AC 2009-46: RAISING THE INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS OF ENGINEERING AND BUSINESS STUDENTS IN AN AUSTRIAN BACHELOR AND MASTER OF SCIENCE PROGRAMME IN AVIATION

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Abstract

This paper presents four topics and related activities for developing the intercultural awareness of engineering and business students which originated during my English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes in the Bachelor and Master of Science Programme in Aviation at the FH JOANNEUM, University of Applied Sciences, Graz, Austria. Even though they were initially created for non-native speakers of English, they may be equally employed with native-speaking students in subject-specific tertiary education and experienced professionals preparing for a work assignment abroad. Raising the cross-cultural awareness of students means introducing and sensitizing them to such issues through which intercultural differences and similarities may be perceived, discussed and acknowledged. The four topics selected are work, national stereotypes, food and gender because these ideally fit in with our purpose and are likely to arise in cross-cultural conversations. The first activity should make learners think about habits they could adopt as permanent residents in a foreign city on their daily ways to and from work. The second activity aims at revealing and breaking national stereotypes as a danger to intercultural communication. The third activity simulates dialogues in a restaurant, during which some problem related to food and a person’s religious confession or personal conviction must be solved. Finally, the fourth activity encourages the discussion of gender-specific issues of male and female equality, of the advancement of women in global societies and businesses as well as of potential threats to women’s rights. All of these activities pursue the goals of questioning learner’s own cross-cultural attitudes and deepening their understanding of foreign cultures. Some of the topics introduced may cause heated debates among learners, which is why they need to be carefully moderated by an experienced instructor. In any case, thought-provoking subjects and tasks facilitate eager participation by learners and provide for a fruitful debriefing and reflection phase with the teacher, which follows on each of the four activities. The tasks presented may serve as contributions to a cross-cultural training course to be designed by instructors who teach engineering and business students or practising professionals alike.
Introduction

Cross-cultural differences are a sensitive and nebulous matter that may cause confusion, misunderstanding and irritation for many people. To the same extent common ground in international negotiations, meetings and conversations is crucial for successful communication among participants of various nationalities and cultural backgrounds. The probably most efficient way of finding out about a person’s cultural identity is interaction through conversations and interviews. Such interaction should be coupled with a sensitivity acquired in cross-cultural training which takes the individuality of each person into account and does not rely on collective generalisations of stereotypical characteristics. This paper introduces four topics and related activities for raising the intercultural awareness of engineering and business students which originated during my English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes in the Bachelor and Master of Science Programme in Aviation at the FH JOANNEUM, University of Applied Sciences, Graz, Austria. Even though they have been developed for non-native speakers of English, they are equally suitable for native-speaking students in subject-specific tertiary education and experienced professionals preparing for a work assignment abroad.

The Bachelor and Master of Science Programme in Aviation at the FH JOANNEUM started in the fall term of 2008 with the first Bachelor year group in the new curriculum, which is step by step replacing the old 4-year diploma curriculum originally established in the fall term of 2001. The first Master of Science year group commences in the fall term of 2011. The new curricula combine engineering and business studies with a view to prepare students for a career in the aeronautical industry. In the 3-year Bachelor programme, students may choose between the Aeronautical Engineering and Piloting branch after a common education during the first two years. All students thus receive four semesters of English language training: Business and Aviation English 1 and 2 as well as English for Aeronautical Technology and Management 1 and 2. In addition to that, those students in the engineering branch attend the fifth-semester language course Professional Presentations, which is excluded from the curriculum for piloting. All students also take a Phraseology course in the first semester and the General Radio Telephone Certificate for Aeronautical Services in the second semester. These courses use Aviation English phraseology but are excluded from the core English language module and taught by external lecturers with an active flight-
The changes in focus and goals of the English language training module within the programme due to the transition from the diploma to the Bachelor-Master system do not affect the topic of this article. In other words, raising the intercultural awareness of students has been an issue in both systems and will remain part of the syllabus in the future.

Since many graduates from the Bachelor and Master of Science Programme in Aviation at the FH JOANNEUM will work in an international environment either abroad or at a globally operating company at home, they will meet people with various cultural backgrounds as part of their work and, most likely, will speak English with them. During their professional internships, they gain practical insights into their future workplaces, yet not more than about half of these take place outside of Austria. Furthermore, some students go abroad on students exchange in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme Erasmus, yet again this number is usually rather low. In any case, this article is founded on the premise that “[c]ultural difference is everywhere and we all actually engage with it in our everyday lives”. As a consequence, the English language courses in the degree programme obtain an important additional function besides professional language training. They intend to raise the intercultural awareness of students who study or work abroad during their university education and of those who remain in Austria until graduation.

1 Culture versus Cultural Identities

There are several models for describing and defining culture, and several corresponding illustrations of the concept. Three of the best-known examples are the cultural iceberg, onion and tree, each of which contains visible and hidden expressions of culture. Behaviour, clothing and food form the tip of the iceberg, the outer layer of the onion and the branches of the tree, whereas meanings, beliefs, attitudes and values constitute the iceberg’s underwater bulk, the onion’s inner layers and the trunk of the tree.
These concepts tend to support the essentialist view of culture, that is culture as a homogeneous and rather predictable entity among people with shared cultural and social characteristics. Such features are often studied, partly generalised and adapted to various situations, so that members of a foreign culture, in the main a foreign country, obtain a recipe for their behaviour when establishing contact with the culture analysed. “In this sense, essentialism is the ‘easy’ answer for culture, which has become popular, usable and marketable in, for example, management studies and foreign language education where people are looking for simple formulae for communicating with clients, students and colleagues from ‘other places and backgrounds’.”

This paper promotes the non-essentialist view of culture; hence, it is necessary to extend the tree model. The term culture may be replaced by a more suitable concept of cultural identities. Like a tree, a person’s cultural identity is composed of several roots, such as education, religion, gender, age, nationality, profession, languages, the media, family, friends and the like. In contrast to Gibson, I am convinced that the roots of cultural identity incorporate literature, music, art and history because the global achievements of artists, for instance, are to various degrees present in the individual mind of a person. Artistic achievements and their reception, therefore, influence and shape a person’s cultural identity, and the same is true for historic and political events. All the roots of the tree grow into its stem, the beliefs, values and attitudes of a person, which are not visible as long as they are below the surface but may become transparent in behaviour, clothing and food, which correspond to the branches and leaves of the tree. It is necessary to underscore, however, that the beliefs, values and attitudes of a person are not static but dynamic and may change over time, as the foundations of these beliefs, the roots of the tree, change and keep growing. For instance, people may switch jobs, move to a foreign country, learn another language or the like. In any case, we grow older and our social relations change, and these factors will have repercussions on our cultural identity. The tree of culture, therefore, is no accurate representation of a cultural entity with shared beliefs and values but rather a symbol of the cultural identity of a person that allows for individual self-definition and development.

Instead of monolithic cultures neatly separated from each other by national, religious or social borders, we are in reality faced with a multitude of individuals who define themselves through various overlapping cultural identities or “a complex multiplicity of
cultures both within and across societies”. A good example of a person’s non-essentialist self-perception that acknowledges such a concept is given below:

‘I feel most British when I travel abroad to places where that is meaningful. A sense of Iranian culture from my family and upbringing comes into play when I listen to Iranian music, speak the language and think of global politics. At the moment the strongest cultural force in my life comes from the international women’s group to which I belong, through conferences, journals and email contact. These are the people to whom I feel culturally closest. The people I find most culturally strange are my children’s friends and the village where I was a child. My Iranian-ness enriches my perceptions of and participation in British society, and vice versa’.

Despite this focus on individuals, “culture is nevertheless basically a group phenomenon which interacts with individual identity”. Such a viewpoint allows for appreciative, respectful and thus successful international communication and may lead to a better understanding among people.

2 Intercultural Awareness-Raising Activities

Fostering the intercultural awareness of students in a language course means introducing and sensitizing them to such topics through which cultural differences and similarities may be perceived, discussed and acknowledged. All the activities that follow aim at promoting the non-essentialist view of culture introduced in the previous section through students’ completion of tasks and an ensuing reflection and deconstruction phase with the trainer.

The four topics that I have selected are work, national stereotypes, food and gender because learners are likely to encounter them in conversations with colleagues and citizens from foreign countries and culturally different groups whom they will meet during their careers. In other terms, they should realise that they will be faced with individual cultural identities of people they meet and that cultural identities cannot be reduced to national or ethnic attributes. Among the many approaches to employ the subject area of the working world for cross-cultural learning is its potential for simulating a job- or education-related stay abroad. Learners imagine a period in their life that they spend in a foreign country and some virtual implications of such a stay for their ways of living. Below there is a detailed description of an activity designed for first-year university students in the Bachelor of Science Programme in Aviation.
Activity 1: Work

Goals
practising the present simple, describing general routines, talking about activities on the way to and from work in a foreign country, developing an understanding of changing habits due to life in a foreign country

Time
35 minutes (10 minutes for preparation, 15 minutes for the dialogues, 10 minutes for the reflection phase)

Material
MTA New York City Subway map(s)
General Routines overhead transparency (with instructions for students)
Useful Words and Phrases overhead transparency

Type of Activity
prepared partner dialogue

Language Focus
present simple for general routines
words and phrases for commuting
describing daily activities

Group Size
pairs

Level
lower intermediate

Skills
reading, speaking, listening

Preparation
The teacher distributes MTA York City Subway maps or photocopies a section for each student and produces the General Routines as well as Useful Words and Phrases overhead transparencies.

Procedure
The teacher tells students to follow the instructions on the General Routines transparency. After they know what to do, the teacher switches transparencies and puts up the Useful Words and Phrases transparency, which may be left projected onto the board during the rest of the activity.

Intercultural Awareness
This activity should help students to imagine life in a city abroad. By transferring daily activities to the surroundings of New York City, students should start thinking about habits they may adopt as permanent residents in a foreign country. In this way, they should be encouraged to conceive the plan to go abroad themselves at some stage in their studies or for a future employment. This activity may also foster an understanding of potential changes in personal habits that would result from living abroad. It should thus facilitate the perception of international experience as an enrichment of students’ personal lives and cultural
identities. The example of New York City may be replaced by any other city, depending on course requirements and the availability of city maps.

**Description of Material**

**MTA New York City Subway map:** teachers may either provide enough original maps for each student or photocopy a section from the map for this activity.

**General Routines:** this overhead transparency contains the instructions for students (see Appendix).

**Useful Words and Phrases:** this overhead transparency contains language that students may need for the task (see Appendix).

The second topic chosen for this paper, national stereotypes, has become a core area of cross-cultural studies, which is not surprising when we consider its far-reaching repercussions on the lives of millions of people throughout history: “Researchers and practitioners have studied the development and function of stereotypes, concluding that using them is a way we cope with the uncertainty of the world and attempt to make life more predictable. Yet they have also been the cause of a great deal of pain and suffering. In being stereotyped, people become victims of narrow judgements and prejudice which prevent them from advancing in our society”. As two world wars have taught us in the twentieth century, disrespect of foreign cultures or religions may have lethal consequences. The following activity embraces the breaking of national stereotypes by discussing the controversial attribution of derogatory traits to members of a foreign culture.

**Activity 2: National Stereotypes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>fluency practice, thinking about prejudices, discussing intercultural differences, becoming aware and breaking of stereotypes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>15 minutes (group discussion), 10 minutes (whole-class reflection and deconstruction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>discussion handout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Activity</td>
<td>group discussion, whole-class reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Focus</td>
<td>agreeing and disagreeing, stating one’s opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Size</td>
<td>three to five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>intermediate upwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>reading, speaking, listening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preparation  
The teacher photocopies the discussion handout for each learner.

Procedure  
The teacher tells students to follow the instructions on the discussion handout. During the discussions, the teacher monitors the language used and notes down any problems for later analysis on the board but does not interrupt the learners. After they have gone through all the questions, the teacher asks for some general answers from various groups in front of the whole class and moderates the reflection and deconstruction process.

Intercultural Awareness  
By means of discussing different national stereotypes, students should develop a sense of controversial characteristics ascribed to certain countries and their inhabitants. Ideally, they reach the insight that stereotypes are far-fetched, lack statistical evidence and endanger international relations by their unjustified attribution of often negative personality traits. Furthermore, the essentialist concept of national characteristics should be deconstructed, and the absurdity of projecting collective personality traits onto a supposedly homogeneous group of people should be revealed. The teacher should also introduce and explain the essentialist and non-essentialist views of culture.

Description of Material  
Handout with questions for discussion (see Appendix)

There are further fruitful ideas for revealing and breaking stereotypes. It can be quite illuminating to collect statements by foreigners on your own country and compare them with your cultural self-perception, which will most likely differ, emphasizing the notion of the complexity of cultural groups in any society. Comments on American behaviour as observed by foreigners, for instance, may be found in an activity designed to increase awareness of how Americans are perceived by members of other cultures. A great and ever-effective game for simulating culture shock is Barnga, available in its 25th anniversary edition.

Our third field of interest, food, also lends itself well to developing intercultural sensitivity. Especially the diversity of recipes, cooking and national dishes around the globe may provide excellent first-contact points with foreign cultures. This is even more so the case as the concept of a “national” dish may be questioned completely:

If our patriot is old-fashioned enough to adhere to the so-called American breakfast, his coffee will be accompanied by an orange, domesticated in the Mediterranean.
The focus of the next activity, however, rather lies on a lack of cross-cultural understanding when it comes to religious beliefs, which are often closely linked with how food is prepared and eaten. At the same time, well-established and simplistic expectations of how people behave due to their confessions of faith should be deconstructed. Other examples of how to approach cultural issues anchored in religion are also available.  

### Activity 3: Food and Dining Out

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>talking about food, learning phrases used at a restaurant, becoming aware of intercultural issues related to dining out with a foreign visitor and religious beliefs reflected in food, questioning stereotypical images</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>30 minutes (20 minutes for group simulations, 10 minutes for reflection and deconstruction with whole class and teacher)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Material | Food and Dining Out handout  
English menu (for example: “Bleu Gourmet Dinner Menu”) |
| Type of Activity | simulation |
| Language Focus | vocabulary for food and dining out |
| Group Size | three to four |
| Level | intermediate and above |
| Skills | reading, speaking, listening |
| Preparation | The teacher photocopies the handout Food and Dining Out and an English menu for each student. |
| Procedure | The teacher asks students to follow the instructions on the handout. Students mix and vary the group sizes corresponding to the relevant tasks. They use the English menu as a basis for the simulations. After the simulations, the teacher asks students what they had to bear in mind when dining with visitors from a foreign country. The teacher should warn students of the dangers of simplification inherent in the |
Intercultural Awareness

In short simulations, students act out situations in which they are confronted with some sort of a problem arising during dinner with foreign business partners and visitors. The simulations should demonstrate how closely food and a person’s cultural identity may be linked, especially because very often what people eat or drink may be related to their religious beliefs. Examples are kosher meals and food prepared according to the rules of Jewish law, the sacred status of cows in India, or the avoidance of pork and alcohol by strict Muslims. However, the discussion and deconstruction phase should also point to the simplistic character of such generalisations because many Muslims do drink alcohol, and so forth. The complexity of a person’s individual choices of cultural identities should be contrasted with the essentialist assumption that somebody behaves in a certain way because he or she is a member of a certain group or citizen of a certain country. That is why the instructions in the situations given should be critically reflected on with the whole group.

Description of Material

**English menu**: any menu containing dishes described in English will do and can be selected from a wide variety of restaurants that offer their menus as free downloads on their home pages.

**Food and Dining Out handout** with situations for role play and useful phrases (see Appendix)

Finally, discussing the status and respect women enjoy or choose to enjoy in different societies serves the purpose of raising intercultural awareness as well. By addressing questions of equality between men and women in global business and committing learners to form their own opinion on controversial gender issues, they may develop insights into both their own and foreign attitudes towards these issues. Due to its potential for causing heated debates, this final activity should be carefully introduced and moderated by the teacher. It may of course also be adapted to instructors’ needs and group constellations, as the other activities presented in this paper.
Activity 4: Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Goals</strong></th>
<th>becoming aware of intercultural issues related to male/female relationships and gender questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
<td>25 minutes (15 minutes for group discussions, 10 minutes for reflection and deconstruction with whole class and teacher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Material</strong></td>
<td>instruction handout “This Is a Woman’s World, Isn’t It?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Activity</strong></td>
<td>group discussion, whole-class reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language Focus</strong></td>
<td>women at work and in the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group Size</strong></td>
<td>three to four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level</strong></td>
<td>intermediate and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills</strong></td>
<td>reading, speaking, listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation</strong></td>
<td>The teacher photocopies the instruction handout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Procedure</strong></td>
<td>The teacher tells students to follow the instructions on the handout. Students have to grade the statements on the handout in order to find out about their own position on certain gender-related issues. Then they discuss the statements within their groups. Afterwards, the teacher asks for any especially striking outcomes of the activity, which will be discussed with the whole class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intercultural Awareness</strong></td>
<td>Students should reflect on the implementation of women’s rights in their own countries and in the world. The group discussion should trigger such questions as “Who or what sets cultural standards?”, “What is normal?” or “Where does the insistence on one’s own cultural identity begin and the tolerance of a foreign custom, habit or belief end?” If these questions do not arise during the group discussion, the teacher may address them in the reflection phase. The teacher should also deconstruct simplistic images that may come up during the discussions, such as the popular myth that women have no chances of participation in public life in “Muslim” countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of Material</strong></td>
<td><strong>Handout</strong> with statements for discussion (see Appendix)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher’s Notes</strong></td>
<td><strong>burka</strong> a long loose piece of clothing that covers the whole body, including the head and face, worn in public by Muslim women in some countries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
career woman
a woman whose career is more important to her than getting married and 
having children

polyandry
the custom of having more than one husband at the same time

polygamy
the custom of having more than one wife at the same time

working girl (informal)
1 (becoming old-fashioned) a prostitute
2 (sometimes offensive) a woman who has a paid job

Conclusions

The present paper has introduced four activities designed to develop inter-cultural awareness among students in a Bachelor and Master of Science Programme in Aviation. The first activity stimulates a feel for living abroad, the second activity sensitizes students to the hindrances and dangers radiating from stereotypes for international cooperation, the third activity builds on possible causes of cross-cultural misunderstandings based on the connection between food and religion and the fourth activity provokes discussions of global gender questions. All these activities may be easily integrated into a language-teaching syllabus or be adapted to a cross-cultural training course. Their thought-provoking nature facilitates eager participation by learners and lays the foundations for a fruitful debriefing, reflection and deconstruction phase with the teacher, which follows on each of the four tasks and constitutes their core. During this phase, instructors should always draw their learners’ attention to the common ground shared by participants in the activities and create an environment where a plurality of opinions can be openly discussed. The debriefing, reflection and deconstruction phases also serve the purpose of emphasizing the non-essentialist view of culture and laying bare the irrationality of the essentialist notion of culture. All the activities introduced fulfil the function of preparing engineering and business students for receiving international visitors and partners at home, for a longer stay abroad, for work at a multi-national corporation and for many situations arising during their future careers. They also offer experienced engineers and managers an opportunity to share and develop their international competence. Finally, they may serve as contributions to the design of a cross-cultural training course by instructors who teach engineering and business students or practising professionals.
Bibliography


Appendix

Overhead Transparency 1 for Activity 1: Work

**General Routines: Instructions (Work)**

- Imagine you work or study in New York City.
- Take the MTA New York City Subway map. Pick a spot on the map where your office is and mark it (Columbia University is in the top left corner on the map).
- Mark a spot where you live.
- Think of 3 actions you perform daily on your way to work/university and 3 that you perform on your way back from work/university.
- Work with a partner and tell each other what you do.

Overhead Transparency 2 for Activity 1: Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Useful Words and Phrases</th>
<th>Possible Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>during/before/after rush hour</td>
<td>buy a newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the morning/afternoon/evening</td>
<td>have a cup of coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to go by car/bus/cab/bike</td>
<td>have breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to go/get to work on foot</td>
<td>pick up a colleague/friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to take the subway</td>
<td>meet with sb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to get on/off a bus / the subway</td>
<td>go shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>call sb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>read a book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>listen to music/the news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>relax in a park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>visit a park, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Handout for Activity 2: National Stereotypes

Read through the example below and discuss the related questions with your colleagues.

**National Stereotypes – One Example**

How dangerous prejudices can be has been recently proved by the statement of Stefano Stefani, Italy’s Deputy Industry Minister for Tourism, who wrote in a newspaper article about German tourists that they were “stereotyped blonds with hypernationalist pride … who noisily invade our beaches”. He added that Martin Schulz, a German member of the European Parliament, “probably grew up … drinking gigantic amounts of beer and gorging himself on fried potatoes”. The powerful German tabloid Bild suggested that Stefani had “spaghetti for brains”. 19

(1) Which characteristics are explicitly and implicitly attributed to Germans and Italians in the quotations above?

(2) How would you describe the language used?

(3) What is the most disturbing aspect of the example for you?

(4) Which other examples of national stereotypes have you noticed recently? Describe them briefly.

(5) How are Austrians / citizens from your home country usually seen by foreigners? Tell your colleagues about your experiences.

(6) How do you feel when somebody expects you to live up to their image of a “typical” Austrian / citizen of your home country?

(7) Where do national stereotypes come from and how are they spread?

(8) Why is it difficult to argue that national stereotypes are generally true?

Handout for Activity 3: Food and Dining Out

**Food and Dining Out**

You are going to work in groups of different sizes. Pick one of the situations listed below and act it out. Before you start, look at the phrases you may need for the situation you choose. After you have acted out a situation with your group, pick another one and change groups if necessary. You do not have to write down anything but should have a fluent conversation.
Time per situation: 5 minutes for preparation and 5 minutes for simulating each situation
Time for reflection with whole class: 10 minutes

**Situation 1 (three students)**
You are in a restaurant together with an Egyptian business partner. Your partner does not eat pork and does not drink any alcohol. When the waiter/waitress comes to take your orders, you suggest that you share a bottle of red wine. Your partner is not pleased. Solve the problem and order your meals.

**Situation 2 (four students)**
You and your colleague are on a business trip through America and have been invited to dinner by an Indian project partner from Calcutta. At the restaurant, your colleague tries to convince your project partner that he/she should try a juicy steak. Your project partner feels offended and your colleague does not understand why somebody would not want to try out the local cuisine when travelling abroad. Solve the problem and order your meals from the waiter/waitress.

**Situation 3 (three students)**
You have invited a French business partner to dinner. He/She is a strict vegetarian who does not even eat cheese and milk. Together with the waiter/waitress, you should find something suitable on the menu. Order your meals.

**Situation 4 (four students)**
You and your colleague have dinner with a potential U.S. American business partner, whom you have just met at an international fair. You start talking about the world economy, in the course of which your business partner tells you how much money he/she earns. You would like to start ordering your meals, but your business partner also asks you how much you make. You had rather not talk about your salaries to somebody you have just met, but you do not want to offend your business partner either. Order your meals from the waiter/waitress.

**Situation 5 (four students)**
You have the pleasure of taking care of two visitors from Israel who want to invest a lot of money into your company. When they look through the menu, they seem to be a bit disappointed by the selection of dishes offered. You have chosen the restaurant and feel responsible for their well-being. You have to find out what they do not like about the
restaurant. The waiter/waitress is becoming impatient.

Useful Phrases

**Booking a table**
I’d like to reserve a table for five for tonight, please.
I’d like to book a table in the non-smoking section for 8 pm on Wednesday. We’re a party of three.

**Ordering the meal**
We’ll be ordering à la carte.
Do you have any foreign-language menus?
For starters, I’ll have the tomato salad, and for the main course I’d like the beef.
I’ll have a glass of red/white/rosé wine, please.
We’d like a bottle of the French Bordeaux, please.
Which wine would you recommend to go with the fish?
Could I have potatoes instead of rice, please?
Please, feel free to order a full menu/whatever you like. (to a guest you are paying for)

**During the meal**
I’d like to propose a toast to our host Tom. Thank you for this lovely evening.
Would anyone like a dessert?
I think I’ll have a cup of coffee. Would anyone like to join me?

**Problems**
Sorry, but I had ordered the fish, not the lamb.
I’m afraid the wine is too warm.
Sorry, but the steak is overdone.
I’m afraid my chicken is a bit undercooked. Could I have another one?
We’ve been waiting for our order for half an hour already.

**Paying**
Could I have the bill, please?
Do you take Visa?
Is the tip included?
Can we split the bill, please?
This one is on me.
You’re invited by our company.

Handout for Activity 4: Gender

**This Is a Woman’s World, Isn’t It?**
“The woman who can create her own job is the woman who will win fame and fortune”.

Pioneer American pilot Amelia Earhart (1897–1937)

Read through the statements below on your own and rank them: I strongly agree; I agree; neutral; I disagree; I strongly disagree.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Your Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Women should earn the same salaries for the same jobs as men.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) There should be a certain percentage of female employees in a company, at least 50%.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) Men and women should both stay at home for the same amount of time when they have children (maternity and paternity leave).</td>
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<td>(4) Men and women are equally suited for all jobs and kinds of work.</td>
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<td>(5) Terms such as <em>career woman</em> and <em>working girl</em> are offensive.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(6) Household duties should be equally shared between men and women.</td>
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<td>(7) Arranged marriages help establish and maintain good rapport between families.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(8) Polyandry and polygamy are acceptable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(9) Premarital sexual intercourse is acceptable for men and women alike.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(10) Men and women should be allowed to dress as they want for business meetings, no matter whether they want to wear shorts or a traditional costume / a short skirt or the burka.</td>
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