If a character must interact with someone in another language for an extended period of time, simply make one test to see how well they understand each other during this period, or just benchmark their level of communication based on the skill rating.

For more information, see *Using Language Skills*.

LANGUAGE IN 2070

Halfway through the 21st century, reading and writing have lost some of their importance as society has become more attuned to icons and images. Who needs to spell well in an age of voice recognition software and automated spell-checking? Hi-rez visual displays mean that written communication is highly graphics-oriented, integrating logos, symbols and emoticons into standard discourse.

Globalization and the Matrix have also made the world a smaller place, so that borders no longer limit languages. Migrating communities have spread various cultures (both traditional and new) across the planet. The proliferation of linguasofts and translation programs makes it even easier to bridge the communication gap.

Though English remains a dominant language, especially in commerce, the influence of Japanese culture and economics is also felt around the world, leading to widespread use of the Japanese language as well. The large and dispersed nature of some ethnic groups have also led to more common usage of Cantonese, Hindi, Arabic, Spanish and Russian, among many others. As a result, your standard sprawl dweller possesses a small repository of pidgin terms for dealing in other tongues.

Two new languages have appeared in the world of *Shadowrun*: *Sperethiel* (the complex and tonal language of elves) and *Or'zet* (the guttural language of orks). Though proponents of both claim that they were reconstructed from languages of ancient elf and ork civilizations, this is highly disputed. It has not stopped them from being adopted into common usage, however, especially in the elven nations and ork communities.

KNOWLEDGE SKILL TABLE

Character Seeks:	Threshold
General knowledge	1
Detailed knowledge	2
Intricate knowledge	3
Obscure knowledge	4

LANGUAGE SKILL TABLE

Situation	Threshold
Universal concept	1
(hunger, fear, bodily functions)	
Basic conversation	1
(concerns of daily life)	
Complex subject	2
(special/ limited interest topics)	
Intricate subject	3
(almost any technical subject)	
Obscure subject	4
(deeply technical/rare knowledge)	

Situation	Dice Pool Modifier
Speaking lingo	
(or variation of a particular language)	–2
Using augmented reality	
visual display help	+1 to +4

Language (Intuition)

This skill must be taken separately for each language desired.

Default: Yes
Skill Group: None
Specializations: Read/Write, Speak, By dialect, By lingo

LINGOS

Lingos are spinoffs of existing languages. They exist because a subgroup has created its own language from its specific terminology, phrasings and slang. Common examples of lingos are Cityspeak (the street jive of the gangs and other "street-educated" people), legalese (the language of lawyers and therefore of the business and political worlds), 'l33t-speak (the code-talk of hackers), wiz (the jargon of the magically active), trog (the slang of the Seattle Ork Underground), military jargon (those who have formal military training speak a language all their own), techie (the lingo of research scientists and people who never leave the lab), orbital (the banter developed by off-Earth colonies) and so on. Lingos are almost exclusively spoken or visual.
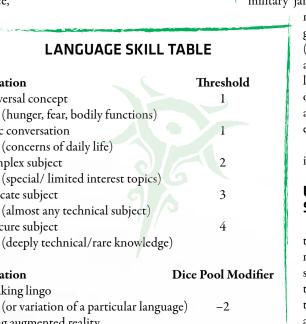
Lingos are treated as specializations of existing languages.

USING LANGUAGE SKILLS

Whenever a character tries to convey something in a non-native language or understand what someone is saying to them in a non-native language, the gamemaster should call for a Language Test. The Language Skill Table lists suggested thresholds for the complexity of the topic. Failure to achieve enough hits in a Language Test usually means that communication doesn't occur. When a glitch is rolled, information is misunderstood, even if the rest of it gets across accurately. The gamemaster may want to make any required die rolls himself, so that the players will not know whether what they intended to say got across.

A beautiful elven woman comes running up to Ashley, babbling something in Sperethiel. Ashley's knowledge of the elven language is minimal (Sperethiel

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