

Language Politeness in the Halaqah Program

Juliana Damsik^{1*}, Norafizah Mahmud²

¹ Akademi Pengajian Bahasa, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam

² Blink Book Sdn. Bhd

*Corresponding Author

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates language politeness in the Halaqah program with the objective of identifying the maxims employed, analyzing both adherence and violations, and evaluating their impact on the effectiveness of religious communication. Grounded in Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle, which highlights six key maxims as a framework for civilized discourse, this qualitative study employed purposive sampling across three selected episodes of Halaqah. Data were transcribed and analyzed using content analysis guided by the maxims. The findings reveal that the maxims of wisdom, generosity, and sympathy were most frequently observed, with consistent adherence contributing to communicative harmony. Instances of non-adherence, although less common, were strategically used to strengthen arguments. The study concludes that linguistic politeness in Halaqah plays a pivotal role in enhancing speaker credibility and audience receptivity. The implications underscore the significance of politeness principles in religious broadcasting and suggest that future research should broaden the scope by incorporating alternative communication theories and evaluating the effectiveness of politeness-focused training for preachers in media contexts.

Keywords: linguistic politeness, maxims, religious discourse, Halaqah program

INTRODUCTION

Linguistic politeness in the delivery of knowledge and religious discourse, as exemplified in the Halaqah program, plays a crucial role in shaping audience perceptions of the intended message. The language employed not only reflects the speaker's character but also determines the extent to which the message is understood, accepted, and internalized. Within the Islamic tradition, eloquent and respectful speech is considered part of noble character, underscoring the responsibility of preachers to ensure that their communication resonates with sincerity and civility (Haji Yusoff & Amran, 2020).

Effective communication in religious contexts requires careful selection of respectful expressions, appropriate intonation, and interactional forms that uphold the dignity of listeners. In Halaqah, these strategies are evident in the use of courteous styles, cultured argumentation, and expressions of deference. Such practices not only preserve communicative harmony but also enhance the persuasiveness of religious messages and foster audience receptivity (SUKMA, 2023). Prior research indicates that politeness reduces the risk of conflict and strengthens speaker credibility (Mashudi et al., 2014). Thus, linguistic politeness serves as a bridge between presenters and audiences, reinforcing Islamic values through wisdom-infused discourse.

Despite its importance, scholarly examination of linguistic politeness within televised preaching remains limited. Religious broadcasts such as Halaqah are influential not only in transmitting knowledge but also in shaping attitudes and perceptions among diverse audiences. Without systematic inquiry, the extent to which politeness principles are adhered to—and how these affect audience reception—remains unclear (Haji Yusoff & Amran, 2020).

Moreover, religious discourse often engages with sensitive issues requiring thoughtful and balanced

explanations. In such contexts, linguistic politeness becomes essential to maintaining a harmonious, professional, and civilized atmosphere among moderators, panelists, and viewers. In contrast, confrontational or impolite language risks generating misunderstandings, tensions, or even conflict. Strategic application of politeness principles therefore ensures that messages are delivered effectively while safeguarding social cohesion (Sukma, 2023).

Current gaps in scholarship are evident in three areas: first, the limited application of Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle in analyzing preaching contexts; second, the underexplored role of media as an agent in disseminating cultured communication values; and third, the lack of attention to how politeness strategies influence audience perceptions of religious discourse (Beden, 2019). Addressing these gaps, this study examines linguistic politeness in Halaqah with the aim of identifying the maxims employed, analyzing adherence and non-adherence, and evaluating their implications for the effectiveness of religious broadcasting.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The application of the principles of decency leech (1983) in past studies shows its effectiveness in analyzing educational, media, and preaching communications. General studies have found that compliance with maximal wisdom and sympathy is often the key to maintaining a positive relationship between speakers and listeners (Beden, 2019). In the context of preaching on social media, this principle helps the preacher convey the message with wisdom, avoid provocation, and maintain harmony (Sukma, 2023). For specific studies such as language proficiency in the Halaqah plan, this theory allows researchers to evaluate whether panel interactions and moderators adhere to or violate the maxim, as well as their impact on the acceptance of messages (Haji Yusoff & Amran, 2020). The new view that arises is that the application of this theory is not only relevant to evaluate the hinstence, but also potentially serve as a practical guide for the preaching media practitioners to enhance the effectiveness of communication.

Overall, the discussion of the literature highlights on the principle of decency Leech (1983) showed a strong basic relationship between these theories and the effectiveness of communication, especially in the context of preaching. The pattern that emerged was the cohesion between polite language selection, wise interaction strategies, and positive acceptance of the audience. However, the challenges identified include the difficulty of maintaining a hill in the discussion of sensitive issues and the tendency of some speakers to violate certain maxims for the sake of arguments. From a research point of view, there is a gap in studies that apply this theory systematically on television broadcasting plans. This gap opens up opportunities for a more in -depth study, not only in terms of theoretical analysis, but also through a methodological approach that incorporates discourse analysis with the observation of broadcasting contexts. Previous studies on social media.

A study by Fallianda (2018) examines Instagram user language proficiency through sociopragmatic analysis of comments on "Infogressive" accounts. Using qualitative design, data is collected from written interactions between operators and users, with focus on Brown and Levinson's strategy. The findings show that 81.3% of positive healing strategies were used, while negative drops were only 10.2%. Social distance factors and the level of coercion of the speech affect the selection of strategies. This study shows that although social media is open, users still adopt a certain context (Fallianda, 2018; Sukma, 2023).

Etty Zalita Zakaria (2022) emphasized that social media is now a major medium of disseminating information, but technology explosions have led to the aspects of humor. This discourse study examines the language phenomenon of not being in line with online interactions, especially in the context of preaching. The findings show that while language proficiency is an important feature of Malay-Muslim culture, social media users tend to ignore them in sensitive discussions. This poses a challenge for preachers and media practitioners to maintain communication manners (Zakaria, 2022; Sukma, 2023).

Previous studies on compliance and maximal non-compliance. Indirawati Zahid and Muhammad Nasri Safe (2022) analyzed the adherence and adherence of the maximum conversation in podcast health interviews. This qualitative study downloads, copies, and analyzes the text of the interview, finds compliance with all the maxims, but the non-compliance with the maximum quantity and the way exists. Interestingly, certain non-compliance does not affect communication, but helps the topic explanation (Zahid & Safe, 2022; Buhari et al., 2023; Beden, 2019). A study by Indirawati Zahid (2018) on TV3's "Question" show shows that the moderator complies with all maxims, while the invitation panel violates the maxim of quantity and methods to clarify economic issues. The design of this study involved analysis of transcripts and observations of two moderators and two economic observers. The findings show that maximal non-compliance is sometimes strategic to achieve communication objectives (Zahid, 2018; Buhari et al., 2023; Beden, 2019).

Application of the theory of Leech's politeness principles in the maxim analysis of politeness Beden (2019) applies the principle of decency of Leech (1983) with the Grice and Asmah Omar model to analyze the strategies for writing the Language Council magazine. This qualitative study analyzes selected texts and found compliance with maximum wisdom, support, and humility forming effective strategy combination patterns. This finding shows that Leech Theory is relevant not only in verbal communication, but also in formal writing (Beden, 2019; Buhari et al., 2023; Claudia et al., 2018). A study by Claudia et al. (2018) against the drama of the "Toilet Gang" drama uses a qualitative descriptive design to identify the maximum decency in the dialogue. The sample consists of the full script of the drama, analyzed by six LEECH maxims. The findings show that the maximum agreement, generosity, and the dominant sympathy, proves the effectiveness of this theory in analyzing creative works. The challenge identified is the maximum interpretation of the subjective depends on the cultural context (Claudia et al., 2018; Beden, 2019; Buhari et al., 2023). Overall, the discussion of previous studies shows a consistent relationship between language proficiency, maximal compliance, and the effectiveness of message delivery, whether on social media, face-to-face communication, or even preaching plans. The pattern that shows that the drill works not only to maintain the harmony of the interaction, but also to increase the credibility of the speaker. However, key challenges include the tendency to violate maxims in certain situations, whether intentionally to emphasize arguments or the lack of awareness of language implications. From a research point of view, there is a systematic application of the theory to the context of television preaching, especially that combines discourse analysis with observation of broadcasting situations. This gap opens up space for a more in-depth and interdisciplinary study.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design to investigate the application of Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle in the Halaqah program. A qualitative approach was chosen as it provides a systematic and contextualized understanding of linguistic behavior, allowing for in-depth exploration of how maxims are enacted in religious discourse (Lexy, 2007).

Purposive sampling was applied to select three episodes of Halaqah as the study sample, representing a population comprising all episodes of the program. The chosen episodes fulfilled specific criteria aligned with the study's objectives, ensuring relevance and richness of data. This approach enabled focused analysis of speech events in which politeness strategies were likely to emerge prominently.

Data were collected through video recordings of the selected episodes, which were transcribed verbatim to capture linguistic features accurately. Every utterance was documented to ensure completeness of the dataset and minimize the risk of omitting subtle politeness markers.

The transcripts were analyzed using content analysis guided by the six maxims of Leech's Politeness Principle: wisdom, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy. Each utterance was coded for adherence or non-adherence to these maxims. The analysis focused not only on identifying instances of compliance but also on examining strategic violations and their communicative purposes.

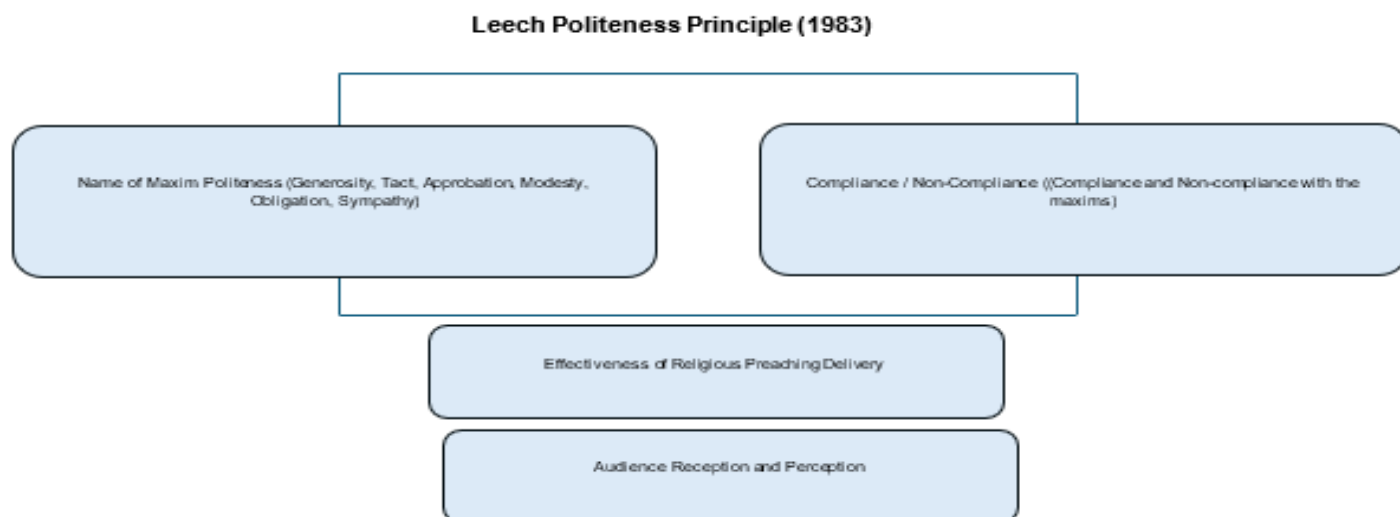


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework Diagram Leech's Politeness Principles (1983)

The conceptual framework illustrated herein is grounded in Leech's Politeness Principle (1983), which serves as the foundational theoretical lens for this study. It delineates the interrelationship between the types of politeness maxims, the degree of adherence or non-adherence to these maxims, and their consequential impact on the effectiveness of da'wah communication within the Halaqah television programme.

This framework posits that each type of maxim namely tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy—plays a pivotal role in shaping civil and respectful interaction. The extent to which these maxims are observed or violated subsequently influences the communicative efficacy of the da'wah message. Effectiveness is operationalised through audience reception and perception, which are regarded as key indicators of successful communication in the context of televised religious discourse.

The framework further conceptualises the types of politeness maxims as independent variables that affect the speaker's level of compliance or non-compliance during interaction. This level of compliance functions as a mediating variable that directly impacts the effectiveness of da'wah delivery. Ultimately, communicative effectiveness shapes audience reception and perception of the conveyed message. The relationship is inherently dynamic: adherence to politeness maxims enhances credibility and communicative harmony, whereas non-adherence may compromise message acceptance and diminish its persuasive potential.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings show that the maxim of wisdom is the most dominant element of the Halaqah plan, followed by generosity, support, and sympathy, while humility and consent appear to be lower. This pattern is in line with the findings of SUKMA (2023) which found that positive strategies are more frequently used in the context of preaching as they foster communication harmony. Beden (2019) also emphasized that the maximum of wisdom is often the core of a discourse aimed at benefiting the listener. However, the low frequency of the consent indicates that the panel does not necessarily agree in all circumstances, in line with the findings of Zahid (2018) that controlled disagreement can enrich discussion. Overall, this finding confirms that the maxim's selection in halaqah is strategic, aimed at maintaining manners while ensuring that discussion remains critical and beneficial. This indicates the balance between the dignity and the need to convey the argument effectively.

Maxim Compliance

Analysis of maxim compliance shows that speakers in halaqah consistently use the language that respects listeners, supports, and shows empathy. This strategy is in line with the findings of Haji Yusoff and Amran

(2020) who emphasize that language proficiency in preaching increases the acceptance of messages by the audience. Sukma's (2023) study also found that compliance with maximal wisdom and sympathy helps reduce the potential of conflict in sensitive issues discussion. In the context of halaqah, this compliance not only maintains harmony, but also increases the credibility of the speaker in the eye of the beholder. Although compliance occurs in many forms, it remains based on the principles of civilized communication that is fundamental to the effectiveness of the da'wah. Overall, this finding reinforces the view that maxim's compliance is an important factor in ensuring that religious messages are conveyed with wisdom, thus fostering a positive relationship between the presenter and the audience.

Table 1 Examples of maxim compliance utterances

Maxim	Example Utterances
Support	“Saya setuju dengan pandangan ustaz, kerana ia selari dengan hadis.”
Sympathy	“Kita prihatin terhadap nasib saudara kita di Palestin.”
Modesty	“Saya bukan pakar, tetapi izinkan saya berkongsi sedikit pandangan.”
Agreement	“Ya, saya setuju bahawa ini adalah isu yang perlu diberi perhatian.”

The findings indicate that maximal compliance occurs consistently, with speakers using the language that respects listeners, supports, and shows empathy. This speech helps maintain a harmonious atmosphere and enhances the credibility of the speaker. Overall, maximal compliance plays an important role in ensuring that the message of preaching is well received by the audience

Maxim non-compliance

Findings on maximal non -compliance indicate that while rare, it appears in the form of continuous criticism, emphasis on the weaknesses of others, or minimizes the suffering of others. This phenomenon is in line with the findings of Zahid & Safe (2022) that find that the maximum non -compliance is sometimes used strategically to clarify the argument or to emphasize the stand. Beden (2019) also states that maximal violations are not necessarily negative, but they can serve as rhetoric in certain situations. However, in the context of preaching such as halaqah, non-compliance with the potential to affect the harmony of communication and reception of messages. Therefore, while non -compliance can be a communication strategy, it needs to be managed wisely so as not to contradict the value of the dignity that is the basis of the delivery of the preaching. Overall, this finding emphasizes that the balance between the firmness of the argument and the language of language is the key to the effectiveness of communication in the Preaching Plan.

Table 2 Examples of utterances of maximum non -compliance

Maxim	Example Utterances
Tact	“Tok guru itu salah memahami ayat ini.”
Generosity	“Golongan itu hanya mementingkan diri sendiri.”
Support	“Ada ustaz yang sebenarnya memecah-belahkan masyarakat.”
Sympathy	“Masalah itu tidaklah seteruk yang mereka Darkwa.”

Table 2 shows examples of words that indicate non -compliance with the maximum. This data was analyzed to identify situations in which the speaker violated the principle of decency, whether intentionally or not. The findings indicate that non -compliance occurs in the form of continuous criticism, emphasis on the weaknesses of others, or minimizes the suffering of others. Although these non -compliance can affect the harmony of

communication, in some contexts it is used to assert the argument or give a firm explanation. Overall, the maximum non-compliance in halaqah is limited, but still affects the tone and acceptance of the message of preaching.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that linguistic politeness is a vital element in ensuring the effectiveness of religious communication within the Halaqah program. The findings confirm that adherence to the maxims of wisdom, generosity, and sympathy not only enhances speaker credibility but also strengthens audience receptivity to religious messages. While instances of non-adherence were identified, they were often employed strategically to reinforce arguments or highlight critical issues, suggesting that politeness and assertiveness can coexist in a balanced manner.

From a theoretical perspective, the study reinforces the relevance of Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle as an analytical framework for religious broadcasting. The consistent use of polite strategies across Halaqah episodes illustrates the enduring applicability of this model in understanding how civility mediates communication. The findings also suggest that maximal adherence should be considered a marker of communicative quality, while strategic non-adherence, when carefully managed, can enhance rhetorical effectiveness.

Practically, the results provide important insights for preachers and media practitioners. By embedding politeness strategies into religious discourse, communicators can manage sensitive issues without jeopardizing harmony or audience trust. Training modules on linguistic politeness could be developed to strengthen preacher performance in broadcast media, ensuring that Islamic values are conveyed with wisdom, empathy, and credibility.

Future research should extend the scope of analysis to a broader range of religious programs and explore interdisciplinary frameworks by integrating Leech's maxims with complementary communication theories, such as Grice's Cooperative Principle. Such approaches would enrich understanding of how politeness strategies interact with rhetorical choices in shaping audience engagement.

In conclusion, linguistic politeness is not merely a theoretical construct but a practical tool that underpins ethical, effective, and culturally resonant religious communication. By maintaining the delicate balance between harmony and critique, programs like Halaqah can continue to serve as impactful platforms for disseminating Islamic values in contemporary media landscapes.

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