



Politeness Principles in the Interaction of Students at SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang: Pragmatics Study

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the forms of politeness maxims, the forms of their violations, and the factors influencing maxim violations in the utterances of students at SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang outside classroom hours. The study was conducted in May 2026 through two observation sessions in the school corridor and canteen, using a qualitative descriptive approach. The research subjects were seven seventh- and eighth-grade students selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and a voice recorder, then analyzed interactively through the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that most forms of politeness maxim application were evident in students' interactions, although a few utterances were not yet fully polite. Violations were found in three maxims tact, approbation, and modesty with more violations occurring in the canteen than in the corridor. Contributing factors include differences in cultural and linguistic backgrounds, informal and playful interaction contexts, differences in social status or age among students, and the use of slang. These findings indicate that politeness norms are reasonably internalized, yet contextual and ongoing language development remains necessary in multicultural school environments.

Keywords: speech politeness, interaction of students, pragmatic study

INTRODUCTION

The principle of politeness is an important aspect of everyday communication. Through politeness, speakers strive to convey their meaning without offending their interlocutors, thus maintaining a positive relationship between them. Politeness is not only reflected in word choice but also in speaking strategies adapted to the prevailing norms and culture within a community. Leech (2016) explains that politeness serves to maintain a balanced relationship between speakers and their interlocutors, ensuring harmonious interactions. Nadar (2016) emphasizes that politeness is a cultural phenomenon whose benchmarks vary from one society to another. This demonstrates that

politeness is not a universal concept but is highly dependent on cultural norms and the surrounding speech situation. From a pragmatic perspective, Yule (2016) emphasizes that assessing whether an utterance is polite or not must consider factors beyond the language structure itself, such as the purpose of communication, cultural norms, and the dynamics of the relationship between speakers. This makes the study of language politeness relevant for application in the context of students, who interact daily in informal situations with diverse cultural backgrounds and peers in the school environment.

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In the context of adolescents, particularly junior high school students, language behavior is an interesting topic to study. At this age, students are in a period of active social development, where they begin to form their identities and expand their friendship networks. This process is closely related to how they communicate with one another. It is not uncommon for students to use certain language styles, sometimes ignoring established norms of politeness, to attempt to demonstrate their identity and be accepted by their peers. This situation makes the study of language politeness among students crucial, particularly to understand the extent to which they have internalized politeness values in their daily communication at school. Wibowo (2019) states that adolescent communication patterns are strongly influenced by peer group dynamics, so that social pressure from classmates can encourage individuals to ignore politeness norms in order to gain recognition from their peers. This phenomenon strengthens research that specifically examines students' language behavior in informal interactions, as this is precisely where students' true communication characteristics are most evident. This is where the typical politeness conflict arises in students. On the one hand, they understand the norms of politeness taught in school, but on the other hand, peer pressure encourages them to use language styles that sometimes conflict with these norms. Brown and Levinson (in Culpeper, 2016) propose the concept of "face" as something maintained during every interaction; adolescents are at a developmental stage where the preservation of positive face—specifically the desire to be valued and accepted by a group—plays a dominant role in determining their choice of speech strategies.

Leech (2016) categorizes the politeness principle into six maxims: tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy. These six maxims are interconnected and form a comprehensive framework for understanding linguistic politeness. The maxim of tact dictates that speakers should minimize cost to others and maximize benefit to others in their utterances. The maxim of

generosity requires speakers to minimize personal gain and maximize personal sacrifice or cost. The maxim of approbation encourages speakers to minimize disparagement of others and maximize praise for others. The maxim of modesty obliges speakers to minimize self-praise and maximize self-deprecation or self-criticism. The maxim of agreement instructs speakers to minimize disagreement with others and maximize alignment or consensus with others. Finally, the maxim of sympathy requires speakers to minimize antipathy toward others and maximize sympathy toward others. This study specifically focuses on these six maxims because they constitute a cohesive theoretical framework for analyzing students' linguistic politeness across various everyday interactional situations.

Several previous studies have provided a vital foundation for this research. In their study on the realization of linguistic politeness principles among students at Madrasah Aliyah Arifah Gowa, Pakri et al. (2023) found that linguistic politeness manifests in various forms of speech during learning activities. While the aforementioned research provides a good overview of politeness in formal contexts, it has not addressed student interactions in informal situations outside the classroom. In their study, Sari & Aprianti (2022) found that indirect speech acts were the dominant strategy in teacher-student interactions; however, their research focused on the teacher-student relationship rather than interactions among students themselves. Kurniati (2020) concluded that politeness violations in daily interactions often stem from a mismatch between the speaker's norms and the interlocutor's expectations—a finding that serves as a relevant framework for understanding the maxim violations observed in the present study. Collectively, these studies indicate a lack of research specifically analyzing the forms of—and violations regarding—politeness principle maxims in the speech of junior high school students outside of class hours, particularly within the school environment in Ketapang. No study has yet comprehensively analyzed the forms, violations, and



underlying causes of impoliteness among junior high students in Ketapang within informal settings in a single, integrated study; the present research aims to fill this gap. Additionally, Lestari's (2021) study on the linguistic politeness of junior high students in West Kalimantan identified recurring patterns of violations regarding the Approbation and Sympathy maxims in informal situations, though it did not explicitly identify the factors driving these violations. Lestari's findings further underscore the relevance of research that simultaneously analyzes speech forms, violations, and their causes within a unified and comprehensive framework.

The novelty of this study lies in three aspects. First, it not only describes forms of speech but also examines maxim violations and their influencing factors within an integrated analytical framework—an approach not previously undertaken in the Ketapang region. Second, the study draws data from student-to-student interactions in informal settings outside of class hours rather than from formal teacher-student interactions, thereby yielding a more authentic picture of students' linguistic behavior. Third, the research is conducted in a culturally and linguistically diverse school in West Kalimantan, a setting that has rarely been the subject of in-depth pragmatic study. Prayitno (2017) notes that politeness studies incorporating an analysis of underlying factors foster a more meaningful understanding of a community's communicative behavior. Through this approach, the study is expected to hold not only academic value but also practical utility for developing students' communicative character within the school environment.

Rahardi (2017) emphasizes that violations of politeness principles in an educational context impact not only the quality of communication but also the social climate and interpersonal relationships among students. Furthermore, Chaer & Agustina (2016) explain that understanding these six maxims is crucial in a sociolinguistic context, as each maxim reflects social values governing

how members of a speech community ought to interact. Violations of a maxim are not necessarily intentional; they may arise from a speaker's ignorance of prevailing norms, differences in cultural background, or situational pressures experienced at the time of speaking. A deep understanding of these six maxims serves as a vital foundation for the systematic and meaningful analysis of student speech data. Fundamentally, these six maxims are interconnected and cannot be rigidly separated in practice; a single utterance may involve the simultaneous presence of more than one maxim. Therefore, an analysis of linguistic politeness requires a comprehensive view of the context to ensure the meaning embedded in an utterance is understood accurately. Prayitno (2017) notes that within a sociopragmatic context, a single utterance can simultaneously reflect adherence to one maxim and a violation of another, depending on the analytical perspective adopted and the interlocutor involved in the interaction. Consequently, a holistic and contextual analytical approach is crucial to avoid assessing utterances in isolation or detached from the underlying social reality. The inability to rigidly separate one maxim from another actually reflects the complexity of language as a dynamic social tool.

SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang is a junior high school in Ketapang Regency, West Kalimantan, with a student body drawn from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, including speakers of Ketapang Malay and other regional languages. This diversity creates complex communication dynamics, where politeness norms from various speech communities intersect in the students' daily lives. Behaviors considered normal and appropriate by one cultural group might be perceived as impolite by another, thereby increasing the potential for communication misunderstandings. This study specifically gathers data from student interactions outside of class hours—such as during breaks, in the canteen, on the school grounds, and in the corridors. These informal settings were selected because they allow for the observation of

the students' most natural and authentic linguistic behavior, free from the formal pressures associated with teachers or classroom instruction. Chaer & Agustina (2016) explain that every speech community possesses its own politeness norms—shaped through socialization and interaction among members—meaning that analyzing speech in informal contexts provides a more honest picture of how students truly communicate. The multicultural context of SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang further enhances the study's relevance, as it enables the researcher to observe how students from different linguistic backgrounds negotiate politeness norms within a shared social space. Sumarsono (2017) asserts that within a speech community, an individual's linguistic behavior is influenced not only by their mother tongue but also by the process of adapting to the communication norms prevailing in their new environment, including the school setting. This makes the research site highly strategic for uncovering the true complexities of students' linguistic politeness behaviors.

This study also relates to the learning objectives for the Indonesian language subject at the junior high level, specifically regarding the ability to communicate politely. In the learning process, students are expected not merely to speak, but to adapt their language according to the situation and their interlocutors. Linguistic politeness is a crucial element, as it reflects the students' attitudes and character during interactions. Therefore, the findings of this study are expected to assist teachers in understanding the actual state of students' language proficiency, thereby serving as a foundation for fostering and enhancing students' communication skills at school. Within the framework of the currently implemented Independent Curriculum, the strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile emphasizes the importance of polite communication as a reflection of national values. This

further reinforces the study's significance, demonstrating that it is not only theoretically relevant but also aligned with the direction of national education policy. Wibowo (2019) asserts that the cultivation of linguistic politeness cannot be separated from the context of character education, as an individual's manner of speaking reflects the values they have internalized as members of society. Thus, this study also contributes to efforts toward a more holistic approach to character education grounded in empirical field data.

Based on the background outlined above, this study formulates three main research questions: (1) what are the forms of the politeness principle maxims (tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy) found in the speech of SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang students outside of class hours? (2) what are the forms of maxim violations within the politeness principle during interactions among SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang students outside of class hours? and (3) what factors influence the violation of these politeness principle maxims during interactions among SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang students outside of class hours? These three research questions are designed to provide a systematic overview—ranging from the manifestation of application and forms of violation to the underlying causes—thereby enabling the study to contribute comprehensively to the understanding of student speech politeness within the school's informal context. In practical terms, the findings addressing these questions are expected to serve as a resource for the school—particularly Indonesian language teachers—for evaluation purposes and for planning more targeted programs to foster students' communication character. Leech (2016) emphasizes that a sound understanding of the politeness principle requires grasping when and why the principle is violated, rather than merely describing its forms.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. This approach was selected because the data sought are not numerical but consist of speech and linguistic behavior that can only be deeply understood through direct observation. Sugiyono (2019:18) explains that qualitative research



is used to examine objects in their natural state, with the researcher serving as the primary instrument. The descriptive design is utilized because the study aims to portray the forms and violations of politeness principle maxims in student speech exactly as they occur, without variable manipulation. Moleong (2017:6) adds that qualitative research aims to holistically understand phenomena experienced by research subjects—expressed through words within a specific, natural context—thereby allowing for the authentic recording of spontaneous, unplanned student speech via direct observation and in-depth interviews.

The study was conducted at SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang in Ketapang Regency, West Kalimantan. This school was selected due to its diverse student body—representing various cultural and linguistic backgrounds—and its range of informal spaces, such as the canteen, sports field, and corridors, which facilitate the observation of natural student speech. The research subjects were students from SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang, selected using purposive sampling to ensure a mix of genders and grade levels (Grades VII and VIII). Selecting informants from both grade levels and genders aimed to capture variations in linguistic politeness patterns influenced by age, learning experience, and gender; this aligns with Sumarsono's (2017) emphasis on gender and grade level as significant sociolinguistic variables within adolescent speech communities.

Data collection was carried out using three techniques. First, participant observation was employed to observe students' speech directly in informal settings—specifically during breaks, in the canteen, on the school grounds, and in the corridors. Sugiyono (2019:227), Razak (2017:199) explains that in participant observation, the researcher actively engages in the activities being observed, resulting in data that is deeper and more meaningful. During observation, the researcher recorded every utterance containing elements of politeness or violations thereof, noting the situational context and the relationships between

speakers. Second, in-depth, open-ended, and informal interviews were conducted to explore the informants' perceptions of politeness norms in daily communication; as Moleong (2017) notes, in-depth interviews allow researchers to broadly explore informants' reasons, motivations, and perceptions. Third, documentation involved noting and recording speech during observations, which was subsequently transcribed meticulously to facilitate analysis. The instruments used included observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and a voice recorder.

Data analysis was conducted interactively following the three stages outlined by Miles et al. (2014): data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During the reduction stage, the researcher filtered for utterances containing forms of politeness and violations of politeness maxims. The reduced data was presented in a descriptive narrative accompanied by student speech excerpts as empirical evidence. Conclusions were drawn based on patterns consistently found in the data, while taking into account the social context underlying each utterance, as emphasized by Rahardi (2017). Data validity was ensured through source triangulation and technique triangulation: comparing data from six informants of diverse genders and grade levels, and cross-referencing data obtained from observations, interviews, and recordings. Additionally, a "member check" was conducted with the informants to verify that the researcher's interpretations aligned with the actual intent of the utterances. The researcher hopes that the findings of this study will prove beneficial, particularly for Indonesian language instruction at the junior high school level. Insights regarding the forms of maxims and their violations are expected to serve as a resource for teachers when developing materials or learning activities focused on linguistic politeness, thereby enabling students not only to grasp the theory of proper language use but also to apply it in their daily lives. Furthermore, the researcher hopes this study will serve as a reference for other researchers wishing to ex-

plore similar topics, especially within the West Kalimantan region.

RESULTS

This study was conducted over two participatory observation sessions at SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang. The first session took place on May 18, 2026, at 1:00 PM in the school corridor, and the second on May 21, 2026, at 1:00 PM in the school canteen. These two distinct locations were selected to ensure the collected data captured student politeness patterns across varying situations. In addition to observation, data were gathered through interviews with student informants selected based on gender and grade-level diversity, allowing the resulting data to reflect speech pattern variations across different student backgrounds. Overall, the informants' speech patterns showed similar tendencies; therefore, the interview data are presented representatively by highlighting the most relevant variations. The study identified three key findings: (a) forms of politeness maxims, (b) forms of maxim violations, and (c) factors contributing to maxim violations. In general, the observations revealed that nearly all forms of politeness maxim application were present in student interactions across the two sessions. Only two aspects were not consistently observed: the habit of using speech that avoids offending the interlocutor entirely, and the habit of refraining from disparaging or mocking peers during interactions. This indicates that most students demonstrate reasonably polite linguistic behavior in their daily interactions, although minor areas for improvement remain regarding informal situations outside the classroom.

The maxim of tact was clearly evident in how students offered assistance and made requests of their peers in a gentle, non-coercive manner. Observations in the corridor recorded utterances such as "ade yang bise aku bantu ndak" (is there anything I can help with?) and "boleh nda e klo aku minjam pulpen kau nntik" (is it okay if I borrow your pen later?), demonstrating the students' effort

to avoid inconveniencing their peers during interactions. This aligns with interview data from informant Aisyah, who typically says "tolong, tolong gak minjam pulpen" (please, may I borrow your pen?); informant Yuni, who says "tolong gak minjam pulpen" (please, may I borrow your eraser?); informant Adit, who uses the utterance "minjam gak duit kau t boleh de besok ku balikan" (may I borrow your money? I'll pay it back tomorrow); informant Novia, who says "salsa tolong gak minjam buku boleh ndak e?" (Salsa, please, may I borrow your book?); informant Risky, who says "boleh ndak minjam pulpen kau bentar" (may I borrow your pen for a moment?); and informant Rahmat, who uses the utterance "minjam pulpen lah boleh ndak" (may I borrow your pen?). These six speech patterns demonstrate that the students have a good understanding of how to make polite requests, in accordance with Leech's (2016) Maxim of Tact.

The Maxim of Generosity is evident in the students' willingness to yield and prioritize the interests of others. Observations revealed utterances such as "kau jak dulu ngomong" (you speak first), indicating that the students are not selfish and are willing to let their friends go first. In her interview, informant Aisyah also stated that she dislikes boasting and prioritizes the collective interest. This demonstrates that the values of togetherness and mutual respect are well-ingrained in the students.

The maxim of approbation is evident in utterances containing praise for a friend. During the observation, expressions such as "wah hebat sekali kamu" (wow, you're amazing) and the use of positive words when responding to a friend were noted. In interviews, informant Aisyah cited the compliment "Your writing is really good," while informant Yuni used "Wow, you look really beautiful." Informant Adit expressed "You look really cool" and "You are amazing," and informant Novia offered the praise, "You're so diligent to arrive so early." Informant Risky remarked, "Wow, that new hairstyle is cool," while informant Rahmat said, "You look really cool."



The maxim of modesty is demonstrated by the students' humble attitude in speech. Observations noted that students did not praise themselves excessively; utterances such as "Sorry, I did my best" reflected a reasonable level of self-acknowledgment. The maxim of agreement is evident in statements like "I agree with his/her opinion" and "Let's drop it; there's no need to discuss it further," showing an effort to reach a consensus without conflict. Informant Adit added that when he disagrees, he phrases it as "I feel your opinion isn't quite right," demonstrating an effort to remain polite despite the difference of opinion. Meanwhile, the maxim of sympathy is apparent in expressions of empathy, such as "Don't worry about it; we'll try again later," when a friend is facing a problem. All informants described how they comfort friends—ranging from calming them down and asking them to share their problems, offering support and encouragement ("Keep your spirits up"), and comforting and cheering them up, to simply offering words of encouragement.

Findings regarding violations across the two observation sessions revealed different patterns. During the first session in the corridor (May 18, 2026, at 1:00 PM), no significant maxim violations were found, as all indicators... violations yielded negative results. During the second session in the canteen (May 21, 2026) at 1:00 PM, violations were far more frequent and encompassed three maxims simultaneously: the maxim of tact, the maxim of approbation, and the maxim of modesty. This striking difference demonstrates that the context and location of the interaction significantly influence the level of politeness exhibited by the students.

No violations of the maxim of tact were observed in the first session, as the students did not offend or disparage others. However, in the canteen session, offensive remarks were noted, such as "jelek gak tulisan kau tadik t" (your handwriting on the board earlier was terrible) and "pasti kau ndak mandik tadik pagi ye" (it looks like you didn't shower this morning). Both remarks clearly disparaged the interlocutor by directly

attacking a friend's appearance or abilities. In an interview, the informant Yuni admitted to using harsh language because she was "carried away by the situation while joking around," indicating that these violations were triggered more by the casual atmosphere than by deliberate intent.

Violations of the Maxim of Approbation were most clearly observed during the canteen sessions. Remarks such as "lemot gak kau" (why are you so slow?) and "rakus benar kau makan bah" (you're eating so greedily/you're such a glutton) were direct insults that belittled peers. Informant Aisyah admitted to feeling offended when "a friend mocked me while we were playing," while Informant Yuni felt offended when "comments were made about my appearance." Informant Novia admitted to feeling offended when "a friend made disparaging remarks while we were joking around," Informant Risky mentioned feeling offended "when my appearance was criticized," and Informant Rahmat admitted to feeling offended "when I was insulted during a joke." These accounts demonstrate that violations of the Maxim of Approbation not only occurred but also had a tangible impact on the students involved.

Violations of the Maxim of Modesty were also found in the canteen sessions, manifesting as excessive self-aggrandizement—such as the remark "untung tulisan aku bagus sih" (luckily, my handwriting is good)—uttered immediately after criticizing a friend's handwriting; this served to belittle others while highlighting oneself. Violations of the Maxim of Modesty appeared exclusively in the more relaxed and informal context of the canteen. Conversely, no significant violations of the Maxim of Agreement or the Maxim of Sympathy were observed in either session. Students continued to strive for polite agreement—evident in remarks like "iye aku setuju same pendapat kau" (yeah, I agree with your opinion)—and demonstrated genuine sympathy toward peers facing difficulties.

Regarding the causes of these violations, four factors were confirmed across both observation sessions. The first factor was the diversity of

cultural and linguistic backgrounds among the students. Given that SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang enrolls students from various ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, these differences played a significant role. Informant Adit noted, "Yeah, when dealing with someone who speaks a different language, you have to make an extra effort to understand each other," while informant Yuni stated, "We didn't really click because of the language difference." The second factor was the informal, playful atmosphere—particularly evident during the canteen sessions, where more instances of rule-breaking were observed compared to the corridors. The third factor involved differences in social status or age among students; this was confirmed across both observation sessions, as students interacted with peers of varying social backgrounds and grade levels. The fourth factor was the use of colloquialisms or slang, a practice confirmed by all informants: Aisyah used terms like "Cok" and "bro"; Yuni used "say"; Adit used "Cok" and "njay"; Novia used "Cok" and "bro"; Risky used "bor" (e.g., "bor, so we aren't going to the canteen?"); and Rahmat used "Cok" and "bro" in daily conversation. One factor observed in both sessions but deemed insignificant was emotional stress or conflict; although noted on the observation sheets, the students appeared to interact in a relaxed manner without any significant tension.

DISCUSSION

Based on the research findings outlined above, it is evident that the majority of students at SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang apply principles of linguistic politeness in their daily interactions, particularly in informal situations outside the classroom. The level of adherence across all observed maxim indicators suggests that the politeness norms taught at school have become well-ingrained in the students' communication behavior. Prayitno (2017) notes that in a sociopragmatic context, a single utterance can simultaneously reflect adherence to one maxim while violating another, depending on the context and the interlocutor. Thus, although the overall level of politeness is high, this does

not mean that violations do not occur at all. A comparison between the hallway and canteen settings reveals that the canteen setting clearly exhibits a higher frequency of violations. This is understandable, as the canteen atmosphere—bustling with eating and joking—leads students to speak more freely and informally than they do in the hallways.

Chaer & Agustina (2016) explain that every speech community possesses its own politeness norms; within a school environment, these norms are reinforced by institutional rules which, even if not always explicitly stated, influence student behavior. This is confirmed by the statements of all informants, who acknowledged the existence of speaking norms at school. Aisyah stated, "Yes, there are; we shouldn't speak carelessly while on school grounds." Yuni emphasized, "Yes, we aren't allowed to speak carelessly at school." Adit stated, "Yes, we aren't allowed to use rude language." Novia remarked, "Yes, we aren't allowed to speak carelessly while on school grounds." Risky mentioned, "Yes, we aren't allowed to use impolite language," and Rahmat emphasized, "Yes, we aren't allowed to use rude language." This awareness demonstrates that students do not merely practice politeness automatically; rather, they are knowledgeable about and understand what is expected of them within the school environment. These findings align with the research of Pakri et al. (2023), who also observed that linguistic politeness manifests in various forms of student speech, albeit in different contexts. While Pakri et al. focused on formal instructional settings, the present study demonstrates that politeness can also prominently emerge in informal contexts. Sari & Aprianti (2022) reported similar findings, noting that students tend to employ speech that fosters harmony during interactions. This reinforces the view that students—at least in certain situations—consciously or unconsciously utilize communication strategies that maintain a balance in social relationships between speakers, precisely as described by Leech (2016) in his concept of the politeness principle.

Although the number of violations identified was not particularly high, they still warrant deeper analysis. Violations involving excessive self-aggrandizement and the disparagement of others to draw attention to oneself—categorized as breaches of the modesty maxim—reveal that this phenomenon frequently occurs unconsciously during the more relaxed conversations typical of canteen sessions. Brown and Levinson (in Culpeper, 2016) explain that adolescents are at a developmental stage characterized by a strong desire for validation and group acceptance. In their efforts to assert themselves among peers, students may inadvertently employ comparisons that belittle others; this stems not from malice, but rather from the ongoing process of constructing a social identity. Kurniati (2020) similarly concludes that politeness violations in daily interactions often arise from a mismatch between the speaker's norms and the listener's expectations, rather than from an intent to cause hurt. Adit, one of the informants, admitted to using impolite language, attributing it to habit ("maybe because I'm used to it"), while Yuni noted that such impoliteness often arises from habit or occurs spontaneously during joking.

Differences in cultural and linguistic backgrounds stand out as a primary factor. Given that students at SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang come from diverse ethnic and regional language backgrounds, these differences significantly influence how they interact with one another. Sumarsono (2017) emphasizes that in a multicultural community, an individual's linguistic behavior is shaped by the process of adapting to the communication norms of their new environment. This is evident in the interview data: Yuni mentioned a "lack of connection due to language differences," Adit noted the need for extra understanding when dealing with different languages, Novia stated that "different ethnic groups have different ways of speaking," Risky revealed that background differences affected his speech, and Rahmat simply noted, "yes, there is a lack of connection." In essence, linguistic and cultural differences not only complicate communication but also risk leading

to breaches of politeness norms, as each party operates with different standards and habits.

The informal atmosphere of joking is also a highly relevant factor, particularly in the more relaxed setting of the school canteen. Rahardi (2017) explains that in informal situations, the boundary between polite and impolite speech becomes blurred because students tend to lower their standards of formality. Informant Yuni admitted she did not always feel she was speaking politely, citing habit or spontaneity while joking; Adit expressed a desire to improve his way of speaking; Risky admitted to using impolite language because he got "carried away joking"; and Rahmat similarly attributed impoliteness to acting "spontaneously." This indicates that while students are aware of the need for improvement, ingrained habits and the atmosphere of joking often cause them to "forget" to maintain politeness.

The use of slang as a third factor is also crucial to understand accurately. All informants reported using slang in their daily interactions; Aisyah used terms like "Cok" and "bro," Yuni used "say," Adit used "Cok" and "njay," Novia used "Cok" and "bro," Risky used "bor" (e.g., "bor, aren't you going to the canteen?"), and Rahmat used "Cok" and "bro." Wibowo (2019) notes that within adolescent communities, slang serves as a marker of group solidarity rather than merely an expression of impoliteness. Therefore, the use of slang cannot be immediately dismissed as a breach of politeness without considering its context and pragmatic function. This distinction is vital to ensure that teachers and researchers do not hastily judge the language students use without grasping the underlying social significance.

A comparison with Lestari's (2021) study—which identified recurring violations of the Approbation and Sympathy maxims in West Kalimantan—is also relevant here. The current study yielded similar findings, particularly regarding canteen interactions, where violations of the Approbation maxim were clearly evident in utterances such as "kau tadik pagi kayaknye nda mandi lah" (it looks like you didn't bathe this

morning) and "kau rakus benar makan e" (you're so greedy—look how much you're eating). In contrast to the calmer atmosphere of the corridor, the canteen setting demonstrates how the location and social atmosphere of an interaction significantly influence the nature and frequency of violations.

The study's strength lies in its ability to capture data from informal student interactions—a context rarely studied—while simultaneously identifying the application of maxims, their violations, and the underlying causes within a unified analytical framework. The six informants—Aisyah et al.—provided firsthand student perspectives that greatly enriched the analysis, ensuring the findings were not based solely on the researcher's observations. A limitation of this study is that the data covers only two observation sessions at two locations; consequently, it cannot fully capture the students' communication patterns across all informal school settings. Further research involving more observation sessions in various locations—such as the sports field or during extracurricular activities—would provide a more comprehensive and representative picture.

Overall, the findings indicate that students at SMP

Negeri 3 Ketapang generally possess the awareness and ability to apply principles of linguistic politeness, although there remain areas requiring attention, particularly in freer, more relaxed settings like the canteen. Instances of non-compliance stem not merely from a lack of knowledge regarding the rules, but from the fact that norms of politeness become more fluid in informal contexts. Leech (2016) emphasizes that politeness principles are not always strictly applied in every interaction, as situational and relational factors between speakers largely determine the extent to which these norms must be upheld. Therefore, what is required is not merely knowledge of politeness norms but also situational sensitivity—specifically, the students' ability to discern when and where stricter adherence to politeness is necessary.

The implications of these findings for the educational sector are significant. Indonesian language teachers, particularly at SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang, need to design programs for fostering linguistic politeness that go beyond classroom theory to address the real-world communication contexts students encounter outside the classroom. A situation-based approach—such as reflecting on daily conversations or simulating interactions within the school environment—could prove effective. Furthermore, the diversity of students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds at the school should be viewed as an asset rather than an obstacle. By recognizing that each student brings different communication norms, teachers can help students respect these differences while fostering a shared understanding of the politeness norms applicable within the school environment. In this way, the cultivation of linguistic politeness becomes an integral part of a broader, more meaningful character education. Rahardi (2017) emphasizes that studies on linguistic politeness rooted in empirical data from actual speech communities are more easily translated into targeted, sustainable educational policies and programs, as the resulting findings reflect the actual conditions students experience in their daily school lives.

CONCLUSION

Based on observations and interviews regarding student interactions at SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang, three conclusions can be drawn. First, the application of linguistic politeness maxims is highly prevalent in students' informal interactions, characterized by a high degree of adherence to Leech's (2016) six maxims: tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy. Almost all forms of these maxims were observed in student interactions, with only a few instances not fully evident. Students generally demonstrated an ability to interact in a subtle, non-coercive manner, showing mutual respect and humility, striving for consensus, and expressing empathy toward their peers. This indicates that the



politeness norms taught at the school have been effectively internalized within the students' informal communication behavior. Secondly, violations of maxims during student interactions followed different patterns across the two observation sessions. In the first session (corridor), no significant maxim violations were observed, as all indicators yielded negative results. In the second session (cafeteria), violations were more varied and encompassed three types: violations of the Maxim of Tact (remarks offending or attacking a peer's appearance), violations of the Maxim of Approbation (direct mockery belittling a peer's abilities), and violations of the Maxim of Modesty (excessive self-aggrandizement). These findings indicate that the cafeteria—as a more open and bustling interaction space—fosters a higher frequency of violations compared to the corridor. As acknowledged by all informants during interviews, these violations generally occurred unintentionally within a playful context.

Third, the factors influencing maxim violations comprise four observed elements: (1) differences in students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds; (2) a playful and informal interaction atmosphere; (3) disparities in social status or age among students; and (4) the use of colloquialisms or slang that may breach politeness norms. These findings confirm that maxim violations in students' informal interactions are driven more by contextual and sociocultural factors than by the speakers' intentions or ill will. Therefore, fostering linguistic politeness requires a contextual and sustained approach that takes into account the diverse backgrounds of students in a multicultural school environment like SMP Negeri 3 Ketapang.

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