

## Politeness Strategies of Anglo Expatriates in Indonesia: A Sociopragmatic Analysis of Directive Speech Acts

ADE MULYANAH \*

Faculty of Cultural Sciences,  
Padjadjaran University, Indonesia  
ade22009@mail.unpad.ac.id

EKANING KRISNAWATI

Faculty of Cultural Sciences,  
Padjadjaran University, Indonesia

LINA MEILINAWATI RAHAYU

Faculty of Cultural Sciences,  
Padjadjaran University, Indonesia

HERRY JOGASWARA

National Research and Innovation Agency, Indonesia

### ABSTRACT

*Politeness strategies in speech acts are essential for Anglo expatriates navigating Indonesia's hierarchical, high-context culture. This study investigates how expatriates from the US, UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand apply politeness in directive speech acts, shaped by intercultural interactions and local power structures. This research employs a qualitative approach, with data collected through a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) administered to 26 expatriates in Jakarta, Bali, and West Java; the data are then analysed using Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory and Searle's Speech Act Theory, focusing on hierarchy, social distance, and power. The results indicate a shift in the application of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory in the Indonesian context, showing Anglo expatriates from low-context cultures adapt to high-context norms in their directive speech acts through modified politeness strategies. Negative politeness predominates, particularly among British, Canadian, and American expatriates, while Australians and New Zealanders adopt a more blended approach, reflecting flexible deployment of politeness strategies according to cultural and regional norms. In Jakarta and Bali, politeness strategies are applied most casually, whereas in West Java they are expressed most formally, demonstrating how expatriates navigate hierarchical and high-context communication patterns. Positive politeness and culturally attuned lexical choices further signal heightened sociopragmatic awareness and reconfigured face management, especially via pronoun-based markers. Given the limited empirical research on expatriate politeness in Indonesia, particularly among Anglo expatriates, we believe this study offers significant novelty by providing rare, context-specific evidence that extends intercultural pragmatics through grounded insights into politeness adaptation in a high-context sociocultural setting in Indonesia.*

*Keywords: Anglo; expatriates; politeness; directive; Indonesia*

### INTRODUCTION

As globalisation intensifies the mobility of skilled labour, Indonesia has emerged as a strategic destination for expatriates due to its growing economy, regional influence, and increasing foreign investment. The number of expatriates in Indonesia has grown significantly, from 70,120 in 2013 to 121,965 in 2023, with notable increases from Anglophone countries such as the UK (2,140), Australia (2,311), and the USA, as well as from other nations such as Singapore, Korea, China,

India, and Japan. This demographic shift has profound implications for global and intercultural communication, positioning Indonesia as a dynamic site of cross-cultural interaction, negotiation, and collaboration.

Expatriates in Indonesia come from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In response, the Ministry of Manpower issued Regulation No. 8 of 2021, which governs the employment of expatriates in the country. Regulations mandate expatriates to undergo language training to support foreign investment and the transfer of knowledge and technology (Harianto, 2021). Locals and expatriates communicate using a mix of native languages, the host language, and cultural elements, often incorporating Indonesian phrases into their speech acts.

Speech act research, particularly in Asian languages such as Indonesian, Chinese, and Japanese, has often relied on the concept of politeness to examine speech acts. The study compares speech-act differences across cultures, focusing on how politeness strategies vary.

A distinct challenge arises from cultural differences, as Indonesian speakers often struggle to comprehend the greeting questions posed by students and expatriates from English-speaking backgrounds. Indonesian speakers also find it challenging to understand the greeting questions of students and expatriates with an English background, such as the greeting "*Apa kabar?*" '*How are you?*' every time they meet (Mulyanah & Krisnawati, 2023). Likewise, foreign speakers are often confused by the question, "*Have you eaten?*" Chinese speakers when they meet (Zhu & Liu, 2020). This phenomenon suggests that studying speech acts by foreign speakers, particularly Indonesian speakers, requires comprehensive research, as there is a notable lack of research on politeness in directive speech acts involving Anglo-Expatriates influenced by their domiciles.

Politeness involves the strategic use of linguistic resources to manage face and social harmony; speech acts are communicative actions such as requesting or directing, and sociopragmatics examines cultural norms governing their appropriateness. Within this framework, Anglo expatriates from low-context, individualistic cultures highlight a gap in intercultural pragmatics regarding how sociocultural backgrounds shape the adaptation of politeness strategies in directive speech acts within non-Anglo contexts.

Other studies have also examined the speech acts of foreign speakers in Indonesian utterances (Kartika, 2019; Muzakki, 2022; Rukhana et al., 2018). The research focuses on cultural understanding in the academic background.

Previous studies have explored the need to understand culturally embedded speech acts in Indonesian (Mulyanah, 2019; Mulyanah et al., 2024), emphasising the importance of mapping politeness strategies due to their link with face and effective communication. However, research on politeness in Indonesian, particularly in the speech acts of Anglo expatriates, remains limited. While politeness strategies are widely studied, few have examined how Anglo expatriates minimise directive speech in Indonesia's hierarchical workplaces. With a growing expatriate population and mandatory language training (Ministry of Manpower Regulation No. 8, 2021), understanding their pragmatic strategies is crucial. This study aims to map the sociopragmatic features of politeness among Anglo expatriates, focusing on directive speech acts and how power, imposition, domicile, and country of origin influence their communication in professional contexts. Two key questions guide this research:

1. How do Anglo expatriates employ politeness strategies in their directive speech acts within Indonesian workplace communication?
2. How do sociopragmatic variables, domicile, and country of origin influence the politeness strategies used by Anglo expatriates in Indonesian workplace communication?

These two issues address the mapping of politeness strategies in directive speech by expatriates and how sociopragmatic factors, such as domicile and country of origin, influence their use of variables when speaking Indonesian.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In interpersonal communication, politeness is vital because it shapes how speakers engage in social interactions, avoid conflict, and maintain harmony. Speech Act Theory (Searle, 1979) and Politeness Theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987) are two common frameworks used in linguistic pragmatics to analyse politeness. Both offer crucial conceptual frameworks for comprehending directive speech acts and the sociocultural elements that shape them.

### SPEECH ACT THEORY AND DIRECTIVE SPEECH ACTS

Speech Act Theory (Searle, 1969, 1979) classifies speech acts into locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, providing a basis for analysing how meaning and action are conveyed in interaction. Politeness is closely tied to speech acts because it regulates the management of illocutionary force to minimise interpersonal conflict. Directive speech acts, such as requests, commands, and suggestions, impose greater pressure on the hearer than other speech acts, making them central to politeness research. In Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory, all speech acts may threaten face, with directives constituting particularly salient face-threatening acts requiring mitigation, especially in cross-cultural communication.

### POLITENESS STRATEGIES AND FACE-SAVING ACTS

Linguistic politeness is vital in conversational interactions. In politeness, language involves linguistic and non-linguistic aspects (Sifianou, 2010). In intercultural communication, politeness aims to avoid cultural conflict, and understanding politeness norms is essential to achieving those goals (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Watts, in Hasegawa, 2009).

Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory conceptualises politeness primarily in terms of face-threatening acts, grounded in the distinction between positive face—the desire for approval—and negative face—the desire for autonomy. Although this model has been critically examined, particularly by Matsumoto (1988), who argues that it is overly Western-oriented and inadequately captures politeness in Asian contexts where social obligation and role-based norms outweigh individual face concerns, the theory remains analytically robust. Its systematic account of face, politeness strategies, and mitigation continues to offer a strong, widely applicable framework for analysing directive speech acts, mainly when used with cultural sensitivity and complemented by sociopragmatic perspectives.

Since directive speech acts entail requesting or directing someone to take action, they naturally threaten the listener's reputation. Speakers use four main politeness techniques to lessen these Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs):

1. Bald on Record: Direct and unmitigated statements (e.g., "Give me the file").
2. Positive Politeness: Strategies that build rapport and show camaraderie (e.g., "Let's grab some coffee, okay?").
3. Negative Politeness: Strategies that minimise imposition and show deference (e.g., "Would you mind passing me the report?").
4. Off-record Politeness: Indirect hints allow the listener to infer meaning (e.g., "It's cold in here" to suggest closing a window).

#### SOCIOPRAGMATICS AND CROSS-CULTURAL POLITENESS

The study of sociopragmatics examines how language use is shaped by cultural expectations and social norms in various societies (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Leech, 2007). Identifying three key societal factors that influence the concept of politeness:

1. Social distance (D) refers to the level of familiarity between the Speaker and the listener.
2. Power (P) is the hierarchical relationship between the Speaker and the hearer.
3. The rank of imposition (Range of Imposition) is how burdensome the request is to the hearer.

These factors are essential in expatriate communication because expatriates must navigate the Indonesian hierarchy, understand the rules of indirect communication, and adhere to politeness requirements (Nham et al., 2022). Prior research (Haristiani & Sari, 2019; Mulyanah & Krisnawati, 2023) has demonstrated that non-native speakers frequently encounter interlanguage effects, where their politeness strategies are shaped by the norms of their native language, sometimes resulting in pragmatic failures.

#### CULTURAL CONTEXT

Indonesian society, characterised by a high power distance and collectivism, employs honorifics (e.g., *Bapak/Ibu*) in hierarchical settings to demonstrate respect and maintain harmony. As a high-context culture (Hall, 1976), communication in this culture relies heavily on implicit cues. In contrast, low-context cultures, such as those in the US, UK, and Australia, are more explicit. This cultural gap influences how Anglo expatriates adapt their politeness strategies in Indonesia. Table 1 illustrates these cultural types.

TABLE 1. Hall's Theory (1976): High-context vs low-context cultures

Aspect	High-Context Culture (e.g., Indonesia, Japan, China)	Low-Context Culture (e.g., UK, Australia)
Communication	Indirect dependence on nonverbal cues and context	Direct, clear, and straightforward
Politeness	Hierarchical non-confrontational	Task-oriented, efficiency-driven
Language Use	Meaning depends on social context	Meaning is in the words themselves
Power Distance	High authority and seniority are important	Low-egalitarian relations
Decision-Making	Slow, consensus-based	Fast, individualistic
Conflict Resolution	Indirectly maintain harmony	Direct, direct discussion
Relationships	Long-term, trust-based	Short-term, transactional
Expatriate Adaptation	Requires indirectness and face-saving strategies	Requires direct, logical communication

Table 1 combines Hall's high–low context theory with Hofstede's cultural dimensions, showing that high-context cultures (e.g., Indonesia, Japan, China, Arab countries) rely on shared meaning, indirectness, and nonverbal cues and are typically characterised by collectivism and high-power distance. In contrast, low-context cultures (e.g., the US, the UK, Canada, Australia) favour direct communication and align with individualism and low power distance (Hofstede, 2001). This integrated framework underpins the study's argument that expatriates from Anglo, low-context, individualist societies must adapt their communicative strategies to perform directive speech acts in high-context environments such as Indonesia, where deference, indirectness, and sensitivity to social hierarchy are culturally expected.

## METHODOLOGY

### PARTICIPANTS

This study examines politeness in Indonesian speech acts among Anglo expatriates from a sociopragmatic perspective. Using purposive sampling, 26 participants from diverse professional backgrounds were selected based on residence in expatriate-dense areas (Jakarta, Bali, West Java), self-reported fluency in Bahasa Indonesia, over one year of residence, and employment in public or multinational sectors. Most had long-term experience and regular intercultural interactions, which allowed for immersion in local communicative norms. Recruitment involved formal letters to institutions outlining the study's aims and criteria, with existing professional networks facilitating access. Data are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Participants based on domicile and country of origin

Category	Description	Number	Percentage
Country of Origin	United Kingdom	5	19%
	USA	6	23%
	Australia	10	38%
	Canada	2	12%
	New Zealand	3	8%
Domicile	Jakarta Province	9	35%
	West Java Province	6	23%
	Bali Province	11	42%

Table 2 shows participant diversity by country of origin and domicile, reflecting a broad mix of English-speaking backgrounds and Indonesian regions. This sociolinguistic variation adds contextual depth and strengthens the study's reliability by avoiding a single national or local bias. Such diversity offers richer insights into pragmatic behaviour and politeness in cross-cultural, multilingual workplaces.

Here are the distributions of expatriates from each region based on job level and professional field.

TABLE 3. Participants based on job level and professional field

Domicile	Country of Origin	Job Level			Professional field		
		Category	No.	Pct.	Category	No.	Pct.
Jakarta: 9 expatriates	UK	Industry	2	22%	Director	1	11%
					Staff	1	11%
					Manager	1	11%
	Australia	Industry	1	11%	Head Division	2	44%
		Professional	4	44%	Research fellow	1	11%
					Diplomat	1	11%
	Service	2	22%	Hotel Manager	2	44%	
West Java: 6 expatriates	USA	Industry	1	16%	Staff	1	16%
		Professional	4	66%	Head Division	3	50%
				Staff	1	16%	
	Australia	Professional	1	16%	Head Division/ Teacher	1	16%
Bali: 11 expatriates	UK	Professional	2	18%	Head Division	1	9%
					Manager	1	9%
			Service	1	9%	Manager	1
	Australia	Professional	2	18%	Head Division/ Educator	2	18%
			Service	1	9%	Staff in a hotel	1
	Canada	Professional	1	9%	Head Division/ Educator	1	9%
			Service	1	9%	Staff in a hotel	1
	New Zealand	Industry	2	18%	CEO	2	18%
Professional		1	9%	Head Division/ Educator	1	9%	

Table 3 illustrates that Jakarta, as the capital, hosts the largest expatriate population, mainly Australians, Americans, and Britons in service, professional, and industrial roles. In West Java, US and Australian professionals dominate the education sector, with a relatively small number of local industry professionals. Bali attracts Australians and Canadians, while Britons and New Zealanders are more commonly found in service and industrial roles, such as CEO and manager positions. These patterns reflect regional differences in economic, industrial, and educational opportunities shaping expatriate roles in Indonesia.

#### DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS

Data collection for this study was conducted over six months in 2023 across three central provinces in Indonesia: Jakarta, West Java, and Bali. Ethical clearance was obtained from the National Research and Innovation Agency before the commencement of the study. The research was conducted in three sequential phases: Jakarta (April), West Java (May), and Bali (June), each phase lasting approximately one month.

The primary instrument for data collection was the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Martínez Flor, 2005; Martínez Flor & Usó-Juan, 2011; Nurani, 2009; Wojtaszek, 2018), which presented seven workplace scenarios that required directive speech acts. The DCT was conducted in Bahasa Indonesia to capture politeness strategies within the native language, ensuring sociopragmatic validity in intercultural communication. Incorporating speaker-hearer relationships (power), status (rank of imposition), and social distance (Nordin et al., 2024). The social distance used was Bogardus's Social Distance Scale, which categorises social distance as close, familiar, and distant.

TABLE 4. Speech event in directive speech

The situation	Interlocutor	Hearer's status	Distance	Speaker's Occupation (Power)
At work: Offering help to complete the job	Colleague	Equal/high	Close	
At work: Asking to make coffee/tea	Office boy	Low/Equal	Distant	Staff
At work: Interrupting conversations	Colleague	Equal/high	Distant	Manager,
At work: Asking to fetch something	Colleague	Low/Equal	Familiar	Head Division,
At work: Asking to have a meeting	Colleague	Equal/high	Familiar	Director
At work: Asking to have a meeting	Boss	High	Distant	Research fellow.
At work: Asking for help	Colleague	Equal/High	Close	CEO

The data collection procedure was implemented in three stages to ensure validity and reliability (Beebe & Takahashi, 1989).

### Stage 1: Open-Ended DCT

The DCT was tested through expert review, with the first stage consisting of an open-ended DCT administered to a purposively selected subset of 10 participants. This stage aimed to capture a broad range of authentic responses to directive speech acts across seven social scenarios. The participant should represent their present profession. Participants were given clear instructions about the indicator in every speech event, and responses were collected via Google Forms. The open-ended format allowed diverse answers, which were then analysed. The responses were in Bahasa Indonesia, then translated into English.

#### (1) Open-ended DCT prompt

At lunchtime, you find that your colleague, who is also a staff member and a close friend, is still busy finishing work, even though he looks tired. You want to help him. You can include local language, slang, and colloquialisms in Indonesian.

(You have a close relation, but the status can be high/low)

*What would you say when you want to help him?*

Responses

R1: *Take a rest first, I'll finish the rest. Don't worry, it will be done.*

R2: *Please go ahead and rest. I'll help finish it.*

### Stage 2: Semi-Closed DCT

In the second stage, the DCT was adapted into a semi-closed format with preset response options, providing more transparent and manageable choices for participants. Based on these responses, the DCT was revised into a semi-closed format.

#### (2) Semi multiple choice

Your response may incorporate local cultural expressions by using Indonesian and regional languages.

Responses (from other participants)

A. *Take a rest first, I'll finish the rest. Don't worry, it'll be done.*

B. *Please go ahead and rest. I'll help finish it.*

C. *.....(open responses)*

The semi-end DCT, as described by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), aimed to streamline the data collection process while preserving the richness of participants' pragmatic responses. The semi-closed format made it easier to compare responses across participants and facilitated the subsequent analysis.

### Stage 3: In-Depth Interview

The DCT procedure consisted of two stages: prompt distribution and follow-up interviews. Given the study's focus on factual yet experience-informed responses, the traditional role-play element was replaced with in-depth interviews conducted across three provinces. Participants who referenced local expressions in their DCT responses were purposively selected for interviews to validate and enrich the data, while all 26 participants remained included in the final analysis. These interviews aimed to confirm DCT responses, explore participants' local and intercultural experiences, and provide deeper insights into culture. They also served as a means of triangulating the findings by examining sociocultural variables, such as local greetings, phatic particles (e.g., "deh," "dong"), honorifics, and address forms. This process yielded rich qualitative data on participants' sociopragmatic competence and cultural adaptation within the Indonesian context.

## DATA ANALYSIS

Data from 26 participants were analysed using Brown and Levinson's politeness framework, categorising responses into four strategies: bald on record, positive, negative, and off record. The analysis also considered sociopragmatic variables, i.e. power, social distance, and rank of imposition, to assess their influence on the choice of politeness strategies. Following Creswell and Creswell's six-step data analysis procedure, the process began with sorting and categorising DCT responses by country of origin, domicile, and strategy type. Next, strategies were classified by type and function, followed by an examination of sociological factors affecting politeness choices. These were evaluated based on the participants' backgrounds and interactional contexts. The results were then presented in a structured narrative report, culminating in a synthesis of key findings in the conclusion.

## RESULT

### ANGLO EXPATRIATES' POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN DIRECTIVE SPEECH ACTS IN INDONESIAN UTTERANCES

This section outlines the politeness strategies employed by Anglo expatriates in Indonesia, categorised by sub-strategy. Results reveal regional and cultural variations, reflecting adaptation to local norms. Subsections detail the frequency and impact of these strategies in managing face-threatening acts and maintaining harmony.

TABLE 5. The Anglo's politeness strategy in the directive speech act

Politeness Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Negative Politeness	100	55.56%
Positive Politeness	77	42.77%
Bald on Record	3	1.66%
Total	180	100%

Table 5 presents 180 utterances produced by 26 participants across seven DCT situations. Although the expected total was 182, two responses were excluded due to data corruption. The analysis reveals a clear preference for negative politeness, reflecting participants' efforts to reduce

imposition and maintain social distance. Positive politeness was the second most frequently used strategy, emphasising rapport-building and social closeness. In contrast, bald-on-record strategies appeared only rarely, indicating a strong tendency to avoid face-threatening acts. These patterns suggest that participants strategically employed politeness to navigate interpersonal dynamics in workplace communication.

### NEGATIVE POLITENESS

Negative politeness strategies help manage social distance and avoid imposition, crucial in Indonesia's hierarchical culture. This section shows how Anglo expatriates use deference, indirectness, and respect to align with local face-saving norms in formal contexts.

TABLE 6. Anglo expatriates' negative politeness in directive speech acts

Sub-strategy	Freq.	Pct.	Description
Give Deference	65	65%	Reflects respect and hierarchy, showing deference to others.
Minimise Imposition	25	25%	Efforts to reduce the burden or imposition in communication.
Question/Hedge	9	9%	Softening statements to reduce directness or mitigate impact.
Apology	1	1%	Used to maintain politeness and avoid offending.
Total	100	100%	

Table 6 shows that Anglo expatriates commonly use Give Deference as a key negative politeness strategy, reflecting sensitivity to Indonesia's hierarchical, respect-based culture. Their use of Minimise Imposition, Question/Hedge, and occasional Apology highlights efforts to soften requests and preserve the hearer's face. These patterns suggest active linguistic adaptation to local norms, especially where power and social harmony are central.

- (a) Hedging and questioning are key negative politeness strategies to minimise Imposition and soften requests.

Speech Event	Question, Hedge
Situation 4	<i>Apakah bisa ambil file itu?</i> Would you get me the file?
Situation 2	<i>Boleh minta tolong buat kopi?</i> Can you make me some coffee?
Situation 7	<i>Apakah bisa bantu saya?</i> Would you like to help me?

The above examples illustrate the question/hedge strategy, which involves question strategy (e.g. *Would you get me the file?*). This approach softens requests and allows the listener room to refuse, making it a common but less dominant strategy.

- (b) Minimising Imposition is a key negative politeness strategy to make requests or suggestions seem less demanding or intrusive. The example of data is shown below.

Speech Event	Minimising Imposition
Situation 3	<i>Mohon maafkan saya. Bolehkah saya meminta waktu sedetik?</i> <i>Please forgive me. May I ask for a second?</i> <i>Permisi. Boleh saya mengganggu sebentar?</i> <i>Excuse me. Can I bother you for a moment?</i>

The above examples describe minimising imposition, as seen in phrases like “*Can I bother you for a moment?*” Words like *sedetik* (a second) and *sebentar* (a moment) soften requests, respecting the hearer's negative face by reducing perceived pressure.

- (c) The giving deference strategy. Giving deference shows respect, acknowledges power differences, and lowers the speaker's status to reduce FTA. The following examples are found in the data.

Speech Event	Giving Deference
Situation 4	<i>Mohon maafkan saya. Maukah anda ambilkan file saya di sana jika anda tidak keberatan?</i> Excuse me. Would you mind fetching my file there?
Situation 6	<i>Mohon izin menyampaikan jadwal rapat besok Bapak. Terima kasih.</i> Please allow me to inform you of tomorrow's meeting, Sir. Thanks

Pronouns and titles such as *anda* (you), honorifics, and *bapak/ibu* (Sir/Madam) reflect negative politeness, high respect, formality, and politeness, especially in professional settings. Findings indicate Indonesian speakers favour deference and indirectness in formal requests.

- (d) Apologising for the imposition

The example supports the politeness strategy of apologising by saying, “*I am sorry to trouble you*”. While apologies, such as “*Sorry for the trouble*”, add politeness by acknowledging that the request may inconvenience the hearer, they also convey a sense of empathy.

#### POSITIVE POLITENESS STRATEGY

Positive politeness refers to strategies that enhance the listener's positive face by expressing friendliness, solidarity, and closeness, such as compliments, agreement, and shared interests, thereby reducing social distance.

TABLE 7. Anglo's expatriate positive politeness in directive speech acts

Sub-strategy	Freq.	Pct.	Description
Use in group identity markers	60	77.63%	Signals shared group membership
Notice to attend to the hearer (his interests, wants, needs)	12	15.79%	Shows attention to the hearer's needs
Intensify interest in hearers and seek agreement	5	6.58%	Engages the listener
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Table 7 identifies three positive politeness strategies employed by Anglo expatriates in their directives: in-group markers to build solidarity, noticing the hearer to demonstrate attentiveness, and intensifying interest or seeking agreement to foster alignment. These reflect deliberate adaptation to Indonesia's high-context, collectivist culture, where harmony and closeness are central.

<b>Speech Event</b>	<b>Positive Politeness</b>
Situation 1	Notice to attend to the hearer (his interests, wants, needs). <i>Saya bantu kamu ya, kamu duduk saja</i> I'll help you, you just sit down.
Situation 7	<i>Ini sudah jam makan siang, ayo makan dulu.</i> It's break time, so let's have lunch.
Situation 2	Use in group identity markers. <i>Tolong buat kopi ya, Mas/Mbak!</i> Please make coffee, Brother/Ms! Kopi, makasih (I will have) Coffee, thanks.
Situation 7	<i>Boleh titip makan siang ya Bang?</i> Can I ask you to get me lunch, please, Buddy? Intensify interest in hearers and seek agreement.
Situation 5	<i>Ayo meeting.</i> Let us have a meeting.

The examples illustrate three positive politeness strategies. In-group identity markers, such as casual terms like "Mas" or "Mbak" (Ms./bro), foster solidarity. Noticing expresses care through context-sensitive remarks (e.g., "It's break time, so let's have lunch"), while seeking agreement invites collaboration with inclusive language (e.g., "Let us have a meeting"). Together, these strategies enhance rapport and interaction quality.

#### BALD ON RECORD

Bald on record is often used when clarity and efficiency are crucial, such as in emergencies or when giving clear instructions. The examples are as follows:

<b>Situation</b>	<b>Bald on-Record</b>
Situation 5	<i>Datang ke rapat besok</i> Come to tomorrow's meeting.
Situation 4	<i>Ambilkan file itu</i> Take that file <i>Kopiku mana, mana kopiku</i> Which is my coffee?

For example, in situations 4 and 5, staff members with close, familiar relationships used the direct command, "Come to tomorrow's meeting", when scheduling a meeting. This approach leaves no room for misunderstanding.

#### THE POLITENESS OF ANGLO EXPATRIATES: COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, DOMICILIE, AND SOCIOLOGICAL VARIABLE

This section examines the politeness strategies used by expatriates in three provinces, considering how their domicile, country of origin, and sociological factors influence their communication.

#### MAPPING OF EXPATRIATES' POLITENESS STRATEGIES BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

The research results illustrate the distribution of sentiment frequency across different countries of origin, highlighting the variations in public perception. The sentiment analysis provides valuable insight into how each country perceived the studied subject matter.

TABLE 8. Politeness strategy based on the country of origin

Country of origin	Negative Politeness		Positive Politeness		Bald on Record		Total
	Freq.	Pct.	Freq.	Pct.	Freq.	Pct.	
Australia	43	59.72%	28	38.88%	1	1.38%	72
USA	28	63.63%	14	31.81%	2	4.54%	44
UK	25	65.71%	11	38.13%	1	1.35%	35
Canada	9	64.28%	5	35.71%	0	0.00%	14
New Zealand	12	60%	7	35%	1	5%	20

Table 8 shows that, while politeness strategies vary by country, all favour negative politeness, aligning with Indonesia's hierarchical, indirect norms. British expatriates exhibit the highest use of negative politeness in Indonesia, reflecting a habitus of restraint and hierarchy. Despite increasing egalitarianism in English (Palander-Collin & Nevala, 2020), these norms re-emerge interculturally. Canadians and Americans follow, while Australians and New Zealanders balance politeness strategies.

#### MAPPING EXPATRIATES' POLITENESS STRATEGIES BY DOMICILE

This section examines politeness strategies among Anglo expatriates in Bali, Jakarta, and West Java, highlighting how domicile and country of origin influence their approaches to politeness, social distance, and local integration.

#### EXPATRIATES' POLITENESS IN BALI

TABLE 9. Anglo expatriates' politeness strategies in Bali

Strategy	Sub-strategy	Freq.	Pct.	Description
Negative Politeness	Give deference	25	38.46%	Emphasising hierarchy.
	Question & hedges	4	6.15%	Softening statements to minimise impact
	Minimise the imposition	6	9.23%	Reducing the listener's burden.
	Apology	2	3.07%	Maintaining politeness.
Positive Politeness	Use in group identity marker	20	30.76%	Fostering social connection
	Seek agreement	3	4.61%	Seeking validation to build rapport.
	Notice	3	4.61%	Acknowledges others' presence as a sign of politeness.
Bald on Record	Direct	2	3.08%	Reflecting a preference for indirect communication.
Total		65	100%	

Table 9 illustrates Balinese politeness, which centres on negative strategies such as giving deference, minimising imposition, hedging, and apologising, reflecting respect and indirectness. Frequent use of in-group markers reinforces social bonds, while rare bald-on-record usage shows a preference for polite clarity. Though negative politeness dominates, in-group strategies add warmth, reflecting Balinese values of respect, harmony, and balanced interaction.

**Utterances**  
*Let me help you, yes. You can go home.*

**Types Politeness**  
 Positive politeness giving notice.

*Would you like to come to tomorrow's meeting,  
 Bapak? Thank you  
 Which is my coffee, bli (bro)?*

Negative politeness by giving deference  
 Bald on record

Anglo expatriates in Bali, such as educators, staff, and CEOs from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the UK, primarily use negative politeness. Australians, Canadians, and Britons typically say, "*Would you like to attend tomorrow's meeting, Sir?*" At the same time, New Zealanders often combine this with positive politeness, using phrases like "*let me*" and local terms such as "*bli*" (*brother*). Long-term residents adopt terms like "*Bapak*" and "*bli*," along with softeners like "*yes*," to foster rapport. These strategies reflect Balinese values, including *matur sukma* (*gratitude*) and *astunkara* (*God's willing*), promoting social integration.

### EXPATRIATES' POLITENESS IN WEST JAVA

TABLE 10. Anglo expatriates' politeness strategies in West Java

Strategy	Sub-strategy	Freq.	Pct.	Description
Negative Politeness	Give deference	19	50%	Showing respect for hierarchy
	Minimise the imposition	3	7.89%	Showing a desire to integrate socially
Positive Politeness	Use in group identity marker	12	31.57%	Acknowledges others' presence
	Notice	3	7.89%	Strengthening connection and empathy
Bald on Record	Direct	1	2.63%	A preference for indirect communication
Total		38	100%	

Table 10 shows that expatriates in West Java predominantly employ negative politeness, particularly through acts of deference that signal respect and reduce imposition. Positive politeness strategies that use in-group identity markers reflect efforts to build social connections. Less frequent strategies, minimising imposition and noticing the hearer's support, indicate indirectness, while the rare use of bald-on-record forms suggests a strong preference for maintaining harmony. These patterns are further illustrated in the examples below.

#### Utterance

*Please make some coffee, Mbak?*  
*Fetch the file from the cupboard. Hatur nuhun.*  
*Excuse me. Would you like to fetch the file if you don't  
 mind?*  
*Excuse me. Can I interrupt you for a minute?*

#### Types Politeness

Positive politeness by using in-group identity markers  
 Bald on Record  
 Negative politeness gives deference.  
 Negative politeness is given by minimising the  
 imposition.

Based on the data, US and Australian expatriates in West Java's professional sectors employ negative politeness through honorifics such as *Bapak/Ibu* and *anda*, aligning with local norms. Phatic markers such as "*deh*," "*ya*," and "*hatur nuhun* (*Thank you*)" signal respect and inclusion. Workplace communication minimises face threats, favouring positive politeness and indirectness over direct speech to maintain harmony.

### EXPATRIATES' POLITENESS IN JAKARTA

Expatriates in Jakarta primarily use negative politeness and bald-on-record strategies in workplace communication. Negative politeness, characteristic of American and British expatriates, minimises imposition and demonstrates deference using indirect speech and formal salutations.

TABLE 11. Anglo expatriates' politeness strategies in Jakarta

Strategy	Sub-strategy	Freq.	Pct.	Description
Negative Politeness	Giving deference	17	38.64%	Focusing on hierarchy
	Minimising imposition	4	9.09%	Efforts to soften requests
	Hedging	2	4.54%	Softening strategies to minimise impact
Positive Politeness	In-group identity markers	12	27.27%	Strong effort to assimilate
	Noticing	6	13.63%	Acknowledgement and engagement
	Seeking agreement	2	4.54%	Showing engagement and alignment
Bald on Record	Direct	1	2.27%	Indicating prioritisation of politeness over bluntness
Total		44	100%	

In Jakarta, negative politeness is less dominant, reflecting the city's less hierarchical social structure. Strategies such as minimising imposition and hedging further soften requests while maintaining formality. Positive politeness is also more dominant, particularly through the use of in-group markers, noticing the hearer, and seeking agreement, demonstrating efforts to build a connection and engage the listener. Directness is rare, indicating a strong cultural preference for indirect and respectful communication.

**Utterances**

*Would you attend the meeting tomorrow, Bapak?*  
*Fetch the file from the cupboard.*  
*Please take a rest, deh.*  
*Let us have a meeting.*

**Types Politeness**

Negative politeness by giving deference  
 Bald on record  
 Positive politeness uses an in-group marker.  
 Positive politeness seeks agreement.

Jakarta speakers use politeness to show respect and build rapport. "*Would you attend the meeting tomorrow, Bapak (Sir)?*" reflects negative politeness through deference using honorifics. Positive politeness is evident in phrases like "*Please take a rest, deh,*" which utilise phatic markers such as "*deh*" and "*let's*" to invite and soften the interaction. The use of the *dong* marks a friendly attitude. These examples show how structure and phatic cues shape polite interaction.

ANGLO EXPATRIATES' POLITENESS IN INDONESIAN DIRECTIVE SPEECH ACTS  
 BY SOCIOLOGICAL VARIABLES

The table examines how Anglo expatriates employ different politeness strategies in response to various speech events, directive speech acts, and sociological variables, including power relations, imposition levels, and the weight of face-threatening acts (FTA). The table uses the formula:  $W_x D(S, H) + P(H, S) + R_x$ . Every category gets a score of 1.

- $W_x$  is the weight of the face-threatening act (FTA).
- $D(S, H)$  is the weight of the social distance between the speaker (S) and the hearer (H).
- $P(H, S)$  is the power relationship of the hearer (H) over the speaker (S).
- $R_x$  is the relative ranking of imposition within the particular culture

TABLE 12. Analysis of the predominant sociological variables in Anglo expatriates' politeness strategies

Speech Event	Speaker vs. Hearer	Hearer's Status	Speaker's Status	Distance	Politeness Strategies Choice	Sociological Variables based on the relation of H & S			
						Distance (D)	Power (P)	Imposition (Rx)	Wx
Situation 2: Asking to make coffee/tea	Staff vs office boy	Equal	Equal	Distant	Positive Politeness	High (+)	Low (-)	High (+)	2
	Staff vs office boy	Equal	Equal	Distant	Bald on Record	High (+)	Low (-)	High (+)	2
	Boss (head division/ manager, etc) vs office boy	Lower	Higher	Distant	Positive Politeness	High (+)	High (+)	High (+)	3
	Boss (head division/ manager, etc) vs office boy	Lower	Lower	Distant	Negative Politeness	High (+)	High (+)	High (+)	3

Table 12 illustrates the use of politeness strategies, positive politeness, negative politeness, and bald-on-record, in the speech event of requesting coffee or tea, considering relative power (P), social distance (D), and rank of imposition (R), which together determine the weight of the face-threatening act (W). When staff interact with office boys, despite their equal formal status, they may use positive politeness to maintain harmony or be direct in making requests. Bosses interacting with office boys combine positive and negative politeness, reflecting hierarchical awareness: positive politeness fosters solidarity, while negative politeness mitigates imposition and respects autonomy. In the Indonesian context, asking an office assistant to make coffee is culturally normalised, implicitly positioning the office boy as lower in power. Thus, the choice of politeness strategy reflects not only formal power and social distance but also the cultural norms that shape expected hierarchical behaviour.

## DISCUSSION

### ANGLO POLITENESS IN DIRECTIVE SPEECH ACTS IN INDONESIA: LOW VS HIGH-CONTEXT CULTURE

Anglo expatriates in Indonesia adjust their politeness strategies based on sociological variables, country of origin, and domicile. The contrast between low-context Anglo communication and Indonesia's high-context environment shapes how they use formality, power, and integration. Findings reveal a strong tendency toward negative politeness, reflecting the importance of deference in maintaining harmony, consistent with patterns observed in other hierarchical cultures (Song, 2017). Power dynamics often override other social variables, making indirectness and respect central to interaction.

Expatriates from Canada, the UK and the US predominantly use negative politeness, characterised by formality and non-intrusiveness (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Americans are slightly more direct, yet all groups favour respectful distancing. However, pragmatic missteps may occur, as Brown and Levinson's model does not fully capture Indonesia's flexible use of address forms. Indonesians often prefer "*bapak/ibu*" (*Sir/Madam*) instead of "*kamu*" (*you*). At the same

time, expatriates usually rely on "anda" (a more polite form of "kamu") or English modals, such as "could I" or "would you" Misusing pronouns like *kamu* in formal contexts may lead to communicative failure (Mulyanah & Krisnawati, 2023)

Australian and New Zealand expatriates display a more balanced strategy, combining negative politeness with relational warmth. Their use of positive politeness, through inclusive expressions like "let's have a meeting, bro!" and kinship terms, demonstrates adaptability and a desire to build rapport. The preference for positive politeness aligns with previous findings on New Zealanders' communication style, which emphasises solidarity and informality through humour (Schnurr & Chan, 2009). It blends and reduces reliance on direct or ambiguous strategies, aligning with Indonesia's preference for indirectness and social cohesion (Mulyanah et al., 2024)

Although Anglo cultures are rooted in direct speech, expatriates adopt strategies that mitigate face threats and support professional cooperation. These adaptations extend beyond hierarchical sensitivity, reflecting efforts to maintain respectful and effective interactions in high-context settings. While negative politeness prevails, variations in positive politeness reflect each country's orientation toward either formality or social closeness in cross-cultural communication (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015; Scollon & Scollon, 2005; Zainaro et al., 2022).

#### POLITENESS FROM A SOCIOPRAGMATICS PERSPECTIVE

This study examines how Anglo expatriates in Bali, West Java, and Jakarta employ politeness strategies shaped by sociopragmatic factors, including domicile, country of origin, and workplace role. Grounded in Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness framework, the findings demonstrate that power, social distance, and the rank of imposition significantly influence communicative behaviour in Indonesian professional contexts.

Across all three provinces, negative politeness emerges as the dominant strategy, particularly among high-status professionals, such as diplomats and academics. This preference, most strongly observed in West Java (57.89%), followed by Jakarta (52.08%) and Bali (56.91%), reflects a widespread sensitivity to hierarchy and formality in the Indonesian workplace. Deference and mitigation of imposition serve to maintain social order and professional decorum. Meanwhile, positive politeness remains significant across provinces, most notably in Bali (40%), aligning with its relational and hospitality-oriented culture. Here, expatriates frequently employ in-group identity markers and local expressions, such as "*matur sukma*" and "*bli*", to foster solidarity and cultural integration.

In Jakarta, expatriates primarily from Australia, the UK, and the US tend to balance formal workplace norms with inclusive communication styles. They employ positive politeness strategies, combined with softening particles (e.g., *dong*, *deh*, *ya*), and negative politeness features to remain approachable while demonstrating respect for hierarchical structures. This pattern aligns with findings by Petraki and Ramayanti (2018), which show that middle managers in Jakarta often use positive politeness strategies, including humour, to foster collegiality. In contrast, in West Java, American expatriates exhibit a stronger adherence to local deference norms, frequently incorporating Sundanese expressions, such as "*hatur nuhun*", to convey respect. The prevailing communication approach reflects a dual emphasis on professional formality and interpersonal rapport, often achieved through strategies such as noticing and expressing empathy.

Workplace roles further shape politeness choices. In corporate and academic settings, people predominantly use negative politeness to maintain professionalism. In contrast, individuals in the hospitality and informal sectors tend to exhibit a greater tendency toward positive politeness,

emphasising warmth and inclusivity. Hedging is commonly used to soften high-imposition acts (e.g., interrupting a superior), and bald-on-record strategies are rare, accounting for only 2.27% in Jakarta, 2.63% in West Java, and 3.08% in Bali, and are typically reserved for low-risk directives (e.g., "Take the file").

These findings support Hall's (1976) theory of high-context communication and Hofstede's (2001) emphasis on power distance in collectivist cultures. They also affirm Holmes and Stubbe's (2015) view that workplace roles mediate linguistic choices. However, deviations from theoretical expectations—such as lower-status staff occasionally using direct forms—suggest that local cultural perceptions of power and formality may override textbook politeness norms. Such observations indicate a need to refine universal models by incorporating culturally and institutionally specific factors.

Overall, Anglo expatriates from low-context societies demonstrate notable adaptability to Indonesia's high-context communication norms. While negative politeness strategies dominate across contexts, the strategic use of positive politeness and cultural expressions highlights a broader intercultural sensitivity. These regional and occupational variations reinforce the importance of context-specific pragmatics in global workplace interactions.

#### IMPLICATIONS OF BROWN LEVINSON'S POLITENESS THEORY IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN INDONESIA

Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory offers a framework for understanding how expatriates from low-context cultures adapt to Indonesia's high-context, collectivist norms, which emphasise hierarchy, social status, and levels of imposition. Although originally grounded in individualistic assumptions, the theory remains useful in analysing how Western expatriates adjust their strategies to maintain respect and social harmony in Indonesian workplaces (Hall, 1976; Hofstede, 2001)

Critics argue that the theory overlooks the collective nature of communication in high-context cultures (Holmes & Stubbe, 2015; Mulyanah et al., 2024), yet this study demonstrates its adaptability. Expatriates prioritise respect for individuals in professional settings by modifying their politeness strategies. A key finding is their shift in language when speaking English with peers, where Indonesian honorifics, such as *Bapak/Ibu* (*Sir/Madam*), are often dropped in favour of a first-name address, a practice considered impolite in local norms.

A notable adaptation is the use of phatic expressions to initiate, sustain, and reinforce social bonds. Incorporating local terms such as "*dong*," "*deh*," "*ya*," and regional phrases like "*matur sukma*" (*thank you*), "*astungkāra*" (*God's willing*), or honorifics like "*mas*," "*mbak*," and "*bang*" reflects a deeper cultural sensitivity and integration. These linguistic choices not only soften directness but also signal respect for local customs.

Empirical research on expatriate pragmatics in Indonesia remains limited, particularly on directive speech acts and the use of pronominal forms to signal deference rather than personal names, which contrasts with core Anglo norms. From a Bourdieusian perspective, this reflects the renegotiation of habitus, as expatriates' low-context communicative dispositions are reshaped through interaction in Indonesia's high-context setting. Few studies examine how phatic expressions, localised lexis, or urban residence in Jakarta and Bali foster partial adaptation to more casual yet culturally regulated politeness, leaving this intersection underexplored.

The research highlights a contextual shift in the application of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory in Indonesia, showing that Anglo expatriates from low-context cultures pragmatically adapt to high-context Indonesian norms by using modified directive speech acts.

Negative politeness predominates, particularly among British, Canadian, and American expatriates, while Australians and New Zealanders display a more blended approach, reflecting flexible adjustment to sociocultural and regional norms. In Jakarta and Bali, politeness strategies are applied most casually, whereas in West Java they are expressed more formally, demonstrating expatriates' navigation of hierarchical and high-context communication patterns. Positive politeness and culturally appropriate lexical choices further indicate heightened sociopragmatic awareness and reconfigured face management, primarily through pronominal markers of distance and deference. Crucially, these results address a significant gap in the literature, as empirical research on expatriate politeness, especially Anglo expatriates operating in the Indonesian context, remains scarce in high-impact journals, thereby positioning this study as a context-specific contribution to intercultural pragmatics.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that effective cross-cultural communication among expatriates in Indonesia relies on context-sensitive politeness strategies shaped by national and regional norms. Country of origin and local domicile influence preferences toward hierarchy, formality, and integration. US, UK, and Canadian expatriates tend to favour negative politeness, characterised by deference and indirectness, consistent with Indonesia's hierarchical culture, although it sometimes clashes with the country's rigid address forms. Australians and New Zealanders adopt a more balanced style, blending positive politeness with respectful distance. Negative politeness dominates across all provinces, especially in Jakarta's formal settings. Bali exhibits the highest use of positive politeness, reflecting its relational culture, while West Java strikes a balance between both. The minimal use of bald-on-record strategies confirms a shared preference for face-saving interactions.

While this study focuses on Anglo expatriates in Jakarta, West Java, and Bali, the primary hubs for British nationals, its limited scope necessitates broader research. Future studies should expand to a wider range of Indonesia's 38 provinces to deepen the understanding of regional impacts on politeness and intercultural communication.

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