8 International trade

- expressions for checking understanding
- correcting and reformulating
- roleplaying a negotiation

8.4 Speaking Negotiations – diplomacy

Discussion

1 **Read the information in the box. With a partner, discuss whether you think the countries and regions below are *L* (low-context) or *H* (high-context) cultures.**

	Low-context cultures	High-context cultures
Focus of negotiations	problem-solving, deadlines are important	relationship-building, time is flexible
Communication style	direct, verbal, few non-verbal signals	indirect, dislike conflict, avoid saying no
Business organization	individuals more important than the group	group more important than individuals

☐ China ☐ USA ☐ Australia ☐ N Europe
☐ Middle East ☐ Latin America ☐ UK ☐ Japan

What does this mean for international negotiators?

Listening for gist

2 2:67–2:69 **Listen to three negotiation extracts. What went wrong in each case? Think about high- and low-context cultures, as well as the actual phrases used.**

3 2:70–2:72 **Listen to alternative versions of the three negotiations. How do the negotiators avoid misunderstandings?**

4 2:70–2:72 **With a partner, choose the correct options in the checklist of useful expressions for being diplomatic. Then listen again and check your answers.**

Useful expressions: Diplomatic negotiations

Checking understanding

Correct me if I'm *impolite / wrong / inappropriate*, but you seem to be saying that ...
Have I *got / seen / caught* this right?
Would I be *true / fair / right* in saying that ...?
If I've understood *just / correctly / really* ...

Correcting misunderstandings

I'm afraid there seems to be a slight *misunderstanding / mistake / mishap*.
I'm sorry, that isn't quite what I *want / meant / expected*.
Perhaps I haven't made myself *sense / right / clear*.

Reformulating

Let me put it another *angle / way / time*.
What I was trying to *say / mean / tell* was ...
Allow me to *repeat / rephrase / reform* that.
What I *meant / told / expressed* was ...

Diplomatic language

5 **Match the direct remarks 1–4 with diplomatic forms that were used in Exercise 3.**

Direct	Diplomatic
1 I'm not ready to make a decision.	a) Perhaps we should talk again in a few days?
2 This project is totally unrealistic.	b) I think we might need more time to explore all the implications.
3 Let's finish the meeting now.	c) We would be very happy to give you the same terms as Auckland, if you were in a position to order the same volume.
4 We won't pay for shipping unless you give us a bigger order.	d) I'm afraid we feel there are still quite a large number of difficulties to face in this project.