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Contemporary Approaches to
Intercultural Pragmatics Research and its
Application in Language Teaching

From Scientific Concepts to Practical Implementation

*Contemporary Approaches to
Intercultural Pragmatics Research
and its Application in Language Teaching –
From Scientific Concepts to
Practical Implementation*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

CLA – Communicative Language Ability

CMC – Computer-Mediated Communication

DCTs – Discourse Completion Tests

EFL – English as a foreign language

FTA – Face-Threatening Act

IC – Intercultural Communication

ICC – Intercultural Competence

IP – Intercultural Pragmatics

RMM – Rapport Management Model

Foreword

The increased mobility of people, ideas, and cultures in the twenty-first century has intensified the need for deeper understanding of how language functions across cultural boundaries. Communication today rarely occurs within a single cultural framework; instead, speakers constantly negotiate meaning with interlocutors who may interpret linguistic forms through different cultural norms, values, and expectations. In this context, intercultural pragmatics has emerged as a crucial field of research that explores how individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds use language in interaction and how meaning is constructed, interpreted, and sometimes misunderstood in intercultural communication.

Contemporary approaches to intercultural pragmatics research emphasize the dynamic, context-sensitive nature of communication. Rather than treating language use as a rigid system of rules, modern scholarship focuses on how pragmatic meaning is collaboratively negotiated through interaction. Researchers increasingly adopt interdisciplinary perspectives, combining insights from linguistics, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, cognitive science, and cultural studies. These perspectives highlight that pragmatic competence involves not only knowledge of linguistic forms but also awareness of cultural conventions, social relationships, and communicative intentions.

In the recent years, advances in research methodologies have significantly enriched the understanding of intercultural pragmatic phenomena. Corpus-based studies, experimental methods, conversation analysis, and ethnographic approaches provide new ways of examining authentic communication across cultures. Digital communication environments, such as online platforms and social media, have further expanded the scope of pragmatic research, revealing new patterns of intercultural interaction and negotiation of meaning.

One of the most important challenges in the field is the transfer of theoretical knowledge into educational practice. While intercultural pragmatics has generated valuable insights into the nature of communication, its application in language teaching remains an evolving area. Language education has traditionally focused on grammatical accuracy and lexical knowledge, often overlooking the pragmatic dimension of communication. However, successful interaction in a second or foreign language requires much more than structural competence; learners must also understand how to use language appropriately in diverse social and cultural contexts.

The integration of intercultural pragmatics into language teaching therefore represents an essential step toward developing learners' communicative competence. Contemporary pedagogical approaches increasingly recognize the importance of raising learners' awareness of pragmatic norms, speech acts, politeness strategies, and culturally embedded communication patterns. Through carefully designed classroom activities, authentic materials, and reflective tasks, students can develop the ability to interpret and produce language in ways that are socially and culturally appropriate.

Equally important is the development of intercultural awareness and sensitivity. Language learners must learn not only how to communicate effectively but also how to interpret differences without judgment and negotiate meaning in situations where cultural expectations may differ. In this sense, intercultural pragmatics teaching contributes not only to linguistic proficiency but also to broader educational goals, including critical thinking, empathy, and intercultural understanding.

The project *Contemporary Approaches to Intercultural Pragmatics Research and Its Application in Language Teaching – From Scientific Concepts to Practical Implementation* was conceived within this broader academic and educational context. Its aim is to bridge the gap between theoretical research and practical application by bringing together scholars, educators, and students in a collaborative exploration of how intercultural pragmatic insights can inform and enrich language teaching practices.

The project began in 2025 and will continue through 2026. It brings together academic staff, researchers, and students from the Faculty of Philology at Goce Delcev University in Stip, as well as colleagues and students from the South East European University in Tetovo. The collaboration between these institutions reflects the multicultural and multilingual character of North Macedonia, where diverse linguistic and cultural communities interact on a daily basis. Such a context provides a particularly meaningful environment for the study of intercultural pragmatics and its role in language education. By fostering cooperation among scholars from different academic and cultural backgrounds, the project contributes to a broader understanding of intercultural communication and promotes the development of innovative teaching practices in language education.

By presenting contemporary scientific concepts alongside examples of pedagogical implementation, this project seeks to support teachers in integrating pragmatic awareness into their teaching and to encourage students to approach language learning as a socially and culturally embedded process. At the same time, it contributes to the ongoing dialogue between research and practice, emphasizing that effective language education must be grounded in both solid theoretical foundations and innovative teaching methodologies.

We hope that the outcomes of this project will serve as a valuable resource for researchers, educators, and students who are interested in advancing the study and teaching of intercultural communication. The growing complexity of global communication makes it increasingly important to equip learners with the skills necessary to navigate linguistic and cultural diversity with confidence and sensitivity.

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Finally, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to all the employees, academic staff, and students of the Faculty of Philology, Goce Delcev University (UGD) in Stip, and the South East European University (SEEU) in Tetovo. We are also immensely grateful to everyone involved in the project's activities. Their support, commitment and collaboration were vital for the successful implementation of this initiative.

Project Leader
Biljana Ivanovska