

Unit

3



Human Relations

- A - The Journey**
- B - Another Woman**
- C - The Never-Never Nest**

3. Human Relations

Look at the picture and read the following excerpt from the diary of a 72-year-old man. Answer the questions that follow.



As I sit here alone and waiting
I gaze at people passing me by.
I try to smile and reach out to them
But no one notices; no one waits.
They look to me like I am nothing -
Are they afraid to be seen saying “Hi”
to an old man like me?

1. What is the excerpt about?
2. How do people respond to the old man’s plight?
3. How should old people be treated so that they do not feel neglected?

Oral Discourse: Description - Describe the picture in your own words. (Reflect on the theme, people, events, about the old man etc.)

The Journey

After spending a leisurely Sunday at home, the very thought of returning to work on Monday is tiring. Lethargy creeps in if the holiday continues over an extended period. That is how I felt when I was preparing to return to my place of work after spending six months at home. The fact that I was to leave behind my newly-wed wife and go to a far-off place did not help either. Obviously I did not want to go.

However, I finally did decide to go. I did not have much to carry by way of luggage – just a trunk. Ours is a hilly terrain, without any motorable roads – and there is no certainty that we are ever going to have any roads. In any case, while coming home we do not carry bedding. Besides, I had come home this time round for a special purpose: to get married. My parents had arranged my marriage, according to the customs of our tribal society. Time flew, and five months into my marriage I realized it. Initially I thought of extending my leave – even taking unpaid leave. But after some dilly-dallying, I finally decided against it because marriage had increased my responsibilities and I had got into debt.

On my way home from the bus stop, my trunk had been carried by a porter. The problem now was we couldn't find anyone who could help me carry the trunk to the bus stop. At another time of the year, we would have easily found someone to help me, but now most of the villagers were busy in the fields. Nobody had time to spare for me. In fact, carrying the trunk should not have been such a worry for me except that my education had made me shun physical labour. After all, I was a government officer and the idea of people seeing me carry my own luggage was not at all amusing. Otherwise, for a young man like me it should not have been an issue to carry a 20-kilo chest on my back.

Finally, my father came up with a solution. 'Don't worry. I myself will see you off at Dirang.'

I protested. How could I allow my old father to carry my trunk? What would people think? What would they say? But I failed to dissuade him. It was decided that father would carry the chest.

A large crowd gathered at our place the day I was to leave. People had come to wish me luck. It was 10.20 when I left for Dirang. My father had already left. As I had to do a bit of catching up, I walked fast. Three kilometres down the road, I caught up with my father. Father said, 'You are late. Would you like to rest for some time?'



Having walked fast I was tired. Moreover, I had to cross two hills on the way up to the spot. I quickly sat down on a rock. My father laughed at my plight.

‘So this little distance has tired you? Rest for a while. But we have to be in time for the bus.’

Father was quiet for some time. He thoughtfully looked at the sun for a moment, and then his eyes fell on the can of home-made wine that I was carrying. Wetting his lips with his tongue he said in a matter-of-fact manner, ‘I am thirsty’.

I gave him the can of wine. He poured himself a mug and handed me the can. He drank all of it at one go. He then arranged the belt that was attached to the trunk carefully on his forehead. So, this was the picture: my father carrying my luggage on his back and me following him with a tiny bag in my hand. We were walking up a narrow hilly road, and neither of us uttered a word as if we were strangers who spoke different languages. I did not know what was going on in his mind. From time to time it crossed my mind that it was improper for me to let father carry the luggage. I wanted to tell him that I would like to carry the trunk myself, but my guilt and shame did not allow me to do so. This self-consciousness had probably to do with my education, the white-collar job that I had, or quite simply my

pride. Somehow, I had the feeling that if I carried the luggage, my father and my people, in fact the whole world would laugh at me and I would be belittled.

Father had provided for my education, and I had been able to realize his dreams. My parents were truly proud of me. It was through me that they had earned a greater degree of admiration and respect from the villagers. My father would not like to see me carrying a trunk on my back and would be very hurt if I did so. I concluded that it would be better to let him carry it. Father was used to carrying luggage anyway. He was stronger and more skilled than me in these matters. I had never got used to physical labour having stayed in hostels right from my childhood. So, in spite of my youth and strength, I was physically useless. I continued walking silently with father. We rested at two places on the way and had our tiffin but we hardly talked. Finally, we reached Dirang. The bus from Tawang had not yet reached Dirang and so we had some time in hand. We entered a tea shop and sat facing each other. Father appeared tired. I felt sorry for him but couldn't bring myself to say anything. I asked the waiter to get us two cups of tea. Just as I was going to take my first sip, I heard father's voice, 'Do you have a pair of old shoes?'

'Why?' I asked.

'The road is uneven and full of pebbles. It hurts while walking.'

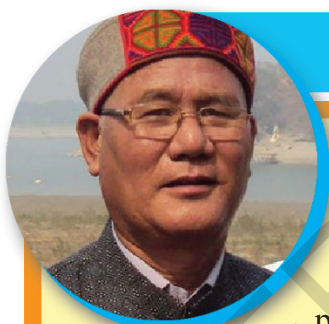


I looked at father's bare feet. Never having worn shoes, his feet had developed cracks and somehow resembled those of an elephant. I noticed this for the first time. I hadn't noticed that the road was uneven. I didn't have to since I was wearing a pair of hunting boots. I checked my wallet and saw I still had around Rs.40 with me. A pair of canvas shoes would cost around Rs.12 and the remaining amount would be enough for me to get to Bomdila.

My father protested. 'Give me an old pair. You don't have to spend money on new shoes.' I couldn't convince him to buy a new pair. Reluctantly I gave him the hunting boots I was wearing. I then took out my pair of leather shoes from the trunk, and noticed my father's face lighting up with contentment. Suddenly he looked at me and said, 'Take care. Write to us...'

Father wanted to say something but the bus started moving. I saw my father gradually receding into the distance. I saw that the road we had come by looked like a giant motionless rope. Father would use the same road to go back home. Simultaneously our journeys started in two opposite directions, with me seated in the luxurious seat of a bus and father walking back with weary legs on the pebble-strewn road.

- *Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi (Translated by D P Nath)*



About the author

Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi (born in May, 1952) is a prominent name in Assamese literature. Though he grew up in poverty, he studied well and entered Arunachal Pradesh Civil Service and was later elevated to the Indian Administrative Service. He writes fiction, drama and essays in Assamese and English. He has received a national recognition for his novel 'Mouna Ounth Mukhar Hriday', which won the Sahitya Academy award in 2005. Many of Thongchi's novels, including *Sonam*, deal with the cultural life of the Monpa and the Sherdukpen tribes of Arunachal Pradesh.

Glossary

lethargy (<i>n</i>)	:	the state of not having any energy or enthusiasm for doing things
creeps (<i>v</i>)	:	develops very slowly
dilly-dallying (<i>v</i>)	:	taking a long time to do something, go somewhere or make a decision
shun (<i>v</i>)	:	to avoid something or somebody
dissuade (<i>v</i>)	:	to convince somebody not to do something
plight (<i>n</i>)	:	a difficult and sad situation
guilt (<i>n</i>)	:	the unhappy feelings caused by knowing that you have done something wrong
self-consciousness (<i>n</i>)	:	feelings of nervousness about what other people think of you
contentment (<i>n</i>)	:	a feeling of happiness or satisfaction
weary (<i>adj</i>)	:	very tired

Comprehension

I. Answer the following questions.

1. 'After spending a leisurely Sunday at home, the very thought of returning to work on Monday is tiring.' Do you agree? Have you ever felt so?
2. The last sentence of the first paragraph and the first sentence of the second paragraph appear to contradict each other. What could be the reason for the change in the decision?
3. Why did the author get into debt? Think of some possible reasons.
4. Why was the author reluctant to carry his own luggage? What would you do if you were in the author's place?

5. The author feared that the whole world would laugh at him if he carried the trunk. Was the fear imaginary or real? Give reasons for your answer.
6. Choose one sentence from the story that best expresses the author's false prestige. Support your answer with details from the story.
7. What does the phrase 'opposite directions' in the last sentence suggest?
8. How was the story told? Were the events narrated in the order in which they had happened? Spot the sentences where the course of narration changed its directions. How effective was it?

II. The following ideas belong to certain paragraphs in the story. Identify the paragraphs and put these numbers against them.

1. The author enjoyed his married life.
2. The author tried to convince himself that he had not done anything wrong.
3. The author was ashamed of making his father carry his trunk.
4. The author looks at himself and his father as two travellers taking two different roads.

III. The following statements are false. Correct them.

1. The author offered to carry the trunk for some time.
2. The author could decide on whether to allow his father to carry the trunk or not.
3. The author took unpaid leave.
4. The father was not happy with the old shoes his son gave him.

Vocabulary

I. Look at these words from the story:

1. newly-wed wife
2. bus stop
3. forehead

They are all compound words. A compound word is a union of two or more words to convey a specific idea or special meaning that is not as clearly or quickly conveyed by separated words. As shown above, compound words may be hyphenated, written open (as separate words), or written solid (closed). The use of compounding in English is an evolving

process. As expressions become more popular or adopt special meanings, they follow a gradual evolution from two or more separate or hyphenated words to single words.

audio visual	audio-visual	audiovisual
copy editor	copy-editor	copyeditor
wild life	wild-life	wildlife

The words in the first, second and third columns are called 'open compounds', 'hyphenated compounds' and 'closed compounds' respectively. In this unit we focus on hyphenated compounds.

A hyphenated compound is a combination of words joined by a hyphen or hyphens. Here, the hyphen aids understanding and readability and ensures correct pronunciation. Words are hyphenated mainly to express the idea of a unit and to avoid ambiguity.

Pick out all the compound words from the story and group them under the headings as explained above.

Grammar

I. In this story the author used the past perfect (had + past participle) in many sentences. If you observe the following sentences from the story and the rules given under them, you will understand why and how the past perfect is used.

1. It was 10.20 My father had already left. (para 6)

When an action takes place before a point of time in the past, the action is expressed in the past perfect tense. (Sometimes the point of time can be understood from the earlier sentences and other contextual clues.)

2. Finally we reached Dirang. The bus from Tawang had not yet reached Dirang.(para 11)

When two actions in the past are clearly separated by time, the earlier action is expressed in the past perfect tense.

3. I quickly sat down on a rock. My father laughed at my plight. (para 7)

When two actions in the past happen simultaneously, both of them are expressed in the past tense.

4. a) Sunitha never saw a bear before she was transferred to Maredumilli. (not from the story)

b) Shindh closed the doors because she heard loud noises from outside.

c) I never met him after I left India.

Normally, when the time relation is unambiguous, (by the use of before, after, because, etc.), the simple past (past perfect is optional) is used to refer to both past actions.

Identify the tense and give reasons for the tense used.

1. I had come home this time round for a special purpose: to get married. My parents had arranged my marriage according to the customs of our tribal society.
2. Time flew, and five months into my marriage I realized it.
3. But after some dilly-dallying I finally decided against it because marriage had increased my responsibilities and I had got into debt.
4. On my way home from the bus stop my trunk had been carried by a porter. (para 3)
5. A large crowd gathered at our place the day I was to leave. People had come to wish me luck. (para 6)
6. Father was quiet for some time. He thoughtfully looked at the sun for a moment, and then his eyes fell on the can of home-made wine that I was carrying. (para 9)
7. I gave him the can of wine. He poured himself a mug and handed me the can. He drank all of it at one go. He then arranged the belt that was attached to the trunk carefully on his forehead. (para 10)
8. I had never got used to physical labour having stayed in hostels right from my childhood. (para 11)
9. His feet had developed cracks and somehow resembled those of an elephant. (para 14)
10. I noticed this for the first time. I hadn't noticed that the road was uneven. (para 14)
11. I checked my wallet and saw I still had around Rs.40 with me. (para 14)
12. I then took out my pair of leather shoes from the trunk, and noticed my father's face lighting up with contentment. (para 15)
13. I saw that the road we had come by looked like a giant motionless rope. (para 16)
14. He stopped his business after he became old.
15. I never ate 'haleem' before I visited Hyderabad.

Writing

I. In the story 'The Journey' the author says "... my education had made me shun physical labour". This is an adverse effect of education. Now write an essay on 'The Adverse Effects of Education'. Here are some points:

Effect on

- doing some work that involves physical labour
- dress / fashion
- family relationships
- giving respect to elders
- the treatment of illiterate people

Study Skills

Scientists believe that we have various kind of intelligence. All intelligences are equally valuable and present in every individual, girl or boy, man or woman, though some intelligence is better developed than others in each one of us. Some of the intelligences have been detailed below. There is also Naturalistic Intelligence – Love for animals, plants and Spiritual Intelligence – Belief in God, thinking about life and its purpose. Find out which intelligences are better developed in you, and which ones you would like to develop. Write down your findings as shown in the example after the table.

VISUAL AND SPATIAL INTELLIGENCE	VERBAL/ LINGUISTIC INTELLIGENCE	MATHEMATICAL/ LOGICAL INTELLIGENCE
<p>You like to: think in pictures, create mental images to remember things. You enjoy looking at maps, charts, pictures, videos, and movies.</p> <p>You are good at: puzzle building, reading, writing, understanding maps, charts and graphs, a sense of direction, sketching, painting, fixing or making objects, understanding pictures.</p> <p>You can become a: navigator, sculptor, artist, inventor, architect, interior designer, mechanic, engineer.</p>	<p>You like to: use words and language. You speak well and think in words rather than pictures.</p> <p>You are good at: speaking, writing, story telling, listening, explaining, teaching, using humour, understanding the meaning of words, remembering information, convincing someone of your point of view.</p> <p>You can become a: poet, journalist, writer, teacher, lawyer, politician, translator.</p>	<p>You like to: use reason, logic and numbers. Always curious about the world around, you ask lots of questions and like to do experiments.</p> <p>You are good at: problem solving, solving puzzles, experimenting, questioning and wondering about natural events, doing mathematics calculations, working with geometric shapes.</p> <p>You can become a: scientist, engineer, computer programmer, researcher, accountant, mathematician.</p>

BODILY KINAESTHETIC INTELLIGENCE	MUSICAL INTELLIGENCE	INTERPERSONAL INTELLIGENCE
<p>You like to: understand others. You control your body movements and handle objects skillfully. You have a good sense of balance and can catch or hit a ball well, and like to dance. You like to move around while learning.</p> <p>You are good at: dancing, physical coordination, sports, crafts, acting, miming, using your hands to create or build. You express emotions through your body.</p> <p>You can become a: dancer, athlete, physical education teacher, actor, firefighter, crafts-person.</p>	<p>You like to: play and enjoy music. You think about sounds, rhythms and patterns. You immediately respond to music either appreciating or criticising what you hear.</p> <p>You are good at: singing, whistling, playing musical instruments, recognising tunes, composing music, remembering melodies, understanding the structure and rhythm of music.</p> <p>You can become a: musician, disc jockey, singer, composer.</p>	<p>You like to: try to see things from other people's point of view in order to understand how they think or feel. You are a good organiser and manage to get other people to cooperate and work as a team.</p> <p>You are good at: seeing things from others' view, listening, understanding other people's moods and feelings, solving problems, cooperating with groups, noticing people's moods, communicating, building trust.</p> <p>You can become a: counsellor, salesperson, politician, business person, teacher.</p>

Example: I like to speak a lot and I enjoy music too. I am very good at telling a story. I am also good at remembering information as well as melodies. I understand the meaning of words, but I cannot understand maps and charts. Therefore, I have good verbal intelligence and musical intelligence though my visual intelligence is poor. I can become a writer, teacher, singer or a disc jockey.

Listening

Listen to the story read by your teacher and answer the questions that follow.

I. Read the statements given below and mark True or False against each of them.

1. Pothuraju went to far-off lands to enjoy free life.
2. Ganiraju asked his father to give his share of property.
3. Pothuraju had a lavish life from the beginning.
4. Dhanaraju did not care about Pothuraju.

II. Which of the following is the most appropriate title for the story you have just listened to.

- a) A Rich Son b) Repentance c) Two Sons