

lem is discussed with addressees of various contexts. It is of course possible to also contact and query politicians or relevant authorities for an opinion.

- Guidelines for the correspondence are previously agreed upon (e. g. a series of common issues) to ensure that the results are comparable.
- Once a sufficient number of responses have been received, they will be analyzed, grouped and presented (e. g. on a poster) and discussed.

## 3.7 Language use: different, depending on the context!

### Goal

*Part of the competence for action and the competence for communication is that one conducts oneself not only in terms of language, but also in terms of gestures, mimicry, language distance, etc. in a manner that befits the respective situation or social constellation. The appropriate rules are largely unwritten and culture-specific. To deliberate about them and to experiment with them strengthens the social and communicative competence.*

3<sup>rd</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> grade

20–45 minutes



Procedure:

- Possible introduction to the topic:
  - A stimulating learning situation (e. g. How does “Sie” (formal you address) and “Du” (informal you address) actually function in our language and in the language of the (German-speaking) country where we now reside?).
  - An episode about a communicative misunderstanding (e. g. a Sie/ Du blunder) ; standing too close to the person talked to (proxemics), voice level too loud, greeting too informal).
  - A good introduction to the topic also occurs when the instructor purposely models a violation of the unwritten rules of communication (too formal or too sloppy use of language with a student; proxemics or standing too far from the person addressed, speaking too softly or too loudly...).
- Discussion of the topic, raising awareness of the unwritten norms which, in addition to grammatical comprehensibility, must be observed to ensure a functional communication.
- Scenic experiments with group-specific use of language and non-verbal elements (body contact, loudness, gestures, mimicry, proxemics, etc.): What is “appropriate” in communicating with friends, with authorities, with grandparents, with siblings, etc.? What would be out of place or inappropriate? why? Also consider the use of dialect and standard language in this context.
- Compare the norms in terms of formal/informal address, loudness, speaker distance, body contact, shaking hands, kissing when greeting, etc. in the culture of origin and in the immigration country. Where are there important differences? What would you particularly recommend to someone who is newly immigrating? (Possibly compile a written check list.)
- Gestures: which gestures are customary (or taboo) in the country where we currently reside; which ones are “international”?