

What can we learn from 'doing' pragmatics cross- and inter-culturally? Why should we?

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I shall initially be inviting participants' own answers to the questions in my title - We shall explore these together, as I also offer my personal range of reasons, and my chosen principal take on this for the seminar. We shall be briefly recalling and comparing together the phenomena and issues most often already focussed on in cross- and intercultural pragmatics, as well as those addressed in the neighbouring literatures on cross-cultural communication. I shall then, suggest areas of theoretical interest in pragmatics that are rarely if ever focused on in cross- or inter-cultural investigations, nor approached or even conceived of cross-culturally in theoretical pragmatics, to my knowledge. Among these, time permitting, I shall point to questions, and data, or inklings, from my own investigations, and life-long 'participant observation' in intercultural communication contexts, concerning essentially what appears to be assumed as the 'right and proper' way to communicate, the operative 'communicative contract', the assumed and expected communicative rights and obligations, or cooperative principles, if you will. I will focus, to put it very generally and succinctly here, on the **value of information and ways, or not, of sharing it** (why am I withholding details here?). Needless to say, this is not also without implications intersecting with issues more often explored across cultures. At any rate, to show my hand more explicitly, if there still be any need, the assumption of a single universally operative, 'right and proper' communicative contract, for all people, if not corroborated by cross- and intercultural, and contextualized data, is, I believe, particularly dangerous. We shall close by brainstorming again and sharing our reasons why and how this might be so, having perhaps also gained a few new shared insights, and information.



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