



Pragmatics and its Cross-cultural Perspectives

*6 creds.,
1st semester*

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Aims and Objectives

When students have successfully completed this course, they should be able to:

- Have an appreciation of the functionality of language use from the social, cultural and cognitive perspectives that permeate communicative processes.
- Grasp pragmatic concepts such as presupposition and speech acts in the way they function in different cultures.
- Understand pragmatic failure due to pragmatic transfer of speech acts from one language to another.
- Comprehend the relevance of cultural scripts.
- Understand politeness systems and have a broad knowledge of politeness models.
- Connect politeness systems with the domain of cross-cultural politeness.
- Have an awareness of communicative styles in different cultures, as related to a range of parameters (individualistic vs. collectivistic communities, etc.)
- Analyse interactions in cross-cultural situations using this framework of conceptual tools.

Course Program

1. Introduction to Pragmatics.
2. Introduction to important pragmatic concepts in this module: presupposition, speech acts, pragmatic transfer, cultural script, pragmatic failure.
3. Introduction to politeness models and to politeness as a system.
4. Introduction to cross-cultural politeness and intercultural interaction.
5. Illustrations of politeness systems in different cultures.

Required Readings

- Bargiela-Chiappini, F. & Kádár, D.Z. (eds) 2010. *Politeness across Cultures*. Palgrave.
 Brown, P. & Levinson, S. 1987 (2nd ed.) *Politeness. Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 Spencer-Oatey, H. 2009. *Intercultural Interaction*. Palgrave.
 Thomas, J. 1995. *Meaning in Interaction. An Introduction to Pragmatics*. Essex: Longman.

Methodology

Class meetings will consist of lectures, group discussions, and oral presentations. Reading of selected texts available on Studium is expected of students. Illustrations will be also provided and commented upon. Once the main contents have been presented, students (in small groups) will choose a research topic on cross-cultural communication and present it orally to the class. They will receive specific feedback on their work, that they will have to incorporate in their final written essay.

Assessment

Students will be evaluated on a combination of several criteria: attendance, politeness in class, participation, oral presentation of their research project and a written essay of this research project.

Participation and oral presentation of their research project: 75 %

Final written project : 25 %

Bibliography and Resources

- Bargiela-Chiappini, F. & Kádár, D.Z. (eds) 2010. *Politeness across Cultures*. Palgrave.
 Brown, P. & Levinson, S. 1987 (2nd ed.) *Politeness. Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 Kasper, G. & Rose, K. R. 2002. *Pragmatic Development in a Second Language*. Oxford: Blackwell.
 Spencer-Oatey, H. 2009. *Intercultural Interaction*. Palgrave.

On-line resources will be given on Studium.

Robinson, D. 2006. *Introducing Performative Pragmatics*. London and New York: Routledge.

Thomas, J. 1995. *Meaning in Interaction. An Introduction to Pragmatics*. Essex: Longman.

Verschueren, et. al. (eds), 2003. *Handbook of Pragmatics*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
