

# Intercultural Pragmatics: Integrating Diverse Pragmatic Styles in Multicultural Academic Discourse

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## International Conference LANGUAGES AND CULTURES IN TIME AND SPACE 12



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# Aim of the study

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This prime aim of the study is to examine how language is used in academic contexts preserving divergent pragmatic styles for politeness, directness, argumentation and critical engagement in academic communication.

A qualitative analysis of students' e-mails and their communication with professors will be conducted to identify key points of intercultural pragmatic friction. Since different cultures have different norms which are essential to be taught in terms of concrete strategies for pragmatic norms and intercultural communication.

Finally, the paper will conclude that teaching pragmatic norms explicitly can help students navigate academic discourse more effectively by fostering mutual respect for diverse communicative styles without demanding cultural assimilation.

# Outline

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- ❖ Student's and professor's emails examples
- ❖ Defining the terms: intercultural pragmatics, interlanguage pragmatics
- ❖ The pragmatic mismatch in academia
- ❖ Intercultural pragmatic in social life
- ❖ Strategies for integration
- ❖ Conclusion

# Student's emails


Dear Professor Alagozovska,

I'm writing to let you know that I'm having trouble accessing our Teams group. For some reason, I don't have access to the materials and presentations shared there. My friend Julia, however, can access everything without any issues, and we're not sure how to fix this problem.

Could you please check if my account is correctly added to the group?

Thank you very much for your help.

Best regards, Julia Matys

 **Nadica Angelova** 11/7/2025 12:01 PM  
Okay, first question the textbook includes a lot of references by linguists. Would it be okay if I paraphrase some of them in my answers? The second one will the midterm include a section where we need to transcribe words or sentences using the IPA? And the last one will aspiration be covered on the midterm? Thank you for your time

11/7/2025 12:01 PM

Hello Professor Natka, I hope you are having a great summer so far. I needed to ask you something about the majors.

I'd like to learn if there's a possibility of doing BOTH at the same time, to be more clear doing a double major? Since there's a small difference (just 1 subject differs when comparing 2 majors) while learning about one major, Can I also do the other one at the same time having 1 more lecture from the other major? Would I be able to get 2 diplomas? I value and look forward to knowing all about your thoughts on this matter. Thank you.

9/20 11:45 AM

Hello..not really...you have to choose only one.

Tuesday 9:41 AM

Ada, tomorrow's mid term exam will begin at 10.00 o'clock.

Thursday

ADA OZTIRPAN Thursday 8:57 AM

Hello professor, what day and time are you available at school? My mother wants to meet with you.

Thursday 9:01 AM

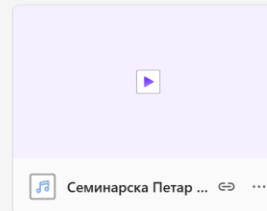
Maybe next Wednesday Ac

ADA OZTIRPAN Thursday 9:09 AM

Thank you professor

PN

Семинарска работа на Петар Начевски. Број на индекс: 162913



5/24 12:41 PM

Thanks Petar, excellent!

# Theories

Positive politeness strategies	Negative politeness strategies
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Notice/attend to hearer's wants</li><li>2. Exaggerate interest/approval</li><li>3. Intensify interest</li><li>4. Use in-group identity markers</li><li>5. Seek agreement</li><li>6. Avoid disagreement</li><li>7. Presuppose/assert common ground</li><li>8. Joke</li><li>9. Assert knowledge of hearer's wants</li><li>10. Offer, promise</li><li>11. Be optimistic</li><li>12. Include both S and H in the activity</li><li>13. Give (or ask for) reasons</li><li>14. Assume/assert reciprocity</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Be conventionally indirect</li><li>2. Question, hedge</li><li>3. Be pessimistic</li><li>4. Minimize imposition</li><li>5. Give deference</li><li>6. Apologize</li><li>7. Impersonalize</li><li>8. State the imposition as a general rule</li><li>9. Nominalize</li><li>10. Go on record as incurring a debt</li></ol>

# What does “intercultural” mean?

**Interaction between individuals from different cultures (countries, regions or groups)!**

*“... for cross-cultural communication to be open and effective, interlocutors must be aware of their boundaries, both personal and cultural, so that they might know the limits on and possibilities for understanding one another in the exchange. That is, in understanding another person and culture you must simultaneously understand yourself. The process is ongoing, an endeavour aimed not at a final transparent understanding of the Other or of the self, but at continued communication, at an ever-widening understanding of both.*

*(Sarris, 1993, p. 6) “*

# What is Intercultural Pragmatics?

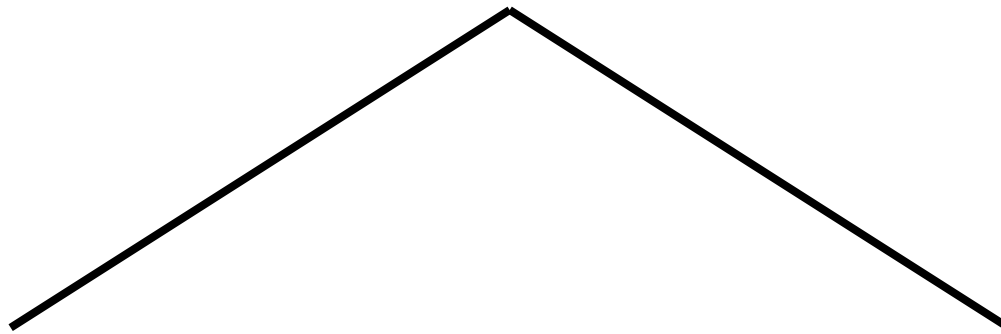
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Definition: The study of how people from different cultural backgrounds use language in social interaction and the effects of their differing pragmatic norms.

- ❑ Speech Acts: How we make requests, give feedback, apologize, disagree.
- ❑ Politeness Strategies: Directness vs. Indirectness.
- ❑ Turn-Taking: In meetings, seminars, and classrooms.

# Intercultural Pragmatics x Interlanguage Pragmatics

- They are both part of *Applied Linguistics*
- The distinction between them, involves differences in perspective (how they view intercultural communication)



## INTERLANGUAGE PRAGMATICS

focuses on *second language*

*acquisition*: a one-way perspective

## INTERCULTURAL PRAGMATICS

is applied *sociolinguistics*: a two-way perspective



# Interlanguage pragmatics (IP)

## One-way perspective

**“It is up to the language learner to acquire the norms of the host community”**

- Together with phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics of the L2, students should acquire the target society’s rules and norms of interaction.
- Only in the past two decades that any effort at all has been made to teach the pragmatic level in formal classroom L2 instruction.

# Intercultural Pragmatics

## Two-way perspective

**“ ICP takes the point of view that individuals from different societies or communities interact according to their own pragmatic norms, often resulting in a conflict of expectations and , ultimately, misunderstandings between the groups.”**

Because intercultural interaction has the potential to bring up stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination against entire groups of people, research in CCP is made necessary to reduce these consequences.

# The "Pragmatic Mismatch" in Academia

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## Areas of Conflict:

1. Classroom Participation: The "value" of speaking up (e.g., Socratic debate vs. respectful listening).

2. Academic Writing: Structuring an argument (linear vs. circular); using citations; expressing a stance (hedging vs. strong claims).

3. Supervisor-Supervisee Relations: Expectations of directness, feedback style (explicit criticism vs. implied suggestions), and hierarchy.

4. Collaborative Work: Decision-making styles and conflict management.



# Intercultural Pragmatics in Education

Attention to:

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1. Mismatch of interactional norms between home and school in order to empower children to succeed.
2. Possibility of language to have various connotation in different cultures.
3. Differences in terms of group power



*Guys, how 'bout going out for a beer after the class?*

This interaction may sound totally inappropriate to some cultures, while it can be quite acceptable in Brazil.

# Intercultural Pragmatics in Social Life

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- Its importance stems from the danger of misperceptions of entire group of people due to differences in world view.
- The consequences of world view differences can be serious for minority groups whose world views are devaluated, resulting in their own loss of self-esteem and group esteem.
- ICP are apt to interfere with the senses of solidarity and harmony between interlocutors from societies with different norms of speech behaviour.

# Strategies for Integration

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## For Instructors & Institutions:

- Make Implicit Norms Explicit: Explain why participation, writing structure, and feedback are done a certain way.
- Scaffold Participation: Use think-pair-share, low-stakes online forums, and pre-submitted questions.
- Diversify Assessment: Value reflective writing and collaborative projects alongside traditional debate.

## For Students & Scholars:

- Develop Metapragmatic Awareness: Reflect on your own style and learn about others.
- Ask Clarifying Questions: "When you said X, did you mean...?"
- Use "I statements": "In my culture, we often... so I interpreted your feedback as..."

# Conclusion

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- Pragmatic diversity is a reality in global academia, not a deficit.
- Mismatches in directness, politeness, and turn-taking can create significant barriers.
- The solution is pragmatic flexibility: The conscious and strategic integration of diverse styles.

The comprehension of differences in communicative conventions, world views, norms of speech behaviour and interpretations, together with one's background, establishes social, educational and workplace networks, supporting successful communication. This understanding ought to start in our surroundings, among families, friends and neighbours.

An illustration of two hands, palms up, holding a small globe of the Earth. The hands are rendered in a realistic style with visible skin texture and fingernails. The globe shows the continents of North and South America. The background is a soft, warm yellow gradient. The text "Thank you" is written in a stylized, outlined font across the center of the globe.

Thank you