Atlantic City?

S: Oh, yes, yes, you know in this area there is one location in D.C. where they pick you up, what I mean a regular weekend you can go to DC or Maryland you can go to Silver Spring ...from then they bring you to Atlantic City and by evening they bring you back to the...you departure in the evening. So back to the old Vietnamese activities I guess

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if you know out old people if they can resist <uh?> they can stay here longer than five or six years that mean they can get use to life here and also ... I hope and I guess that within five years everybody got a job already and since they got a job they get time on the weekend you know and they can have fun together so their life is less boring, less dull but unfortunately in my case I tried to do it but my parent's, they passed away so soon.

I: The group wasn't around then.

S: Yes,

I: Senior Citizens,

S: Yes, that's right Vietnamese Senior Citizens Association, you are right.

I: That is what they call them here.

I: Do you think many people go and become involved in the group.

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S: I guess so, because they are then member fees <unintelligible text> ... I don't know exactly 10 or 15 dollars or \$20 per year membership, you know and offers a lot of

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S: activity which is very good. And I think alot of people in the senior citizens... association.

I: How about other activities that the community has. Are you involved in any of the groups that go on or do you know ...

S: For myself. Mine is no problem because I have been here 6 years so I can get along. No problem with me. ... talking with the senior people.

I: Well I wondered if you were involved with anything like I have heard there is some military groups, high school groups that get together.

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S: Military group

I: Like people that were in the Air Force together.

S: Oh! yeah,

I: Or people that went to a particular high school together

S: Oh, yeah, yeah, that's right. Once in a year those military people, they have the air force day, navy day, and army day and armed forces day yeah, they do, they do have a celebration on that day too. Like myself, at least I attend about 7 occasion like the New Year, the Christmas, Mid-Autumn, the Air Force Day, I was in the Air Force and Maybe birthday of somebody.

I: So you are involved in the community in those ways.

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S: I think that for the Vietnamese refugee as long as they can speak and understand English it will be <any?> problem at all. That's the most thing important very, very important. Most of our people that I met they are depressed about their life hear, they couldn't speak or understand English at all. What I mean at all I should say like they couldn't speak or understand English at all as they as they want to.

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S: You know, you know, as they want to, they cannot make friend with the neighborhood, when they go to work, they cannot express the way that they think to the <unintelligible text> owner, so...the two said they don't understand, the owner and the employee, you know, and if they don't understand their work is not productivity and also you will feel not well to be working in a place that you cannot communicate enough with the people around you. So again English is most important factor for the refugee.

I: Do many people try to get jobs where there are other Vietnamese there? or you know what I mean.

S: I don't understand.

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I: Do many of the refugees try to get jobs in restaurants where there may be other Vietnamese that work there so that they might be able to communicate with them. In going out and trying to search for a job I wonder if that if one of the things that people look for

S: Oh, yes.

I: I mean the ones that have problems with English.

S: Yes, that's right. I knew some restaurant, they been hiring not all but mostly the refugee in the kitchen but that case is very rare. When you open a business you don't want <unintelligible text> all other refugee coming in and work in your business here...so it depend...you know, like some of the small job in the <electronic field?> assembly line they do hire a lot of the refugee and some of the firm that have connection with the computer is the rewiring of the ban, they jam the ban you know, the ribbon band you know so that kind of job doesn't require the people who can speak English very well you know because their job is really stay there and change the ribbon so...in some shop I saw quite a few Vietnamese people working

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S: together but still their I call that a side job because...like me, I cannot work like that year after year so I have to improve my English and go study something else and get a position so I can in the future I can make a progress more and more

I: Are most of the people you know mostly Vietnamese or Americans? Do you have a lot of American friends or different backgrounds?

S: Yeah. Right now I have 1/2 and 1/2 - 1/2 my friends is Vietnamese and 1/2 of my friends is American.

I: Did you find it hard to get to know Americans? or to make friends with them.

S: Not necessarily, it depends on the character of the people. Are you willing to making friends with other people you know, and seems you know one American friend, and he has the connection, you know the friend of his friend or the friend of her friend and that guy bring you some more so again you have to speak English good enough in order that you feel comfortable enough to get in that kind of group...because I know from... for the Vietnamese people who speak English to feel very uncomfortable and also for the opposition for...the listener they feel the same way too. If you don't speak English well

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enough sooner or later you will feel frustrated going with that group so again I have to stress this point that you have to have improve the English you want to stay here.

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