

# Culture Context Communication

*Critical Incidents for Raising Cultural Awareness*



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## **Introduction**

The role of culture as an integral part of language teaching has recently become increasingly popular and significant. However, it remains ambiguous and challenging in that there is little consensus on how or what aspects of culture to incorporate. Often materials dealing with culture rely on overt examples of “tourist culture” taken out of context and requiring the teacher’s background and personal experience, for qualification and grounding. Such approaches can be biased and as a result students have difficulty making their own interpretations and tend to create an “us and them” world view and perspective, which does little more than reinforce stereotypes and communication barriers.

This textbook aims at addressing the need for more balanced and practical cultural learning, in order to raise student’s awareness levels and develop real intercultural communicative competence. Focusing on activities, both inside and outside the classroom, viable and effective student centered and generated approaches to cultural understanding are presented. Applying ethnographic research methods students engage, explore and interact with other cultures locally. Materials included avoid directly or overtly referencing cultural information such as proper names, places, nationalities or languages. This information tends to appeal to students preconceptions and crystalizes already held beliefs, expectations and stereotypes. The absence of cultural signposts allows students to form their own conclusions and interpret material openly, honestly and without bias. As students are in charge and free to shape their own perspectives, they are able to reach a 3rd place identity or neutral position, from which to objectively observe differences, create their own unique, world view and ultimately become more sensitive, tolerant, open-minded and compassionate communicators.

## **Foreword**

Successful communication invariably requires mutual understanding, and the journey to understanding others must first begin with knowing yourself. How are you unique? What do you have in common with your friends, family and others in your community? How are you different? What are your strengths and weaknesses? How do you communicate with people who are different from you? In today's world It is necessary that language learners have a deeper understanding of cultural differences as well as a good command or a level of competence in English.

As a Global Language, English is rapidly changing and metamorphosing into many unique and diverse varieties, based on the minority cultures which use the language for their own specific purposes and within their own specific contexts. It is highly likely that Standard English will be replaced by local branches in the near future. As a result, being able to copy behavior and perform like a native speaker may be of limited use. Today’s English learners require a deeper understanding and a comprehensive arsenal of meta-skills, which will assist them with acquisition and navigation of the finer nuances and sub levels of communication and interaction.

By approaching difference as a resource rather than as a barrier and by engaging in ethnographic research methods through observation, participation, interviews, surveys, interaction with others and reflection on discoveries, learners will develop their own world views, as well as the skills they require to communicate effectively.

These include: the ability to model, understand, and operate flexibly in the world in any given culture, create one’s own appropriate context for living, cross over from one culture to another and become a cultural “shape shifter”, learn how to learn, develop tolerance for ambiguity and difference, a strong sense of self and self-reliance, perceptiveness, open-mindedness, empathy, adaptability, flexibility, critical thinking, curiosity and an overall warmth in human relationships and intercultural communication.

### **Rationale**

This text aims to engage students with interesting and relevant content, provide opportunities for reflection, critical thinking, evaluation and self-exploration. Exercises and activities build research skills and a sense of curiosity that will motivate and facilitate students in extending their inquiry and interests beyond the classroom. As a predominantly student centered text, students are expected to provide much of the information and questions steering the lessons towards their own goals while the teacher assumes the role of facilitator, guide and mentor.

**Teachers:**

The purpose of the exercises and activities in this text are to promote open mindedness and flexibility towards interaction while exposing students to real life language and situations. The materials allow students to consider language in context, reflect on how it is used and form their own conclusions. Students are also encouraged to seek out, access and contribute their own information. Thereby taking control of their learning and creating valid, memorable and personally relevant connections with material and content.

**Students:**

Approach materials and exercises in this text at your own pace, Many concepts and situations may be unfamiliar or challenging. Take small steps and use your own language and culture to help you understand. Start with keywords and comparable examples, which are easier to comprehend and will allow you to expand and extend your learning. Once you feel comfortable with materials, try to develop patterns and strategies to help you process other topics.

**Critical Incidents**

Critical incidents are short dialogues and scenarios, that highlight an aspect of intercultural communication, which may be unfamiliar or challenging if encountered in the real world. The absence of overt cultural information or references, such as names and nationalities, allows the students to form their own interpretations and evaluate the language and culture of each scenario, independent of preconceptions or stereotypes. This allows free thought and a more complete synthesis of cultural differences and understanding of intercultural communication.

**Analysis and Interpretation**

Students use their own experience and resources to interpret and reflect on critical incidents The process has two stages. First students critically evaluate the scenarios and write down short answers. Secondly students exchange and discuss their interpretations in small groups. In conclusion groups ideas can be shared with the whole class and the teacher can summarize findings and offer a final commentary.

**Discussion**

In this section, students consider the topic more deeply and from various perspectives. Initially students write short answers to discussion questions on their own. Following this, students engage in small group discussions, exchanging and comparing ideas. This serves to build consensus as well as an awareness of the diversity of opinions and perspectives. Discussions can also be expanded to the whole class or moderated by the instructor.

**Homework, Research and Presentation**

These activities provide the students with an opportunity to bring their learning experiences full circle and apply their knowledge and sense of inquiry to their own culture. Exercises require students to consider and explore other groups and compare information with their own communities. Using ethnographic methods of inquiry, including observation and interview, students engage unknown, abstract or ambiguous topics making them relevant.

**Vocabulary, Notes and Keywords**

Here students are encouraged to take control over their learning experience and facilitate their own understanding and knowledge development. By seeking out, researching and recording new and interesting vocabulary, students expand their knowledge base. Students should not only copy definitions and translations but actively consider each word, how it is used appropriately and generate an original example sentence.

**External Sources**

This section allows students to record and document sources and information they have come across on their own. Technology has made information abundant and accessible however properly referencing and processing information and acknowledging its origins are important skills as well as obligations for conducting research and inquiry at any level.

## **Instructor Comments and Evaluation**

This is an opportunity for teachers to give effective, relevant and timely feedback and support. By writing short personal comments, general inquiries and evaluations or simply checking the status of completion, students can get a valuable sense of accomplishment and reassurance, which builds confidence and allows them to further extend their explorations into the unknown.

## **Review Exercises**

### **Advice Exchange**

This activity allows students to consider, process and apply many of the themes and information introduced in the text. By offering and evaluating advice students can realize the practicality of intercultural knowledge and how it applies to communication and human relationships. Students actively and creatively participate in meaningful communication with a lasting practical value.

### **Mini Debate**

Debate is an ideal way to reinforce key concepts and motivate students to reconsider, evaluate and apply information effectively. The debate activity here is fast paced and requires students to think on their feet and actively contribute their opinions without hesitation. The risk free nature of the activity also serves to facilitate expression, critical thinking and evaluation. Students are free to challenge each other focusing on efficient, meaningful communication rather than affective factors. Debate builds confidence, language skills and a deeper understanding of key information and concepts.

### **Role Play**

This activity allows students to consider a communicative situation and apply their knowledge and experience of language and culture to solving or completing a task, scenario or problem. Students are also directly in control as they collaborate to creatively design, produce and perform a dialogue in small groups or in front of the whole class. Role play performance makes it possible for students to put their own culture and personality into the learning process, helping them synthesize concepts, and establish meaningful and relevant connections.

### **Summary and Presentation**

As a final opportunity to reflect on an engage cultural content, students design, and carry out their own research projects on a subject of their choice, which they will present to the class or submit as a report. This allows students to further pursue and explore an area of interest as well as listen to the perspectives and interests of others. Students should participate at all levels and are encouraged to prepare and provide comments and questions following presentations.

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**Draw or attach a picture of something important to you and describe it.**

<b>Description:</b>
Why is it important?
Is its value particular (you) or universal (everyone)?
How is your picture different from others?
Can others understand and appreciate its importance? Why or why not?

*Compare your information with others.*

*What are similarities and differences? What can we learn from these?*

### **INTRODUCTION QUESTIONS**

*In small groups ask and answer the following questions. Take notes in the space provided.*

Where are you from? Introduce yourself.		
What is something interesting or unique about yourself?		
Where have you traveled? What did you experience?		
Describe your ideal vacation?		
Describe your family.		
What sort of things does your family do together?		
What is your dream for the future?		
What is your most embarrassing story?		
What is a strange or interesting story from your work?		
What is your best or worst memory?		
What is the most important lesson you learned at school?		
What would you like to change about yourself?		
What is your nickname Who gave it to you?		
What is your greatest challenge now?		

## INTERESTING INFORMATION QUESTIONS

If you could communicate with any type of animal, which animal would you choose?		
Who is the most interesting person you have ever met?		
If your life was a TV show, what would the title be?		
What's your theme song?		
If you could be married anywhere in the world, where would the wedding take place?		
If you could be invisible for one hour, where would you go and what would you do?		
Who do you think is the most beautiful person alive today?		
What do you think is the most beautiful sound?		
What would you like to be famous for?		
Name the most delicious and most disgusting things you have ever put in your mouth.		
Has a television commercial ever moved you buy the product? What was it?		
If you learned that there actually was a Heaven and Hell, what would you change in your life?		
If you could find out that one work of fiction was actually true, what book would you select?		
If you could have the answer to any question, what would you ask?		
If you could be the pet of any person on earth, who's pet would you choose to be?		
Which month of the year do you think would best describe your personality?		
If you could travel into the past or future, how far would you want to go?		

Read the dialogue with a partner, highlight or circle key words and phrases. Exchange roles A/B.

**A:** Ok ahhh... thanks.... see you tomorrow... I can never remember that guy's name.

People are always calling him something different and I can't tell, which is his first name and which is his family name.

**B:** Me too and I feel bad because names are very important, they represent our *identity*, *beliefs* and *values*.

**A:** I agree. Have you noticed how names and *forms of address* are used differently?

Some people use their family names first or don't even mention their first names.

**B:** That's way too formal for just being friends. It feels like they don't even want to get to know you.

**A:** Right, but at other times, I've seen the same students call the teacher by only his last name, without any title. That to me is a little too *forward* or even rude.

**B:** Interesting, because a girl in my class was surprised when the teacher said; "call me John or Mr. S." I told her it's because his name is difficult to pronounce and that the informality would build a closer relationship and friendly *atmosphere* with the class. She felt uncomfortable and said that would never be accepted in her country.

**A:** And then there are some students who have a name in their own language and then another name in English.

**B:** That would give me a *split personality*!

**A:** How do they decide those names and why don't they just use their original name?

**B:** And their names are often really old, *biblical*, or just random. I feel strange using them, its *culturally conflicting*.

**A:** I think they just want to create a new linguistic identity or a more personal connection to English, or maybe, their real names are too difficult to pronounce.

**B:** Maybe but I still don't feel comfortable addressing people like that.

**A:** Then there are all those nicknames which have all kinds of meanings!

**B:** I know some of them are short forms, some of them sound insulting or funny and some of them are cute. I can't figure out how to address people. There doesn't seem to be any rule!

**A:** I know what you mean. Like for example, so many people assume they can just shorten my name, it actually really *bugs me*!

**B:** Yeah well after graduation, you better remember to call me Doctor! Or I'll be really offended.

**A:** Ha ha ha! All right Buddy! Whatever you say...

**ANALYSIS** *What is happening here? Think about the scenario. Answer the questions.*

<i>Who?</i>	<i>What?</i>	<i>Where?</i>	<i>When?</i>	<i>Why?</i>
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**KEYWORDS** *Write words, meaning and an original sentence.*


**DISCUSSION** *Write short answers and exchange information and ideas in small groups.*

How do you usually introduce yourself?

Which is more important your first name or your family name? Why?

How do you use names to communicate different relationships?

What is your nickname? Who uses it? When and why is it used? What does it mean?

What are the 5 most important things about yourself? *(ask your partner)*

**FURTHER RESEARCH** *Complete the tasks below for next class.*

What is the origin and meaning of your family name?

<b>COMMENTS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
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**UNIT 4*****The Presentation*****ASKING QUESTIONS**

*Read the dialogue with a partner, highlight or circle key words and phrases. Exchange roles A/B.*

**A:** Thank you for your very *informative* and *inspiring* presentation professor.

**B:** It was my pleasure and I appreciate your kindness but, I don't think it *went over* very well.

**A:** What are you talking about? The students loved it! I could hear many of them talking about your main points and conclusions as they left the *auditorium*.

**B:** Really? I assumed that they were either bored or didn't understand it.

**A:** No, no, not at all, it was perfectly suited to their needs, interests and level of understanding. No one was even sleeping or *chatting*..

**B:** I see, well then why didn't anyone ask a question or give a comment after I had finished? I even left 10 minutes at the end *specifically* for that purpose.

**A:** Hmm... well perhaps many of them don't feel comfortable talking about what you said or asking questions.

**B:** Why not? you said it was perfectly suited to them.

**A:** Well if they asked you a question, it might seem *disrespectful*.

**B:** How? Not asking questions is *disrespectful*.

**A:** Well, I think that they feel that asking questions communicates that they didn't understand well or that you did not speak clearly enough, or that your knowledge or covering of the subject was not *adequate* also it would raise them to the same level as you, which would be *inappropriate*.

**B:** I totally disagree. You have to talk to your students. Asking questions is a very important form of communication and feedback. It lets the speaker know how well his presentation was understood, communicates a sense of *respect* and *appreciation*, *broadens* the *perspective*, of what might otherwise be a very limited or *passive* form of *transferring* information, benefiting the whole group.

**A:** I understand your points but the students may not feel comfortable communicating directly like that, perhaps you could prepare some questions beforehand, for students to read out next time...

<b>ANALYSIS</b> <i>What is happening here? Think about the scenario. Answer the questions.</i>				
<i>Who?</i>	<i>What?</i>	<i>Where?</i>	<i>When?</i>	<i>Why?</i>
<b>KEYWORDS</b> <i>Write words, meaning and an original sentence.</i>				
<b>DISCUSSION</b> <i>Write short answers and exchange information and ideas in small groups.</i>				
Do you feel comfortable asking questions after a presentation or lecture? Explain.				
What are cultural rules or values for addressing professionals or superiors?				
Are you good at public speaking? Why or why not? What qualities are important?				
What makes a good question?    What makes a good public speaker?				
When you give a presentation do you like to be asked questions afterwards? Explain.				
<b>FURTHER RESEARCH</b> <i>Complete the tasks below for next class.</i>				
Describe a presentation or lecture you attended recently. How did the audience react or participate? Was there any interaction or communication with the presenter?				
<b>COMMENTS</b>				<b>STATUS</b>

## UNIT 5      *The Student Centered Class*      EDUCATION & LEARNING STYLES

Read the dialogue with a partner, highlight or circle key words and phrases. Exchange roles A/B.

- A:** Hey where were you yesterday? You missed anthropology class. Are you *skipping* classes?
- B:** Well actually yeah, I feel that class is a *waste of my time*.
- A:** No way it's *awesome!* We learn so much and everyone can participate and exchange ideas.
- B:** Well that's the thing. I'm not here to listen to everyone. I want to know what the teacher knows.
- A:** Right, me too but in anthropology, she is more of a guide, introducing us to different problems and topics, allowing us to explore them, giving us advice and steering us towards *resources* and materials. It's the best way I think.
- B:** No, I disagree. I don't think we have enough knowledge and experience to comment on, or explore these topics. We need a teacher, who passes on their knowledge from reading so many books, through lectures.
- A:** No way. I'd rather do that myself. I don't need a teacher to just pass me facts. I'd rather she teach me how to learn.
- B:** I also need to know if I understand the material, by taking tests. We never have tests in that class just reports, activities and presentations.
- A:** That's the thing, you learn by doing and *interacting*, not by just remembering and repeating.
- B:** It's too *open ended*. How can he *evaluate* us? I don't even know what a grade for participation could be? You have to measure quality not quantity and I don't think group work produces much quality. The teacher is the only one with a PhD in that room, so she should do all of the talking, not us.
- A:** There's more to learning than just *absorbing* facts. These days information is everywhere, it's more important to know how to *access* it, organize it and apply it *effectively*. I think it's crazy that with all the technology we have today, that most classrooms are still based on teachers standing in front of a board and using textbooks. Classrooms should be places of *interaction*, discussion and problem solving, not just *passive* information receiving. Isn't that what the internet is for?

**ANALYSIS** *What is happening here? Think about the scenario. Answer the questions.*

<i>Who?</i>	<i>What?</i>	<i>Where?</i>	<i>When?</i>	<i>Why?</i>
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**KEYWORDS** *Write words, meaning and an original sentence.*


**DISCUSSION** *Write short answers and exchange information and ideas in small groups.*

Are you a good student? Explain. What are some qualities of a good student?

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Describe the best/worst class/teacher you ever had. Give examples?  
Why did you feel this way?

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Have you ever had a really good teacher? What are the qualities of a good teacher?

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How do you like to learn? What lessons and activities are most interesting and helpful?

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How will your classes, the skills and information you are learning help you in the future?

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**FURTHER RESEARCH** *Complete the tasks below for next class.*

Imagine you are a teacher, how would you present materials and information to the class?  
Make a lesson plan. What activities, techniques and tools would you use?

**COMMENTS** **STATUS**

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**UNIT 7*****The Small Face*****BEAUTY & COMPLIMENTS**

*Read the dialogue with a partner, highlight or circle key words and phrases. Exchange roles A/B.*

**A:** That looked *awkward*. What were you guys talking about?

**B:** Oh nothing really. *Apparently* I have a small face, white skin, big eyes and a high nose...

**A:** They're actually really nice girls. I'm sure they didn't mean anything by it.

**B:** No, no it was meant as a *compliment*. Those qualities are supposed to be cute or beautiful.

**A:** Really? That doesn't seem *obvious* to me at all. What's so special about big eyes? White skin just makes you look ill, and a small face? *What's up* with that?

**B:** I thought the same thing at first then I realized that there are different cultural values behind what's considered *attractive* or *good looking*.

**A:** I guess so. Well *beauty is in the eye of the beholder* after all.

**B:** That's for sure! I still can't get used to some of the fashions here. I'm happy to go to class in just jeans and sneakers but the girls in my seminar dress up every day like its date night.

**A:** It is nice though, women here are so *sophisticated* and stylish but it's also stressful! Compared to them, no matter what I do to my hair it always looks like I just go out of bed.

**B:** Really, some of the guys in my class look like they spend more time on their hair than I do.

**A:** One thing doesn't make sense though. If women are so glamorous and fashionable then how can they have silly toys or Disney characters hanging from their bags or cell phones?

**B:** I found that odd as well. My roommate is 20 and she has a ton of stuffed animals in her room and even in her car!

**A:** It is a little *bizarre*. I can't get what type of image they are trying to create. Sometimes they're beautiful and sexy other times cute and innocent.

**B:** I never thought I would learn so much about fashion as an exchange student.

<b>ANALYSIS</b> <i>What is happening here? Think about the scenario. Answer the questions.</i>				
<i>Who?</i>	<i>What?</i>	<i>Where?</i>	<i>When?</i>	<i>Why?</i>
<b>KEYWORDS</b> <i>Write words, meaning and an original sentence.</i>				
<b>DISCUSSION</b> <i>Write short answers and exchange information and ideas in small groups.</i>				
What is beautiful for you?				
What is an appropriate compliment to make about someone's physical appearance?				
Is beauty personal, cultural or universal? Explain and give examples.				
Where does your image of beauty come from?				
What is the difference between <i>cute, beautiful, gorgeous, sexy</i> or <i>attractive</i> ?				
<b>FURTHER RESEARCH</b> <i>Complete the tasks below for next class.</i>				
Research and compare some examples of beauty in other cultures. What do they have in common? How do they differ? "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." Do you agree? Explain.				
<b>COMMENTS</b>				<b>STATUS</b>

Read the dialogue with a partner, highlight or circle key words and phrases. Exchange roles A/B.

A: Wow, That movie was *awesome!* How did you get it? It's not even in the theaters yet.

B: Oh I downloaded it from the "me-media" site.

A: Is it easy to do? It must be expensive.

B: No it's free and *dead easy*. Even my grandmother could do it.

A: How can it be free? Movies are usually so expensive, especially new releases.

B: Well that's the thing, they are expensive. So why should we pay such high prices for media?

A: Well because somebody worked hard to create it. It's *intellectual property*.

B: Ya well, those people are rich enough. I don't feel like giving them anymore of my money.

A: But if we don't pay for it, isn't it stealing?

B: No I think of it more as sharing. You know like if I finish reading a book I can lend it to you. You didn't pay for it but you can read it.

A: Hmm, I guess but this way there are thousands of people who aren't paying.

B: Well think about music. When was the last time you actually went into a store to buy something?

A: Not in a long time. I usually borrow music from friends or the library. There are sources online but they're often really complicated and *restrictive*.

B: Exactly! How is downloading different from borrowing? And, when you download stuff for free you don't have to deal with any complications. No worries about credit card *fraud*, *hacking* or what you can and can't do with your music.

A: I know it's easier but it's still *pirating* and against the law. If you get caught you may pay a large fine or even go to jail.

B: Well everyone is doing it. I don't know how they are going to catch let alone *prosecute* anyone. I think I'll *take my chances* at least until media companies work out a fair price.

A: I don't think free media is right, but what would be a fair price?

B: Good question. Nowadays there is not much *distribution* cost with everything being digital. So I think the artist should get something plus some costs for production and marketing. In the past only 10% went to the artist. So if music companies could cut their profits *accordingly*, I might pay for music again.

A: That sounds reasonable. Do you think it's realistic? Could media companies ever reduce their profits by 90%?

B: Well until they do, I'm not changing my downloading habits.

<b>ANALYSIS</b> <i>What is happening here? Think about the scenario. Answer the questions.</i>				
<i>Who?</i>	<i>What?</i>	<i>Where?</i>	<i>When?</i>	<i>Why?</i>
<b>KEYWORDS</b> <i>Write words, meaning and an original sentence.</i>				
<b>DISCUSSION</b> <i>Write short answers and exchange information and ideas in small groups.</i>				
What types of media do you own? How/where do you get new media?				
Is downloading music without paying wrong? Explain.				
Should the internet be controlled? What would you change?				
Should artist's work and copyright be protected? How?				
What is a fair price for a song, album, movie, TV show, game, etc..?				
<b>FURTHER RESEARCH</b> <i>Complete the tasks below for next class.</i>				
What is the most important technological innovation today?				
How will technology change in the next 20 years?				
Think about or design a product that will change the way we live?				
<b>COMMENTS</b>				<b>STATUS</b>

Read the dialogue with a partner, highlight or circle key words and phrases. Exchange roles A/B.

**A:** Hey what's *the deal* with raising your voice when answering the telephone?

**B:** What do you mean?

**A:** I was on a date Sunday and my girlfriend answered her phone, to talk to her boss and she raised her voice by like three *octaves*. I almost fell out of my chair laughing.

**B:** Well usually a raised voice is a sign of respect or politeness.

**A:** Really do you do that too?

**B:** No it's actually more for women.

**A:** What? So how about men?

**B:** Well maybe we talk more clearly or indirectly, it's difficult to explain... But anyway a woman with a higher voice sounds more cute or sexy.

**A:** No way! I can't stand *high pitched* or *shrill* voices. Besides it makes women sound *submissive* or *subservient*!

**B:** No it's just polite. *Aggressive* or *assertive* women can come across as too *intimidating*.

**A:** What? That's a total stereotype! Seriously!?! I think a deep *husky* voice makes a woman sound attractive.

**B:** What so men should have raised voices to be attractive?

**A:** No come on, that's just silly!

**B:** Well it's actually interesting. I thought *voice timber* was cross cultural or universal but it's quite a cultural difference.

**A/B:** Well at least we can agree about men's voices....

<b>ANALYSIS</b> <i>What is happening here? Think about the scenario. Answer the questions.</i>				
<i>Who?</i>	<i>What?</i>	<i>Where?</i>	<i>When?</i>	<i>Why?</i>
<b>KEYWORDS</b> <i>Write words, meaning and an original sentence.</i>				
<b>DISCUSSION</b> <i>Write short answers and exchange information and ideas in small groups.</i>				
How does tone of voice affect meaning?				
How do you communicate politeness and respect?				
Do you change your voice when speaking with different people? Explain.				
What are some gender differences in communication?				
Are there any universal qualities of tone and voice? What are they?				
<b>FURTHER RESEARCH</b> <i>Complete the tasks below for next class.</i>				
Observe some communicative situations. How do communications styles and voice patterns change depending on context? Are there cross-cultural differences?				
<b>COMMENTS</b>				<b>STATUS</b>

Read the dialogue with a partner, highlight or circle key words and phrases. Exchange roles A/B.

**A:** Is it me or are waitresses here really cold and unfriendly?

No wonder you never leave a tip.

**B:** I don't know, but I think they're fine. I've always liked the service here.

**A:** Every time I try to start a conversation, they just smile *blankly* and walk away. I'm sure it's not a language problem, because other people understand me fine.

**B:** I know that where you're from, waitresses are often expected to be *outgoing* and make conversation, but some people find that uncomfortable. Even though they don't get big tips, staff here feel they are serving the customer better by leaving them alone and remaining silent and respectful.

**A:** Really? But that's one of the main reasons why I go out for coffee, to *chat* and socialize!

**B:** I understand and I'm sure they'd love to talk to you too, but they're really not supposed too, they might look lazy or like they're not doing their job.

**A:** Why don't they just relax a little? This is a coffee shop not a 5 star hotel. They don't have to use such polite, formal language just to pour me some coffee.

**B:** Well you're also a customer, putting you in a higher *social register*, which also makes it difficult to have casual conversation.

**A:** I don't know, when I go out for coffee I want to socialize and communicate. I mean we're all humans right? Besides the waitresses at this cafe are really cute!

**B:** I know what you mean but this is just not the time or place for them to act socially like that. You would have to meet them in a different *context*, find something you had in common then you could talk freely.

**A:** Seriously!? That sounds like a lot of work just for some conversation.

**B:** Well I guess you could just ask for her phone number or what time she gets off work!

**A:** What? You're crazy! I could never do that.

**B:** Really? Looks like our waitress beat you to it! What did she write on the back of that napkin!?

<b>ANALYSIS</b> <i>What is happening here? Think about the scenario. Answer the questions.</i>				
<i>Who?</i>	<i>What?</i>	<i>Where?</i>	<i>When?</i>	<i>Why?</i>
<b>KEYWORDS</b> <i>Write words, meaning and an original sentence.</i>				
<b>DISCUSSION</b> <i>Write short answers and exchange information and ideas in small groups.</i>				
What's the best way to meet someone? Give examples.				
What are some 'icebreaking' or conversation initiation strategies you use?				
How comfortable are you talking to someone you don't know?				
How does your communication style change in a formal or informal situation? Explain.				
Give an example of a time when you were shy and when you were outgoing? Are you generally introverted or extraverted? Explain and give examples.				
<b>FURTHER RESEARCH</b> <i>Complete the tasks below for next class.</i>				
Visit a public space and try to observe how people interact with each other. Can you determine their roles and relationships from their communication styles?				
<b>COMMENTS</b>				<b>STATUS</b>

Read the dialogue with a partner, highlight or circle key words and phrases. Exchange roles A/B.

**A:** I was at my girlfriend's parents' house for dinner last night.

**B:** Wow, that's a big step. You must really like her.

**A:** Yeah I do but... I think their *eating habits* might be a *deal breaker*.

**B:** What do you mean?

**A:** I couldn't believe how much noise her family made when they ate, especially soup and noodles. They are really nice and kind but sitting at the table with them, was like feeding time at the zoo!

**B:** Seriously!/? That's unbelievable!

**A:** I can't understand why such *decent* people wouldn't show better manners in front of a guest.

**B:** It might be a different way of showing *respect*. I had a similar experience during my year abroad. When I finished my food, my friend's mother kept *heaping* more on my plate, even though I said I'd had enough. I *ended up* leaving half of it on the plate, it was really wasteful and felt rude.

**A:** No way, that must have been *awkward*.

**B:** The worst part was using chopsticks. I'm finally *getting the hang of* using them but when I tried to take a piece of fish which was being passed to me with chopsticks, they wouldn't let me and just handed me the bowl.

**A:** Huh? What's that all about?

**B:** Then, when I was finished, I stuck them in the rice at the end of dinner and her mother was shocked and *yanked* them out. I just didn't want to drop them on the floor again.

**A:** No doubt! That always happens to me. There must be at least a couple of sets under my sofa!

**B:** Maybe there's more to using chopsticks than just technique.

**A:** Yeah considering that more than half the planet uses them, there must be quite a diverse range of cultural values and beliefs involved.

**B:** My friend was telling me that she felt similarly uncomfortable when her host family said; "help yourself, make yourself at home" or asked "what would you like to drink". Her biggest shock though, was when they asked her if she wanted some yogurt or sugar and cinnamon to go with her rice.

**A:** Hmmmm, actually that sounds pretty tasty! Better than *fermented* beans anyway!

**ANALYSIS** *What is happening here? Think about the scenario. Answer the questions.*

<i>Who?</i>	<i>What?</i>	<i>Where?</i>	<i>When?</i>	<i>Why?</i>
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**KEYWORDS** *Write words, meaning and an original sentence.*


**DISCUSSION** *Write short answers and exchange information and ideas in small groups.*

How do you show appreciation for food? Why do you do this?

--

How well can you adapt to different ways of eating?

--

Describe the most embarrassing food related experience you have ever had?

--

What are some food related taboos in your culture?

--

What are the most important table manners? What is their origin and meaning?

--

**FURTHER RESEARCH** *Complete the tasks below for next class.*

Research the origin of a group's table manners or food customs.  
How do table manners and food customs reflect cultural values, beliefs or attitudes?  
What advice do you have on manners and etiquette for someone visiting your culture?

<b>COMMENTS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
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Read the dialogue with a partner, highlight or circle key words and phrases. Exchange roles A/B.

- A:** Hey how is everything?                      **B:** Good, you?
- A:** Busy. I'm in the middle of a *major* job search.
- B:** Same here. Actually, I was just writing out some entry sheets for a few large companies.
- A:** What do you mean "writing out entry sheets"?
- B:** You know, *filling out* a form about my *qualifications* and *experiences*.
- A:** Oh like your professional *CV* or *resume*. Don't you have that saved on your computer?
- B:** No. It has to be hand written and it's different for each company so I have to make a new one each time.
- A:** Are you serious? What a *colossal* waste of time!
- B:** It is hard work but that's all part of getting a job right.
- A:** Well, not any job I've ever *applied* for. I don't hand write anything except letters to my grandmother.
- B:** What!? So how do you *submit* information to companies?
- A:** Well I research where I would like to work, what *positions* are available, how my skills might be a match and then I send the *HR* department a copy of my *CV* with a cover letter.
- B:** What's an HR department or a *CV*?
- A:** *Human resources* and *curriculum vitae*.
- B:** You mean you just approach the companies directly?
- A:** Of course. How else would you do it?
- B:** Well here there are information seminars, written tests and interview stages which you have to pass.
- A:** Wow! Sounds like a *major procedure*. It must cost companies millions in *manpower* and resources. How do you even know if you want to work there?
- B:** Well, it's a risk but at least if I get picked up by a large company I'll be *set up* for life.
- A:** *Whoa* you're *freaking me out*. You're looking for life employment now!?
- You're only 22!
- B:** I don't know about that but I just want security. This way the companies can look over my details and writing very carefully to *determine* whether I'll be a good match for their *community* or *corporate culture*.
- A:** Hmm. I wonder how *effective* that really is? It's definitely not the most *efficient* approach. Well, in my system I have done most of the work for the company. They can look at my interests, experiences and *qualifications* and determine whether or not I'm *suitable* and where I might best fit in. If they're interested they can call me in for an interview. It's the most *efficient* way of matching *job seekers* with companies.

<b>ANALYSIS</b> <i>What is happening here? Think about the scenario. Answer the questions.</i>				
<i>Who?</i>	<i>What?</i>	<i>Where?</i>	<i>When?</i>	<i>Why?</i>
<b>KEYWORDS</b> <i>Write words, meaning and an original sentence.</i>				
<b>DISCUSSION</b> <i>Write short answers and exchange information and ideas in small groups.</i>				
What is the best way to find a job? What is a good job? Explain.				
What are your career goals? How can you achieve these?				
What is success for you? Who are the most successful people you know? Why?				
How will your education help you get the career you want? What do you need to learn?				
What are the most important skills you need to get a good job?				
<b>FURTHER RESEARCH</b> <i>Complete the tasks below for next class.</i>				
Make a chart outlining the steps and strategies for getting a job. Compare these with someone else. How are these different in other cultures?				
<b>COMMENTS</b>				<b>STATUS</b>

Read the dialogue with a partner, highlight or circle key words and phrases. Exchange roles A/B.

**A:** Hey how was your first day at work?

**B:** Ok I guess but I don't know if I'll *fit in* there.

**A:** Why? It's a great company, they've been around forever and I'm sure you could do really well.

**B:** That's the thing, they're a bit too *traditional* and *archaic* in their thinking and *policies*.

**A:** What do you mean?

**B:** Well, there were two of us *hired* for the same *positions*. This guy and me. Well, when we went in to meet the boss for the first time, as part of our *orientation*, he asked the guy to sit down and asked me to go make them some tea. He didn't even look at me!

**A:** Maybe he *assumed* you were the secretary.

**B:** Exactly! Well I have an MBA from a top university and I should be *acknowledged* or at least treated with *respect*! It was *humiliating*.

**A:** What did you do?

**B:** Well I went and made tea. I didn't want to get *fired* on my first day! Not only did he not thank me but he complained that it was *bitter* and *tepid*. When I finally sat down and introduced myself, he *flat out ignored* me.

**A:** Wow the guy sounds like a real *chauvinist pig*!

**B:** Then he talked about promotions and *marketing strategies*, asked my co-worker what his *ambitions* and goals were and then turned to me, with a *condescending* look, and asked me at what age I want to have children.

**A:** Gees! He can't just make *assumptions* like that just because you're a woman. And in any case it's a form of *sexual harassment*, those kind of personal remarks are rude and inappropriate.

**B:** Right! He just *assumed* that I was going to marry and end my career! I felt he was even *resentful* that I was there in the first place.

**A:** Wow that's awful, what a *dinosaur*. If that continues you have to report it.

**B:** Sure! How will that help my career, accusing my boss of being *sexist*? There are only a few women in the office as it is and they all seem content to *go with the flow*. They're all older and stuck doing *menial* office tasks, not a single woman has a *managerial* position, it's *pathetic*.

**A:** Well that's just it. If no one *stands up* to this type of *behavior*, it will just continue and the worst part is those old guys don't even realize they are wrong!

**B:** I know but why do I have to be the one to do it! I just want to work hard and enjoy my new career. This type of action may well just get me *fired*.

<b>ANALYSIS</b> <i>What is happening here? Think about the scenario. Answer the questions.</i>				
<i>Who?</i>	<i>What?</i>	<i>Where?</i>	<i>When?</i>	<i>Why?</i>
<b>KEYWORDS</b> <i>Write words, meaning and an original sentence.</i>				
<b>DISCUSSION</b> <i>Write short answers and exchange information and ideas in small groups.</i>				
What are traditional roles and jobs for men and women? How are these changing?				
Are there any jobs best suited for either men or women? Give examples.				
How have changing gender roles impacted society? What are your views on gender differences?				
What are some gender stereotypes? Are these universal or cultural?				
How can we prevent gender bias, inequality, discrimination or harassment?				
<b>FURTHER RESEARCH</b> <i>Complete the tasks below for next class.</i>				
Think about the changes in men and women's roles in society, family and workplace. Create a list outlining causes and effects. How might these change in the future?				
<b>COMMENTS</b>				<b>STATUS</b>

## REVIEW EXERCISE: ADVICE EXCHANGE 1

1. In groups of 3-5, take turns reading the problem cards out loud.
2. Other members of your group will give you advice for your problem.
3. Choose the best advice and give that person 1 point.
4. The player with the most points at the end of the round wins.

### Problem Scenario Cards

After eating dinner at a restaurant, I discover that I have no money or credit cards.	My dog chewed my homework and my teacher doesn't believe that I did the work.	I ruined my sister's favorite shirt by getting ink on it.	My friend is really depressed recently.
After a party everyone wants to drive home but they drank alcohol. I drank only a little.	There's some money left on a table after everyone leaves class.	I arrive at class 30 minutes late,	I accidentally ran over my neighbor's dog with my car..
I'm invited for dinner to a friend's house but the food is terrible.	A new acquaintance invites me to a party, people there are using drugs.	I didn't pass my test today.	My friend's boyfriend is aggressive and sometimes violent.
I saw my teacher' hit a parked car and leave. I know the owner of the damaged car.	The waiter forgets to charge me for my dessert.	I accidentally broke an expensive vase at a neighbor's house.	I lost a library book.

*\*Add your own problem to the list and ask other members for advice*

### Score Card

Player	Advice	Score	
<b>Total</b>			

*\*Choose one of the problems and expand it into a dialogue. Show how you would react.*

## REVIEW EXERCISE: ADVICE EXCHANGE 4

1. In groups of 3-5, take turns reading the problem cards out loud.
2. Other members of your group will give you advice for your problem.
3. Choose the best advice and give that person 1 point.
4. The player with the most points at the end of the round wins.

### Problem Scenario Cards

We are supposed to finish work at 6pm but everyone stays overtime for no extra pay.	A senior worker is being very mean and unfair to a new employee.	I really like a man/woman in my office but they are a senior manager.	The senior manager is dating one of my co-workers she gets all the easy jobs.
Other workers in my office always ask me to make tea for them.	Someone stole money at work and I think I know who did it.	I have a good idea but it is different from my seniors.	There is a really big problem at my work.
I have a lot of really good ideas but my supervisor always takes credit for them.	I disagree with the boss's opinion.	I really want to go on a vacation but no one in my office takes holidays.	My Boss is doing sexual harassment.
A co-worker is trying to make our manager look bad so he will get fired.	In a job interview the interviewer asked me an inappropriate question.	I discover my company is doing something illegal.	My co-worker is not doing their work and we are partners in a project.

*\*Add your own problem to the list and ask other members for advice*

### Score Card

Player	Advice	Score	
<b>Total</b>			

*\*Choose one of the problems and expand it into a dialogue. Show how you would react.*

## REVIEW EXERCISE: CRITICAL INCIDENT ROLE PLAY

In small groups, plan, produce and perform a dialogue or a role play of a real life situation. The dialogue should be at least 3-5 minutes long and will be performed in front of the class. Create dialogues like those in the text but be original and use your own real life experiences.

### Preparation

<b>Subject/Title</b>			
<b>Description</b>	<b>Introduction</b>		
	<b>Story</b>		
	<b>Conclusion</b>		
<b>Characters/Roles</b>			
<b>Keywords/Phrases</b>			

### Planning

<b>Members</b>	<b>Duties</b>	<b>Characters</b>



## REVIEW EXERCISE: MINI DEBATE

- Make teams of 2-4 and create a simple resolution which you can support and defend.
- Try to use a resolution similar to the themes in the text. Keep your resolutions simple.
- Come up with as many supporting points as possible, try to anticipate counter points.
- Take turns presenting and defending your main points. (Within a limited time).
- The team with the best arguments and strongest defense wins.
- Alternate resolutions as well as Negative and Affirmative positions.

### Preparation

**Example Resolution:** Soccer is the best sport, doughnuts are better than cookies, *smoking is...*

<b>Resolution</b>		
<b>Keywords</b>		
<b>Support</b>		
<b>Power phrases</b>		

<b>Resolution:</b>	
<b>Affirmative</b>	<b>Negative</b>
1.	2.
Conclusion.	Conclusion.

### Notes

<b>Points</b>	<b>Counter Points</b>

## Audience Evaluation

Resolution:			
Affirmative:		Negative:	
Comments:	Score:	Comments:	Score:

Resolution:			
Affirmative:		Negative:	
Comments:	Score:	Comments:	Score:

Resolution:			
Affirmative:		Negative:	
Comments:	Score:	Comments:	Score:

Resolution:			
Affirmative:		Negative:	
Comments:	Score:	Comments:	Score:

Resolution:			
Affirmative:		Negative:	
Comments:	Score:	Comments:	Score:

Resolution:			
Affirmative:		Negative:	
Comments:	Score:	Comments:	Score:

## SUMMARY & PRESENTATION

### Find out more

In your group summarize the most important and interesting information and discoveries you have made about the topics and scenarios covered.

- Choose one area you are most interested in
- Summarize and organize your information
- Include information from your own research and experiences.
- Present your ideas, thoughts and opinions to the rest of the class
- Prepare notes, questions and materials for discussion

### Planning

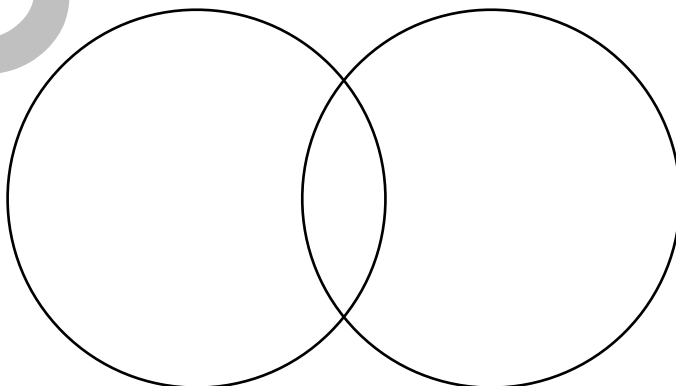
Scenario or area of interest	
Keywords and important information	
My thoughts and opinions	
My experiences	
Further research and sources	
Notes and Questions	

### Contrast & Comparison: Visualizing Connections

My Perspective

Connection

Other Perspective



<b>My Script</b>
Title
Subject
Focus
Purpose
Goals
Keywords
Power Phrases (Audience Connection)
Main Message
Conclusion
Questions

### **Conclusions & Considerations**

What was most interesting? Why?
How does each group interpret the scenarios differently? Why is that?
What else would you like to know?
How can we find more information?
What can be learned from interpreting these scenarios?

# ETHNOGRAPHY

Ethnography is the process of describing a culture. It means creating a portrait of a people. An ethnography is a written description of a particular culture including communities, perspectives, people, products and practices. This type of research is based on information collected through fieldwork which usually involves a process known as triangulation. Triangulation is a way of getting accurate and unbiased data by using at least three different sources or methods, typically these are: interviews, observations, surveys or documents.

The goal of ethnographic research is to get an insider perspective and understanding of another way of life. Rather than studying people ethnography focuses on learning from them in order to better understand how we perceive others and social differences. There are many situations and ways in which ethnographic research can be done. In fact each one of us unconsciously does ethnographic research every day. Whenever we enter a new environment, try something new or meet new people, we automatically try to get as much information as we can by observing the situation and others behavior, asking questions, participating, listening or reading. Ethnographic research is a cycle with no real beginning or end. Since social behavior is unique and unpredictable it is impossible to make any final conclusions which can be generalized to all people of particular group. There are however some important steps which make getting started easier.

- 1) Identify a problem, observe some interesting behavior, something you don't understand or would like to know more about.
- 2) Create some research questions, brainstorm ideas, try to develop a hypothesis by identifying possible causes, reasons or explanations for what you have observed.
- 3) Think about the best way or method to answer your questions or prove/test whether your hypothesis is true or false.

## Planning

Phenomena	Hypothesis	Method

## Inquiry

<b>Who</b>	Who is involved? How many? What are their roles/relationships? Background information.
<b>What</b>	What exchanges, actions and events occur? What type of communication or interaction?
<b>Where</b>	Where does the behavior take place? What is the context and situation?
<b>When</b>	What time, day, season does the behavior occur? What events affect or are affected by it?
<b>Why</b>	What is the purpose of this behavior? Is it conscious, unconscious, planned or spontaneous?
<b>How</b>	How are the actions involved related? What kind of verbal/non-verbal communication is used?

## Synthesis

<b>Data/Results</b>	
<b>Interpretations</b>	
<b>Conclusions</b>	

## REFLECTION

Write down any questions, ideas, insights or new information from your experiences exploring culture.

<b>Language</b> What new words, phrases, expressions and communication styles or strategies did you learn, use or experience?	
<b>Culture</b> What interesting information did you learn about identities, communities, people, actions, perspectives or values?	
<b>Observations</b> Watch your classmates and friends closely. How do they act, react, and interact differently in deferent situations?	
<b>Discoveries</b> What else did you find out about yourself and others?	
<b>Reflection</b> How do you feel about what you've seen, experienced and learned? Do you think any of these have helped or changed you?	

## NOTES

SAMPLE

### **About the Author**

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