



## Culture & Language Preparation Case Study

### Excerpt from the data:

*"My flight arrived pretty late into Shanghai and I had to get a taxi into the city because the bus had finished. And I actually felt really vulnerable because I went up to the taxi desk and they told me it was three times as much as I [had expected to pay], ...so I walked off and they all ran after me and then this other type came out and he's was even more expensive; and I'm thinking okay, what do I do now? I've got to get to the hotel and then eventually negotiate this rate ...and randomly get into a taxi with some guy who speaks no English. [So] I said to the guy who had taken my money... 'Look, he's not going to ask me for money at the other end is he, because I paid you? And they're like 'Oh no, it'd be fine', so it was a little bit [unsettling]..." - Postgraduate student, China Study Tour.*

### Scenario

Students participating in a study tour to China are responsible for organising their own transport and finding their way to the meeting point in Shanghai. No basic language instruction is provided prior to departure and no information is provided on norms of behaviour relating to negotiating prices for goods or services. The single pre-departure workshop covers only the most basic information relating to study tour fees and course requirements.

### Points for discussion

1. Why is knowing even a few basic words of the host culture's language important for both staff and students?
2. What are some simple strategies for basic language instruction in pre-departure workshops?
3. What are some simple strategies for introducing students to important cultural practices during pre-departure?
4. Brainstorm some scenarios which students would be likely to encounter when they first arrive in a new country (e.g., transport to hotel, changing money, eating at a restaurant).
5. How might students take responsibility for this aspect of their preparation?



The *Generic Preparation Guide for Staff & Students Going on Short-Term Study Tours to Asia* is brought to you by the *Ready for Take-Off: Preparing students for intercultural learning in Asia* project. To find out more about the project, you can:

- Visit the project website <http://interculturallearningasia.edu.au/>
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