

Pragmatics and its Cross-Cultural Perspectives

6 creds.,
1st semester

Dr. Consuelo Montes Granado
Universidad de Salamanca
cmg@usal.es



Aims and Objectives

This course aims to provide students with a deep understanding of cross cultural communication. A background in Linguistics/Pragmatics will facilitate following the course

After a brief introduction to the scope of Pragmatics, students will be taught key concepts and conceptual frameworks which will be useful to understand the field of cross cultural pragmatics and the focus on cross cultural politeness. Textual and multimodal illustrations will be presented. Readings will also be required in parallel to class explanations.

This will be the first part of the course, whose aim is to have students acquainted with the necessary background to move to the second stage of the course, when they will have to apply the acquired knowledge to analyse and compare two, three or even more countries of their choice from the perspectives presented in class.

As a final objective, students are expected to produce a personal appraisal of key concepts and of set readings and relate them to their personal experience in cross-cultural communication.

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Have a new understanding of cross-cultural communication
- Have a new sense of cross-cultural politeness
- Have the ability to read specific literature in this field of study
- Have had the experience of teamworking with international classmates
- Write a personal appraisal on key issues pertaining to this field and their personal experience.

Course Program

Theoretical contents:

- Brief introduction to Pragmatics
- Introduction to some useful pragmatic concepts in this module: speech acts, pragmatic transfer
- Introduction to politeness in the field of Pragmatics
- Cross-cultural politeness. Illustrations.
- Cultural dimensions which have an impact on understanding cross-cultural communication
- Illustrations of theoretical concepts, theories, dimensions in several domains such as business encounters, cross-cultural negotiations in the Military, educational settings, etc.

- Discussion of set readings

Practical part:

- Group Project where students will have to apply what they have learned to analyse and compare communication in two, three, four or more countries of their choice.
- Individual appraisal of key concepts and of set readings. Students will also have to relate them to their personal experience in cross-cultural communication.

Methodology

First part of the course:

Methodology: class sessions led by the teacher. Explanations + Illustrations with multimodal materials, embedded on Studium

In parallel, students are required to individually engage in set readings to deepen into this abstract field of study and fully understand key concepts.

Methodology: autonomous individual reading

Second stage of the course: the practical part:

Methodology: Project-based learning and Team-based learning. Collaborative learning

Group work with their international classmates will be compulsory and will not be substituted by any other activity. The group will work like a team and will explore in depth a range of issues related to cross-cultural dimensions in communication, showing analytical and critical thinking skills.

Oral presentation:

Each group of students will deliver a final oral presentation, where they will show that they have achieved the aims of the course. Students will also show their public speaking skills in English.

Final out of class individual practice:

Finally, students will also be required to write an appraisal showing their understanding of key concepts and of set readings and connecting them to their personal experience in cross cultural communication.

Methodology: Autonomous student practice: Reading set readings + writing a personal appraisal

Assessment

The final mark will be the combination of:

- a test (25%),
- a final oral presentation (50%)
- a final personal appraisal (25%).

Active participation will be appreciated.

Mastering public speaking skills in English is an essential part of the assessment system. Due to individual differences, in the group Project presentation, each student will obtain an individual mark.

Understanding this specific field of study and showing the ability to write and argue using pragmatic concepts is the foundation for a good personal appraisal.

Bibliography and Resources

Haugh M, Kádár DZ, Terkourafi M, eds. (2021). *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociopragmatics*. Cambridge University Press.

Kecskes, I. (Ed.). (2022). *The Cambridge Handbook of Intercultural Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sifianou M, Tzanne A. (2021). Face, Facework and Face-Threatening Acts. In: Haugh M, Kádár DZ, Terkourafi M, eds. *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociopragmatics*. Cambridge Handbooks in Language and Linguistics. Cambridge University Press: 249-271.

Spencer-Oatey, H., & Kádár, D. Z. (2021). *Intercultural Politeness: Managing Relations across Cultures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Szende, Tamás, and George Àlàó, eds. (2019). *Pragmatic and Cross-Cultural Competences : Focus on Politeness*. Brussels, Belgium: P. I. E Peter Lang.

Schedule

The course meets several days a week, in the stipulated room on the MA's schedule. We will have 12 two-hour sessions, to be distributed in the four weeks of the first teaching period (first semester).