

# PRAGMATICS

Raising Students' Pragmatic  
Awareness



## Three major communication skills




- | Changing language according to the needs of a listener or situation
- | Following rules for conversations (taking turns, non-verbal gestures, space, etc)
- | Using language for different purposes (greetings, requesting, promising, etc)

## To be competent communicators, we need to understand



- | The meaning of words
- | What the speakers mean when uttering those words
- | The particular circumstances of their utterance, their utterances, their actions, and what they manage to communicate

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- | When we read or hear pieces of language, we normally try to understand not only what the words mean, but what the writer or speaker of those words intend to say
  - | The study of intended speaker meaning is called PRAGMATICS
  - | Pragmatics is **the study of linguistic acts and the contexts in which they are performed**

## Theory of communicative competence



- | Proposes that the ability to communicate in a language comprises four dimensions:
  - a. grammatical competence
  - b. sociolinguistic competence
  - c. discourse competence
  - d. strategic competence

## What speakers need to know



- | Linguistic knowledge
- | Extralinguistic knowledge



## Linguistic knowledge

- | Genre knowledge
- | Discourse knowledge
- | Grammar
- | Vocabulary



## Extralinguistic knowledge

- | Knowledge of the topic
- | Knowledge of the context
- | Familiarity with the other speakers
- | Sociocultural knowledge

## The goal teaching pragmatics



- I To raise learners' pragmatic awareness and tend to give them choices about their interactions in the target language
- I Not to insist on conformity to a particular target-language norm, but rather to help learners become familiar with the range of pragmatic devices and practices in the target language

## Why teach pragmatics in class



- I Learners are able to try out new forms and patterns of communication in an accepting environment
- I The teacher and other students can provide feedback