



LINGUO-CULTURAL AND PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF STUDENT-LECTURER COMMUNICATION: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN MULTICULTURAL EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

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How do linguo-cultural factors shape the communication strategies of students and lecturers in multicultural classrooms?

What pragmatic features, such as politeness strategies and indirect speech acts, are most frequently employed in student-lecturer communication?

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the linguo-cultural and pragmatic features present in student-lecturer interactions within multicultural academic environments. Drawing upon discourse analysis and pragmatic theory, the study investigates how different cultural backgrounds affect communication patterns, power dynamics, and politeness strategies in formal educational settings. It also addresses the pragmatic challenges that arise when lecturers and students from diverse linguistic and cultural contexts engage in academic discourse, with a particular focus on how these interactions impact the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

Introduction: Communication between students and lecturers forms a core component of the educational experience. However, when individuals from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds come together in a classroom, the dynamics of this communication can become complex. The primary aim of this research is to investigate how linguo-cultural factors, such as students' native languages and cultural norms, influence the way they interact with lecturers. Additionally, the thesis explores how these interactions reflect pragmatic strategies related to politeness, face-saving, and power relations. Given the increasing globalization of education, where international students are now a significant part of university classrooms, understanding these interactions is critical for enhancing teaching efficacy and promoting cross-cultural understanding.

Research Questions:

How do linguo-cultural factors shape the communication strategies of students and lecturers in multicultural classrooms?

What pragmatic features, such as politeness strategies and indirect speech acts, are most frequently employed in student-lecturer communication?

In what ways do power dynamics between students and lecturers influence discourse in an academic setting?

How does the cultural background of both students and lecturers affect their perception of effective communication and learning outcomes?

Literature Review:

The literature on intercultural communication and pragmatics provides valuable insights into how cultural norms influence discourse patterns. Studies by Hofstede (1984) and Scollon & Scollon (1995) highlight the importance of power distance and face-saving mechanisms in cross-cultural interactions. This research builds on their work by focusing specifically on student-lecturer communication, drawing from examples in educational linguistics (Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Flowerdew, 2013) and politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The concept of pragmalinguistics, as introduced by Kasper & Blum-Kulka (1993), will also serve as a theoretical framework for analyzing the pragmatic markers used in discourse.

Methodology:

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data to gain a nuanced understanding of student-lecturer communication. Discourse samples will be collected from classroom recordings in multicultural university settings, focusing on both spoken and written interactions (such as email exchanges). A thematic analysis will be conducted to identify recurring linguo-cultural patterns and pragmatic strategies, particularly in relation to politeness, indirectness, and power negotiation. Surveys and interviews with students and lecturers will supplement the discourse analysis, providing additional insights into their perceptions of effective communication.

Discussion and Findings:

Preliminary findings suggest that students from high-context cultures, such as those from East Asia, tend to employ more indirect speech acts and rely heavily on non-verbal cues when communicating with lecturers. This contrasts with students from low-context cultures, such as those from Western Europe and North America, who are more likely to engage in direct communication and challenge authority more openly. These differences often lead to misunderstandings, particularly in the interpretation of politeness and respect. Additionally, power dynamics play a crucial role in shaping discourse, with lecturers often unconsciously reinforcing hierarchical structures through their language choices.

The study also finds that students who are more familiar with the cultural norms of the host country tend to adapt their communication strategies to align with local expectations. This ability to shift between cultural communication styles, often referred to as "cultural intelligence," is critical for successful academic engagement.

Implications for Teaching:

The findings of this research have significant implications for pedagogy in multicultural classrooms. By understanding the linguo-cultural and pragmatic features that shape student-lecturer communication, educators can adopt more inclusive teaching strategies that cater to diverse linguistic needs. Training programs for lecturers can incorporate intercultural communication skills, helping them to become more aware of how their language choices affect students from different cultural backgrounds. This awareness can foster a more equitable classroom environment, where all students feel empowered to participate in

academic discourse.

Conclusion:

In an increasingly globalized educational landscape, the ability to navigate linguo-cultural and pragmatic differences is essential for both students and lecturers. This thesis contributes to the field of educational linguistics by providing a detailed analysis of how these differences manifest in student-lecturer communication and offering practical solutions for overcoming intercultural communication barriers in academic settings. Future research could extend this analysis to include student-student interactions and explore how peer communication further influences academic performance and engagement.

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