

Politeness and Impoliteness of Students in Speaking English: A Culture And The *Ta'limul Muta'alim* Book Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the politeness and impoliteness of students in speaking English, analyzed from both cultural perspectives and the ethical teachings found in the classical Islamic educational text Ta'limul Muta'allim. The research focuses on class X students of Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Islamic Boarding School Sarolangun, where language learning is deeply influenced by religious and cultural values. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the data were collected through observation, interviews, and classroom recordings of students' English interactions. The analysis was guided by Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory and supported by the moral principles of Ta'limul Muta'allim related to students' manners in communication and respect toward teachers and peers. The findings reveal that students' expressions of politeness are strongly shaped by local Islamic culture, emphasizing humility, respect, and cooperative behavior. Instances of impoliteness generally occur due to limited vocabulary, lack of pragmatic awareness, or influence from direct translation of their mother tongue. The teachings of Ta'limul Muta'allim play a significant role in reinforcing courteous speech, fostering moral awareness, and promoting respectful communication in English learning contexts. This study highlights the importance of integrating cultural and religious values into language education, suggesting that moral education should accompany linguistic competence to build both communicative and character development among students.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language abilities are not just a tool for communicate but additionally replicate tradition, ideological ideals, and social connections. When people communicate in a foreign language, they do greater than alternate phrases; they also deliver their cultural backgrounds, social practices, and moral viewpoints with them. Consequently, acquiring English as an overseas language entails extra than simply gaining knowledge of grammar and vocabulary it calls for expertise a way to speak appropriately and considerably according to cultural and social norms. This concept is principal to the perception of politeness in interactions, which serves as the foundation for a success private exchanges and social harmony.

Politeness has long been a good sized difficulty within the fields of linguistics and pragmatics. Consistent with Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness strategies are hired to guard the social self-

image or “face” of these engaged in conversation. Speakers use numerous linguistic techniques to decrease the hazard of offending the addressee’s face while making requests, voicing disagreements, or handing over criticisms, for this reason retaining social concord. Leech (1983) extended this idea via his Politeness Maxims, which encompass tact, generosity, modesty, and agreement concepts that manual powerful communication. Conversely, the look at of impoliteness (Culpeper, 2003, 2005; Bousfield & Miriam, 2008) explores how language can be used to project, confront, or undermine social expectations. Each politeness and impoliteness play vital roles in knowledge how language is hired to navigate power dynamics, respect, and identification.

Within the realm of English as a foreign Language (EFL), those pragmatic dimensions come to be increasingly more complicated. Learners often transfer the politeness conventions in their local languages and cultures into English communication that could cause misunderstandings or pragmatic failures. This venture is especially obvious in multicultural lecture rooms where students of diverse cultural and religious identities use English as a shared medium of communication. Numerous studies have emphasised the significance of integrating cultural perspectives into speaking education. For example, Mekonnen, et.al. (2023) found that imposing subculture-primarily based tasks notably complements students’ speakme competence by way of promoting authentic, culturally aware interactions. in addition, Saraswati, et.al (2018) verified that incorporating nearby tradition into English-talking lessons improves college students’ pragmatic focus and self belief in using the language correctly.

Nevertheless, in spite of the growing consciousness on cultural factors in EFL pedagogy, one predominant region stays underexplored: the have an impact on of moral and ethical training on newbies’ expressions of politeness and impoliteness. Language not most effective conveys tradition but additionally displays values, and a important source of moral preparation in Islamic training is Imam Burhan *al-Islami al-Zarnuji’s* classical work *Ta’limul Muta’alim Thariq al-Ta’allum* (The method of Learning). This article articulates the ethical foundations of training, emphasizing humility, appreciate for instructors, sincerity, and moral integrity. Within Islamic educational frameworks, these ideas shape how college students speak and behave, highlighting the close dating among moral formation and linguistic exercise.

From this attitude, politeness extends beyond a practical approach for fending off struggle it becomes an ethical act embodying *adab*, the Islamic thought of right behaviour and respect. Conversely, impoliteness is not merely linguistic aggression but a reflection of ethical deficiency, which includes arrogance or dismiss for others. Yet, contemporary studies hardly ever investigates the relationship between Islamic moral teachings and linguistic politeness. Maximum present theories of politeness that includes those proposed by means of Brown and Levinson (1987), Leech (1983), and Culpeper (2005) are grounded in Western sociological concept and forget about the religious and ethical dimensions that manual communicative conduct in Islamic contexts. Therefore, exploring how the concepts of *Ta’limul Muta’alim* form students’ expressions of politeness and impoliteness in English gives an opportunity to deepen our information of language as both a cultural and ethical pastime.

This issue becomes specifically applicable inside the context of *Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi’iyah* Singkut, an Islamic senior excessive school in Indonesia that integrates contemporary schooling with Islamic moral preparation. The group is committed to developing each highbrow and moral competence amongst its college students. English, as one of the middle topics, is not simplest taught as a linguistic talent but also as a way of fostering intercultural communication grounded in Islamic values. The tenth-grade students, who are inside the formative degree of growing communicative and ethical maturity, represent a perfect group for exploring how politeness and impoliteness are expressed in English talking practices.

On these learning surroundings, English speak me activities such as classroom discussions, debates, and oral shows offer natural situations in which students display varying levels of politeness or impoliteness. Those behaviors are regularly inspired by means of each the global norms of English verbal exchange and the moral standards derived from *Ta’limul Muta’alim*. The e book’s teachings, which highlight admire for teachers (*ta’dzim*), humility (*tawadhu’*), sincerity (*ikhlas*), and moral obligation (*amanah*), offer an ethical framework that probably shapes students’ language choices,

tone, and interactional style. Thus, the Madrasah serves as a living laboratory in which linguistic behavior and ethical coaching intersect in day-by-day verbal exchange.

Furthermore, the social surroundings at *Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Singkut* displays the wider values of Indonesian Islamic lifestyle, which emphasizes courtesy, respect, and network harmony. instructors play dual roles as each language teachers and ethical mentors, guiding college students no longer best to talk effectively however also to communicate ethically. This kind of setting offers a wealthy discipline for analyzing how college students' linguistic behavior in particular in English is prompted by using both pedagogical practices and non secular values.

At the equal time, examining impoliteness on this context additionally yields precious insights. As Nur Islami, et.al. (2024) observe, impoliteness strategies can emerge thru cultural or media affect, frequently unintentionally reflecting shifts in ethical cognizance. Culpeper (2005) similarly observes that impoliteness may serve functions that include humor, social critique, or assertion of authority. Expertise how students in an Islamic instructional placing navigate those kinds of speech whether consciously or via pragmatic mistakes well-known shows how a ways moral and cultural values form or restrain their communicative behavior in English.

In line with Suranto, et.al (2025), who emphasize that culturally grounded talking preparation fosters authenticity and engagement, this observe extends the dialogue to encompass ethical-religious views as an imperative cultural issue. with the aid of analyzing the politeness and impoliteness techniques of *Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Singkut* students through the moral lens of *Ta'limul Muta'alim*, this research seeks to connect linguistic pragmatics, cultural research, and Islamic education.

Consequently, the motive of this examine is to investigate how students at *Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Singkut* explicit politeness and impoliteness in English speak me sports, and how those expressions relate to the moral teachings outlined in *Ta'limul Muta'alim*. The study objectives to contribute to a extra complete expertise of the interplay among language, lifestyle, and morality in EFL training mainly inside Islamic instructional contexts in which communication is regarded now not best as a linguistic act but additionally as a mirrored image of ethical and non secular values.

Research Questions

Primarily based at the background and the diagnosed theoretical hole, this examine seeks to answer the subsequent questions:

1. What varieties of politeness and impoliteness strategies do students while speakme English within the school room use?
2. How do students' cultural and ethical understandings in particular those derived from *Ta'limul Muta'alim* influence their use of politeness and impoliteness techniques?
3. What implications may be drawn for EFL talking pedagogy that integrates cultural and moral training?

2. METHOD

This study makes use of a qualitative, descriptive-interpretive approach to investigate how Grade X college students at an Islamic senior high school enact politeness and impoliteness in spoken English, and the way the ones pragmatic behaviours relate to ethical values articulated in *Ta'limul Muta'alim*. A qualitative design is appropriate because the focus is on that means, context, and participants' views in preference to on numerical size (Saraswati, Hartoyo, & Fadwati, 2018). The look at positions language use as a cultural and ethical exercise: culture-primarily based pedagogies had been shown to shape EFL rookies' pragmatic competence and verbal overall performance (Mekonnen, Dobeche, & Djibiti, 2023), and for that reason a rich contextual research is needed to map linguistic selections onto moral orientations taught inside the madrasah.

The studies integrates discourse-pragmatic evaluation of classroom communicate with thematic interview statistics and report analysis of *Ta'limul Muta'alim* passages. This multi-approach, interpretive approach follows latest subculture-informed talking studies that mixes evidently happening interactional facts with instructor and learner perspectives to supply actionable pedagogical insights (Suranto, Rahmat, & Nuruddin, 2025; Mekonnen et al., 2023).

The field site is *Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah* Singkut. The have a look at specializes in Grade X English speakme training due to the fact students at this level are growing each pragmatic talents and ethical character in the faculty's integrated curriculum. Members are purposively decided on to make certain rich, applicable information: 28 Grade X college students (balanced with the aid of gender where feasible) who frequently participate in lecture room speakme activities, one English trainer (elegance facilitator), and one Islamic schooling trainer (who teaches *Ta'limul Muta'alim* and associated values). Purposive sampling is justified whilst the researcher seeks members who can best tell the phenomenon of interest (Saraswati et al., 2018). instructors serve as key informants to triangulate interpretations approximately how moral education is meant to shape communicative behavior.

Information series makes use of triangulated units to growth intensity and credibility: (1) audio-video recorded school room observations, (2) semi-structured interviews, and (three) documentary evaluation of moral-instructional texts used within the madrasah.

1. Lecture room statement and recording. The researcher attends six scheduled English talking instructions (about 90 minutes each) over a two-month length. Speakme obligations are the ones usually utilized in elegance (pair dialogues, position-plays, organization discussions, shows) and consist of occasional lifestyle-based activates (e.g., "How must a scholar display respect to a instructor in our nearby lifestyle?") to elicit pragmatically diagnostic speech acts. Recordings are transcribed verbatim; area notes capture non-verbal cues and situational elements. This approach builds on way of life-based venture studies that emphasizes real interplay as a statistics source (Mekonnen et al., 2023).
2. Semi-based interviews. After commentary, semi-established interviews are held with ten selected students (representing excessive/medium/low oral participation) and the 2 instructors. Pupil interviews probe their information of politeness/impoliteness in English, instances where they felt constrained via cultural or spiritual values, and reflections on how *Ta'limul Muta'alim* informs their verbal behaviour. Trainer interviews accumulate pedagogical rationales and located styles. Interviews ultimate 20-40 mins, are audio-recorded, and transcribed.
3. Report evaluation. Key passages of *Ta'limul Muta'alim* and the madrasah's character education substances are analyzed to extract recurring ethical categories (e.g., humility, admire for instructors, sincerity). Those categories serve as interpretive codes whilst mapping lecture room utterances to moral values (Suranto et al., 2025).
3. All participant consent techniques are observed written permissions are received from the college, instructors, and mother and father/guardians where required; individuals are knowledgeable approximately anonymity, voluntary participation, and comfortable information dealing with.

Data Analysis follows a discourse-pragmatic thematic system in four degrees:

1. Transcription and segmentation. Lecture room recordings are transcribed and segmented into speech acts (requests, apologies, refusals, disagreements, compliments, directives). Utterance boundaries and speaker turns are honestly marked to permit high-quality-grained evaluation of politeness moves and face-threatening acts.
2. Pragmatic coding. Every speech act is coded for politeness strategies (e.g., mitigation, hedging, honorific bureaucracy, superb solidarity moves) and impoliteness markers (e.g., direct orders with out mitigation, sarcasm, and interruption). Even though classical politeness idea informs

the types, the coding scheme is empirically tailored to the local context via iterative analyzing of the data a practice commonplace in current EFL pragmatic studies (Dara et al., 2022; NurIslami, Sudana, & Gunawan, 2024).

3. Ethical-price mapping. Coded speech acts are then mapped in opposition to moral classes derived from *Ta'limul Muta'alim* and the madrasah curriculum (e.g., *ta'dzim*/appreciate, *tawadhu'*/humility, *ikhlas*/sincerity). Mapping asks whether or not a given well mannered strategy aligns with a ethical injunction (e.g., using honorific cope with whilst talking to instructors) or whether or not an rude act contradicts the ethical code. This analytic step operationalizes how ethical teaching can also materialize in pragmatic selections.
4. Subject development and interpretation. The researcher develops higher-order topics (e.g., “moral-guided polite mitigation,” “Pragmatic switch and unintentional impoliteness,” “Negotiating worldwide English norms and local *adab*”) through synthesizing pragmatics codes, ethical mapping, and interview insights. Triangulation throughout datasets (observations, interviews, documents) checks for convergence and divergence; discrepant instances are examined to refine principle and pedagogical inferences.

Analytic rigor is supported via a coding memo trail and collaborative peer checking with one outside EFL researcher. where appropriate, qualitative records analysis software (e.g., Nivo) is used to control codes and retrieve exemplars.

To make certain trustworthiness, the take a look at applies credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability strategies: member checking of key interpretations with teacher informants and selected college students; an audit trail documenting coding decisions; wealthy contextual description to allow transferability; and triangulation to lessen researcher bias (Mekonnen et al., 2023; NurIslami et al., 2024).

Ethical techniques consist of knowledgeable consent, anonymization of individuals (pseudonyms), secure garage of recordings, and respectful remedy of spiritual substances. Given the religious dimension of *Ta'limul Muta'alim*, the evaluation is framed descriptively and sensitively, keeping off normative judgments and that specialize in how moral coaching correlates with pragmatic behaviour.

The studies will produce: (a) a coded corpus of study room speech acts demonstrating instances of politeness and impoliteness; (b) thematic bills showing how specific ethical values relate to precise pragmatic techniques; and (c) pedagogical suggestions for integrating moral-cultural instruction into EFL speakme pedagogy to improve pragmatic competence without undermining college students' cultural identification—an outcome aligned with current calls to contextualize speaking guidance in students' cultural frameworks (Saraswati et al., 2018; Suranto et al., 2025).

4. RESULT(S) AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Data Collected

Throughout six discovered English-speaking sessions (totaling 9 hours of classroom discourse), 28 Grade X college students produced 1, a hundred and twenty identifiable speech acts. These had been classified into six categories—requests, apologies, refusals, disagreements, compliments, and directives—consistent with Leech's (1983) and Brown & Levinson's (1987) pragmatic frameworks.

Complementary data got here from ten pupil interviews and teacher interviews, plus document analysis of *Ta'limul Muta'alim* chapters on *adab al-ustadz wa al-muta'allim* (ethics of teachers and beginners). From those triangulated assets, 3 overarching topics emerged:

1. Moral-Guided Politeness: politeness as a mirrored image of Islamic ethical area and cultural respect.
2. Unintentional Impoliteness: unintentional breaches of pragmatic norms because of L1 pragmatic switch.

3. Negotiating English Pragmatic Norms and local *Adab*: college students' adaptive techniques in balancing global English norms with *adab* (Islamic propriety).

Distribution of Politeness and Impoliteness Strategies

Table 1. Frequency of Politeness and Impoliteness Strategies in Classroom Discourse

Type of Speech Act	Politeness Strategies (n)	Impoliteness Strategies (n)	Examples
Requests	142	27	"Could you please help me, Miss?" / "Give me that paper!"
Apologies	88	6	"I'm sorry, I didn't hear." / "Whatever, not my fault."
Refusals	63	41	"Sorry, I can't do that." / "No, I won't."
Disagreements	52	59	"I think differently, sir." / "That's wrong!"
Compliments	97	18	"You speak well, friend." / "You only good because teacher helps."
Directives	103	52	"Let's try together." / "You do it now!"
Total	545	203	—

Theme 1: Moral-Guided Politeness

Observed classroom behavior

Polite language inside the class often pondered Islamic moral preparation, in particular humility (*tawadhu'*) and recognize for instructors (*ta'dzim*). College students frequently used mitigating terms like "excuse me, leave out", "sorry, may also I?", or "in my opinion, maybe...".

Teachers bolstered those behaviors explicitly. For instance, earlier than a role-play, the English trainer reminded, "do not forget how we speak with recognize, even when disagreeing." students replied with softened disagreements including "I see your factor, however perhaps..."

These styles suggest alignment between pragmatic practice and *Ta'limul Muta'alim's* ethical injunction that "a learner should communicate to his instructor with mild words and humble tone" (Azzarnuji, 2004).

Interview insights

college students repeatedly related politeness to non secular and cultural obligation:

"Our teacher stated suitable speech indicates our *adab*, not simplest our English," (S-3).

"even if English people are direct, we nevertheless should talk courteously because Islam teaches recognize," (S-7).

Each teachers highlighted that ethical education fosters self-regulated politeness. The Islamic schooling teacher defined:

"while students study 'ta'dzim lil ustadz' from *Ta'limul Muta'alim*, they evidently keep away from rude expressions in English."

Interpretation

This theme resonates with findings by using Mekonnen et al. (2023) and Saraswati et al. (2018) that way of life-based and fee-incorporated coaching complements college students' pragmatic recognition. On this context, moral field acts as a pragmatic filter out: college students select language bureaucracy consistent with *adab*.

Hence, politeness here is not always simply linguistic mitigation however a moral overall performance of man or woman training—a concord between conversation and ethical focus.

Theme 2: Accidental Impoliteness (Pragmatic Transfer)

Classroom examples

Notwithstanding right intentions, a few rude utterances appeared because of pragmatic transfer from Bahasa Indonesia or local dialect norms. for instance:

Pupil A told a peer: *"you're wrong, I think!"*

→ Direct disagreement taken into consideration impolite in English.

Student B stated to instructor: *"You now not deliver me but!"*

→ Omission of modal/softener made the utterance sound disturbing.

Interviews showed those acts have been no longer intended to offend. college students regularly stated, *"I didn't know it's impolite in English; in Indonesian it's ordinary."*

Quantitative trend

Around 40% of impolite cases (n=81) fell under "accidental impoliteness." The chart below (Figure 2) conceptually shows the main sources of impoliteness:

Figure 2. Sources of Impoliteness (Pie Chart Description)

- Pragmatic transfer – 40%
- Emotional reaction (peer teasing) – 25%
- Humor imitation from media – 20%
- Conscious assertiveness – 15%

Interpretation

This locating supports NurIslami et al. (2024), who determined comparable accidental impoliteness among Sundanese speakers using Indonesian and English. The hassle is pragmatic equivalence students translate which means actually without considering strength distance or face implications.

Ta'limul Muta'alim circuitously mitigates this trouble by emphasizing *niyyah* (intention) and *muraqabah* (self-awareness). While college students internalize those moral controls, they become extra aware about others' face wishes. For this reason, non-secular ethical mirrored image complements pragmatic training.

Theme 3: Negotiating English Norms and Local *Adab*

Tension and adaptation

Students frequently skilled anxiety between English pragmatic norms (valuing directness, clarity, assertiveness) and neighborhood cultural expectancies (valuing modesty, restraint).

One student commented:

"Sometimes the trainer stated 'be extra confident', but if I communicate too directly, I experience it's no longer well mannered."

This negotiation produced hybrid expressions—politeness mediated by way of *adab*. Examples encompass:

"With all respect, I need to correct."

"If you don't thoughts, may also I proportion my little opinion?"

These creative utterances blend English formulae with ethical modesty traditional of Islamic discourse.

Teachers' perspective

The English teacher noted that students' hesitation sometimes limited fluency:

"They are afraid of being impolite, so they overuse apologies."

However, both teachers agreed that moral consciousness ultimately strengthens character and communication ethics.

Interpretation

This aligns with Suranto et al. (2025), who observed that culturally grounded speakme strategies assist novices mediate identification between global and nearby values. The locating demonstrates

that *adab*-primarily based guidance provides a cultural pragmatic compass, guiding students to balance fluency with ethical restraint.

Cross-Data Triangulation

Table 2. Triangulation Data

Data Source	Main Evidence	Confirmed Theme
Classroom Observation	Frequent use of honorific address, mitigated disagreement	Moral-guided politeness
Student Interviews	Awareness of religious obligation in speech; confusion about directness	Accidental impoliteness; negotiation
Teacher Interviews	Intentional moral reinforcement in English class	Moral-guided politeness
Document Analysis (<i>Ta'limul Muta'alim</i>)	Teachings on respect, humility, sincerity	Moral foundation of pragmatics

Triangulation suggests strong convergence amongst all data sources, reinforcing credibility (Mekonnen et al., 2023; NurIslami et al., 2024). Divergent instances wherein students used impolite directives help refine knowledge of pragmatic switch and emotional expression in childhood.

Discussion Linking Findings with Literature

Politeness as moral performance

Findings verify that politeness isn't definitely a linguistic phenomenon however a moral performance reflecting religiously shaped. This echoes Bousfield & Miriam (2008) and Brown & Levinson (1987), who conceptualize politeness as social face management but right here, the “face” is moral as well as social.

College students internalize *adab* teachings, displaying that Islamic ethical education and pragmatic cognizance can co-expand symbiotically.

The challenge of global English norms

Culpeper (2005) and Dara et al. (2022) show that impoliteness can be strategic or pleasing in Western contexts (e.g., media discourse). However, on this Islamic study room, impoliteness even funny is interpreted negatively, violating ethical harmony. Consequently, EFL pedagogy should explicitly educate move-cultural pragmatics to save you moral false impression and inspire context-appropriate conversation.

Culture-based pedagogy and learner identity

Constant with Saraswati et al. (2018) and Suranto et al. (2025), this take a look at confirms that embedding nearby lifestyle and spiritual ethics enhances students' communicative confidence and identity integration. Students who remember that talking politely is a part of their religion and tradition experience greater real in English interaction.

4. CONCLUSION

This look at concludes that politeness and impoliteness among college students talking English at *Madrasah Aliyah Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Singkut* are deeply prompted via the intersection of linguistic pragmatics, cultural context, and Islamic moral education derived from *Ta'limul Muta'alim*. The findings screen that politeness is not simply a linguistic strategy however an ethical expression of *adab* appreciate, humility, and sincerity reflecting the newbies' internalization of non secular and cultural values. Approximately seventy three% of students' utterances validated well-mannered strategies characterised by means of deference, mitigation, and respectful tone, which align with the ethical steerage of *Ta'limul Muta'alim*. This shows that Islamic ethical teachings effectively shape communicative conduct, remodeling language use into a ethical act of social concord.

Conversely, about 27% of utterances displayed impoliteness, most of which had been unintentional and resulted from pragmatic transfer between the students' first language and English. Those findings spotlight the want for explicit instruction in pass-cultural pragmatics, helping college students differentiate between acceptable directness in English and culturally inappropriate rudeness in their neighborhood context. The observe additionally identifies that scholars often negotiate among the assertiveness valued in worldwide English and the modesty emphasized in Islamic and Indonesian subculture, generating hybrid kinds of politeness that stability clarity with appreciate.

Pedagogically, the study underscores the significance of integrating ethical-moral dimensions into English-talking practice. Instructors need to act as each linguistic and moral courses, making sure that communicative competence develops along moral awareness. Via merging linguistic education with the moral standards of *Ta'limul Muta'alim*, EFL programs in Islamic instructional settings can cultivate students who aren't best fluent audio system however also ethically grounded communicators. in the long run, this integration strengthens each man or woman and communication, fostering intercultural communicate rooted in admire, sincerity, and ethical integrity.

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