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HCOM 312

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[Reading response - Part 1](https://ilearn.csumb.edu/mod/turnitintool/view.php?id=232938)

We live in a world of differences, in customs and traditions, which in many cases are based on the religious and political systems of different countries which determine people’s behaviors. In these two chapters in Tannen books, we can see how such behaviors affect life, directly and indirectly, at personal and social level. As I was reading the different situations presented by Tannen, I could see the different stages in my life and of people I have met. It is amazing how those behaviors (good and bad, according to the perspectives of others), are passed from generation to generation either by tradition or culture.

I think as humans, we tend to excuse bad habits, always finding excuses for what we do. In my case, my father drank a lot when my brothers and I were small, and while he never attempted to hit anyone, he was coming down as verbally aggressive. My mother accepted his aggressiveness because, according to her, it was normal for men to drink. My mother grew up in a poor family in Mexico, where it is customary for a man to be the boss and the woman is subjected to be more than a wife, a servant. From when she was very small, my mother took care of her siblings, cooking, washing, and to all that "a wife" is supposed to do. This was seen as normal, since it was seeing from a traditional point of view and the limited schooling they had, which was filled with ignorance. It didn’t allow them to see that they were subjected to patriarchal machismo. My father was a person who intimidated others as speak. He never told us I love you or hug us, but we were confident that he loved us. My oldest brother is the same way with his children. When he talks to them he is loud, he uses profanity with them, and street language. Once, when my first child was three, I visited him, I was carrying my child and then I kissed him on the mouth, and my brother stated that my kid was going to turn out gay once older. Since I had already studied at a university, it helped me to think in a more critical way, to have a more open mind and be tolerant towards others. I could have started a discussion with him about tolerance, ignorance, and respect, but I decided to put myself in his shoes. My brother is not guilty of having learned that from my father or have left school to work and help my father to support the family. Now when I visit him, very respectfully I try to correct their mistakes, not by saying that is bad, but by example. I love my children, I like being with them, hugging them, and kissing them. I do the same with my nephews, that perhaps, my brother took this as an example. As I read the book, I realized that all cultures are different. When these cultures are new to us, we may not understand them, because they do not know anything about them because they do not give us the time to know them. Maybe the behavior of these cultures irritate us or please us, that depends on the importance we give them the perspective in which we see it. When I lived in Mexico, I never saw an African-American until I migrated to the United States. Not knowing the language and listening to them talk, gave me the impression they were bad people, intimidating, violent, and dangerous. I also thought they were lazy and dirty. When I decided to enter the wrestling team in middle school, I started to know them, then to interact with them, and to make friends with some of them. It was then that I realized that they were also human, and the only thing that make them different from me was their skin color, which they did not choose.

Living in this country has made me be more open-minded. I helped me not to judge by appearances. I preferred to know and learn the culture of these people. It's easier to learn the reasons for the different behaviors between races. If we do this, we can increase the knowledge in our brain. We can live in harmony, and if we travel the world, we will know how to react to different traditions, religions and behaviors of people outside the United States.