

Pragmatics
Course syllabus
Winter Semester 2018-19
Department of English and American Studies
Humboldt University of Berlin

Module: 6
Instructor: Dr. Debopam Das
Time: Mondays, 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Location: Room 3001 (University main building)

Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to pragmatics, an important sub-field of linguistics. Pragmatics is the study of contextualized meaning in language. In pragmatics, we examine the relationship between the meaning of an utterance and the context in which the utterance is produced. In this course, we will explore a wide range of topics in the discipline, such as presupposition, implicature, speech acts, deixis and reference. Students will read original and recent work in these areas, and engage themselves in analyzing different types of utterances and their meanings as they are shaped by different pragmatic factors.

Course Objectives:

At the end of the course, students will be familiar with the basic topics in the study of pragmatics. Exercises, assignments and the final exam will focus on the analysis of spoken and written utterances from different perspectives. Students will learn about different strategies for identifying patterns and labelling of pragmatic phenomena. Another goal of the course is to enable students to write descriptive accounts of their analyses of utterances (texts/dialogues), and to explain how the study of pragmatics contributes to a better understanding of language.

Topics to be covered:

1. Definition and overview of the field
2. Implicature
3. Presupposition
4. Speech acts
5. Deixis
6. Reference
7. Discourse structure
8. Pragmatics and semantics

Course grade

The course carries 3 credit points (while the Module 6 carries 7 credit points in total). In order to get those 3 credit points, the student must complete and timely submit the (roughly bi-weekly) assignments. This will also help you to earn the participation certificate at the end of the course:

<https://fakultaeten.hu-berlin.de/de/sprachlit/lehre/bachelor/ba1415/arbeitsnachweis-bachelor-2017.pdf> .

The course also has a final exam which will be graded. Find more info here:

<https://fakultaeten.hu-berlin.de/de/sprachlit/lehre/bachelor/ba0708/modulabschlusspruefungen.html> .

Meeting dates:

Week	Date	Tentative schedule
0	Oct 15	<i>Dies Academicus</i> – No class
1	Oct 22	Introduction and overview
2	Oct 29	Implicature 1
3	Nov 5	Implicature 2
4	Nov 12	Presupposition 1
5	Nov 19	Presupposition 2
6	Nov 26	Speech acts 1
7	Dec 3	Speech act 2
8	Dec 10	Deixis
9	Dec 17	Reference 1
10	Jan 7	Reference 2
11	Jan 14	Discourse structure 1
12	Jan 21	Discourse structure 2
13	Jan 28	Pragmatics and semantics
14	Feb 4	Review of contents
15	Feb 11	Final exam

Required readings:

Required readings (slides, articles, book chapters, etc.) will be available online through the Moodle course page.