



# Unit 7

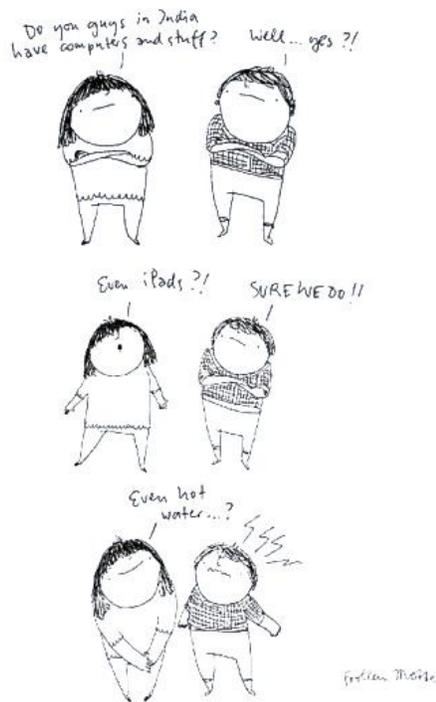
## Intercultural and transcultural learning

Consider the cartoon together with the following statement: "If you get the present perfect and the simple past wrong you may lose marks; if you get the culture wrong you may lose face, money or even life." (Gibson 1994: 127) Discuss why the intercultural encounter depicted in the cartoon goes wrong. Which assumptions lead to particular perspectives and problems? How could one avoid the blunders shown in the cartoon?

STUDY QUESTION:  
BOOK PAGE 152

### Sample Student Answers

- The person on the left does not treat the person from India as an equal
- Leads to the person from India becoming offended
- Assumes being from India means not having high-tech or being up-to-date
- Assumes modern gadgets and basic necessities (hot water) are only available in the western world
- Uses very 'up-front' language, which can be taken as offensive
- *Easy to avoid:* learn about different cultures, read up on other countries
- Don't go acting like a better person
- Learn to use a gentler approach - 'I don't know much about India, do all places there have access to high-tech things like iPads?' / 'Is it true there are places in India without hot water?' (or avoid this question completely)



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## Intercultural and transcultural learning

Consider the following two sentences:

'It was at the end of November. Grandpa brought the bird to the table. 'Imagine the scene and discuss how the story would continue.

STUDY QUESTION:  
BOOK PAGE 153

### Sample Student Answers

- **Scene:** Grandfather brings the roast turkey to the table for dinner.
- **Continuation:** Grandfather carves the bird and hands the meat to the family. They all say grace before starting to eat.

OR

- **Scene:** Grandfather brings an injured bird he found on the porch to the table.
- **Continuation:** He feeds the bird and looks after it until its wing is healed and it can fly again.



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## Intercultural and transcultural learning

Ask students to search the Internet for a collection/list of Do's and Don'ts for Germany: ask them to compile a list of tips and present them in class. Discuss if they are true and what they tell you about the writer's cultural background.

STUDY QUESTION:  
BOOK PAGE 161

### Sample Student Answers

- Do's:**
- Always be on time
  - Shake hands when meeting people
  - Learn some German before going to Germany
  - Carry cash with you
  - Leave a tip of 5-10%
- Don'ts:**
- Do not jaywalk
  - Do not put your elbows on the table whilst eating
  - Do not look away when saying 'cheers' (Prost)
  - Never show Nazi salute, Nazi symbols or shout 'Heil Hitler' - all criminal offences
  - All are true, though some rules are stricter than others:
  - Many Germans speak English and are happy to practice - may not need any German
  - Be on time - different for different occasions - a meeting/appointment, always be on time. Meeting at someone's house - best to be 5-10 minutes late, but never more than 15



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## Intercultural and transcultural learning

Consider the following intercultural questions. Discuss them with fellow students, also from another cultural background. In addition, discuss the attitudes behind cultural or communicative practices.

In your culture or when in a certain country ...

- Is it considered correct to interrupt someone who is speaking and, if so, when is it permissible?
- How do you begin a conversation with someone you have never met before?
- How long do you maintain eye contact when talking with or listening to someone?
- What is the body distance you feel comfortable with when talking to someone you do not know?

STUDY QUESTION:  
BOOK PAGE 162

### Sample Student Answers

- Not acceptable to interrupt under normal circumstances, can be acceptable to interrupt insulting comments or slander
- **Students:** what or where are you studying, how long have you been studying
- **Non-students:** everyday situational comments to start a conversation
- Generally about one meter distance between strangers in conversation
- **Eye contact:** depends on your own personality and who the speaking partner is, as well as the topic of conversation  
*close friends:* more eye contact  
*shy personality/ intimidating partner:* little eye contact, looking other places

*uncomfortable topic: shifty, little eye contact*



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### Intercultural and transcultural learning

First, try to describe the contradiction presented here and why this is not a single, isolated incident. Then think of how it could be exemplary of similar double-bind situations we all are faced with. Consider possible ways of getting out of this double-bind.

Then consider how you would present this poem. How can you get students to write similar poems – and how can they discuss possible strategies of escaping the double bind?

STUDY QUESTION:  
BOOK PAGE 165

### Sample Student Answers

- Feels achievement for signing a petition to help save the Earth - has not actually done anything yet to help it - but then turns on the ignition to a car and contributes to polluting the Earth
- Every day, people do things to help the Earth, using bio-fuels, buying bio-goods, but then travel on holiday in a passenger jet, or throw away heaps of plastics, etc., which again damage the Earth
- It shows us how easily pleased we are, doing little things that make us feel like doing great things, but at the same time neglecting conservation in everyday life
- Sign the petition, do more to help the Earth than just signing a piece of paper, and walk the talk to save the Earth
- Give the poem to students to read at the beginning of the lesson, allow them to discuss it and tell you what it means
- Have students gather ideas of other double-bind situations of daily life, work from there to write their own poems and discuss



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## Intercultural and transcultural learning

Have another look at the cartoon. Try to define the teaching and learning objectives according to Byram with regard to the dialog presented in the cartoon. What knowledge, skills, and attitudes can students acquire? What overall educational objective would you aim at?

STUDY QUESTION:  
BOOK PAGE 167

### Sample Student Answers

- **Knowledge:** students acquire knowledge about the culture, history and social background of the country of the person they are talking to (e.g. India)
- **Skills:** students identify and explain cultural phenomena and can solve problems in
- **Attitudes:** students want to learn more about the other culture (India), are more open to other cultures, know of any problems between cultures, know how not to offend
- **Critical cultural awareness:** students reflect on their own prejudices that inform their perspective of others, but also evaluate other cultural viewpoints and practices

