



# Evaluation of (im)politeness in intercultural requests in the Myanmar language (speaker’s perspective): A pilot study

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## Key words

Myanmar language  
(im)politeness  
evaluation  
intercultural request  
native and non-  
native speakers  
speaker’s perspective

## Abstract

The present paper explores how native and non-native speakers evaluate (im)politeness in intercultural requests in the Myanmar language (also known as Burmese) from the perspective of the speaker. It is aimed to investigate how (im)politeness is processed in making requests in intercultural communication between native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language, not only from the point of speakers in the conversations but also from the point of native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language. Since this study focuses on intercultural communication, the target participants are native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language. Two different groups of participants responded to the questionnaire including eight intercultural requests from the speaker’s perspective. Using the data obtained from 40 participants (20 from each group), the data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. As a pilot study, the validity and reliability scores of the questionnaire were also explored. A group of experts from Myanmar acted as the panel for testing content validity and approved the validity of the questionnaire. For the reliability, 0.806 Cronback’s alpha score was obtained. As for the main finding, the difference between native and non-native speakers’ perceptions of (im)politeness towards every intercultural request can be seen clearly, highlighting the role of culture in (im)politeness processing. Moreover, perceptions of (im)politeness do not reveal a common pattern even in the same group of informants (native speakers or non-native speakers). The most striking fact is that (im)politeness evaluation is not related to the contextual factors in intercultural communication.

## 1. Introduction

This study is concerned with politeness and impoliteness in intercultural interactions. The examination of (im)politeness looks at the intercultural use of both phenomena by native speakers and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language (also known as Burmese).

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The politeness theories in first- and second-wave politeness research represent the respective defaults in the study of (im)politeness; however, each of their approaches to politeness cannot reflect the comprehensive politeness phenomena that emerge within a cross-cultural study.

Since the current study draws on data from intercultural communication between Myanmar-language native speakers and non-native Myanmar-language speakers, and since House and Kádár (2021a) define intercultural as denoting the study of communication between people from two or more cultures, it would be inappropriate to take the models from first- and second-wave politeness theories as a framework for the present work. To this extent, it would be useful to consider a suitable politeness model that can provide a sufficient explanation for (im)politeness phenomena in the intercultural context.

## 2. Theoretical background: Kádár and Haugh's (2013) framework for understanding politeness

Daniel Kádár and Michael Haugh have made significant advances in the study of (im)politeness, particularly through their third-wave politeness research. They have developed a comprehensive framework that incorporates diverse perspectives on politeness as a social practice, which has been partially utilized in this study to address both macro and micro aspects of politeness. The theoretical foundation of this research engages with two main loci of understanding: participant/meta-participant understandings and emic/etic understandings, focusing on how native and non-native speakers evaluate (im)politeness in intercultural requests. Central to Kádár and Haugh's framework is the assertion that politeness must be examined through multiple loci, advocating for a multidimensional approach that transcends conventional definitions. They enhance the distinction between first-order (lay user's) and second-order (theoretical) perspectives of politeness, thus aligning their framework with established social practice concepts in ethnomethodology. Their research is framed around these four loci, providing a nuanced view of politeness.

### (a) Participant/meta-participant understandings (first order)

In this discussion, the roles of participants in interaction are explored, highlighting their various positions regarding politeness evaluation. It differentiates between speakers and hearers, using the terms producer and recipient to encapsulate diverse communication modes. Drawing on Goffman's concept of participation status, the text identifies ratified participants, who engage in the conversation, versus unrated participants, who do not. Different statuses include addressees, side participants, bystanders, and overhearers, each contributing to the understanding of politeness from their unique perspectives. The focus is on the first-order perspectives of those actively involved in evaluating politeness, as well as the influence of meta-participants, who reflect on interactions from an observational standpoint, like TV viewers. Through examples from a U2 concert and the TV show *Seinfeld*, Kádár and Haugh

(2013) illustrate that perceptions of politeness are subject to variation based on each participant's viewpoint, underscoring the importance of considering multiple perspectives in politeness analysis.

(b) Emic/etic understandings (first order)

Understanding politeness requires both emic (insider) and etic (outsider) perspectives. The emic perspective is the viewpoint of individuals within a culture who are aware of the moral expectations that guide behaviour, while the etic perspective involves an external analysis of these concepts. Kádár and Haugh (2013) emphasize that members of a culture are accountable for upholding the moral order based on shared expectancies formed through different layers of interaction. These expectations vary across relational networks and are categorized into first-order (individual interactions), second-order (community practices), and third-order (societal norms) expectancies. The interaction between emic and etic perspectives is vital for analysing politeness in intercultural contexts, where differing evaluations can emerge. An example illustrates this point: Wayne, an Australian, apologizes to Joyce, a Taiwanese, but while Wayne finds his apology sufficient, Joyce perceives it as impolite. This situation highlights the nuanced challenges in understanding politeness across cultures (House & Kádár, 2021a), underscoring that both emic and etic perspectives contribute significantly to evaluative moments of (im)politeness.

(c) Analyst/lay-observer understandings (second order)

Lay observers and analysts approach the evaluation of politeness in distinct ways. Lay observers, lacking specialized training, base their evaluations on spontaneous observations without systematic evidence, while analysts employ structured methods to gather data and explore relationships regarding politeness. Although lay observations are often undervalued in the physical sciences, they hold significant importance in the social sciences, particularly in politeness research, as they can influence reactions among participants. A study on intercultural apologies illustrates this distinction; Australians and Taiwanese respondents evaluated an apology differently, shaped by cultural expectations. This suggests that lay observations can yield valuable insights for analysts, highlighting the importance of understanding both perspectives in assessing evaluative moments of politeness (Chang and Haugh, 2011)

(d) Theoretical/folk-theoretic understandings (second order)

This locus discusses various conceptual perspectives on politeness, categorized as scientific-theoretic, folk-theoretic, and proto-scientific. The scientific-theoretic viewpoint provides structured and replicable frameworks for understanding politeness, exemplified by Brown and

Levinson's theory, which is shared among a specialized community of scholars. The folk-theoretic perspective captures the everyday, sociocultural understandings of politeness held by general members of society, highlighting concepts such as respect and class dynamics. Proto-scientific notions reflect historical beliefs and customs associated with politeness, lacking the rigour of modern theories but still offering valuable insights. Kádár and Haugh (2013) distinguish between user perspectives, focusing on those who engage in conversations about (im)politeness, and observer perspectives, which evaluate these exchanges. The presented framework allows for a nuanced understanding of politeness as a social practice, accommodating various contexts and promoting comparisons across different epistemological and disciplinary foundations.

The framework proposed by Kádár and Haugh (2013) enhances the understanding of politeness by moving beyond a basic distinction between participants and analysts. It recognizes the multiplicity of perspectives on politeness and stresses the necessity of differentiating various understandings and participation roles. Furthermore, it situates politeness within diverse epistemological and disciplinary contexts, facilitating productive comparisons. This framework aims to provide a systematic approach to examining politeness as a social practice across different temporal and social environments, while cautioning against overgeneralizations. Ultimately, it establishes a practical model for studying politeness in varied circumstances.

Kádár and Haugh's (2013) analytical framework of understanding politeness provides an excellent analytical framework for studying intercultural (im)politeness for a number of reasons. Firstly, combining the first and second models of politeness can make the study comprehensive by touching on the production, evaluation, and conceptualization of politeness of two groups of speakers at the utterance level (micro level) and the discourse level (macro level). Moreover, two lines of politeness (first-order politeness or politeness1 – the common-sense notion of politeness; and second-order politeness or politeness2 – the scholastic notion of politeness) can also be captured. Certain academics have contended that politeness and impoliteness 1 and 2 cannot be separated. Eelen (2001) and Garces-Conejos Blitvich (2010) embrace a perspective that integrates both elements, asserting that a strictly one-sided stance is practically unattainable. In this paper, both politeness1 and politeness2 are covered. Jucker (2023) clearly states that the third-wave politeness theories are the most comprehensive ones to study politeness, and this post-discursive perspective of the study of politeness is the combination of the previous two waves of politeness study.

Secondly, Kecskés (2014) argues that the discursive turn holds significant importance for intercultural pragmatics due to its emphasis on dynamism and constructivist principles. According to Eelen's (2001) model, politeness and impoliteness are defined in constructionist terms, where evolution and change are integral components. The evaluations of politeness and impoliteness are viewed as constructions of reality rather than representations of factual

reality. Mills (2003) contends that the discursive approach rejects the notion that certain linguistic forms possess inherent politeness or impoliteness. Instead, it posits that the understanding or evaluation of (im)politeness is heavily influenced by the specific situation and context in which communication occurs.

Regarding the third reason, this research studies intercultural (im)politeness. Haugh and Kadar (2017) outline the three approaches to guarantee the analysis of (im)politeness as intercultural. Firstly, the analysis of (im)politeness as intercultural can be justified by examining participants' orientations towards cultural issues during or after interactions, either naturally or through post-facto interviews. The second approach involves triangulating the results of interactional analyses conducted at the data collection site. The third method involves obtaining evaluations from lay observers who identify with different cultural groups during encounters.

Among the three politeness approaches in third-wave research, it is clear that Haugh's view of (im)politeness as a social practice is part of Kádár and Haugh's (2013) framework. In the other two theories, Terkourafi's (2005) frame-based approach and Kádár and Haugh's (2013) framework, the former is based on a data-driven frame-based approach in which the study of politeness relies on a corpus. This frame-based approach lacks participants' descriptions of cultural issues, such as participants' different cultural backgrounds. The evaluation of (im)politeness is done only by the analyst in this frame-based approach (Asswae, 2018). The data cannot be triangulated since only a corpus is used as the source of data collection. Based on these facts, Terkourafi's (2005) approach is unsuitable for studying intercultural (im)politeness, though it is one of the third-wave politeness theories.

On the other hand, Kádár and Haugh's (2013) framework can warrant the analyses of (im)politeness in this study as intercultural in nature. The second locus of Kádár and Haugh's (2013) framework is "Emic/etic understandings," which warrant the participants' orientation on cultural issues. Three out of four loci, such as "Participant/meta-participant understandings," "Emic/etic understandings," and "Analyst/lay-observer understandings," are related to evaluation by lay observers. Concerning the lay observers' status as members of different cultural groups, the questionnaire employed in this study features an item asking about the participants' ethnic groups.

Regarding the study of intercultural impoliteness, Kádár and Haugh's (2013) framework is also employed because the impoliteness theories (Culpeper, 2005, 2011; Bousfield, 2008) are not helpful enough analytical tools to examine impoliteness in intercultural settings due to their emphasis on Gricean Cooperative phenomena, which focus solely on face-threatening acts, in complete contrast with Brown and Levison's (1987) speaker-based taxonomy. To sum up, due to the points mentioned above, employing Kádár and Haugh's (2013) framework on the understanding of politeness is a solid foundation for studying intercultural (im)politeness in Myanmar.

### 3. Research questions

As the aim of this study is to investigate how (im)politeness is processed in making requests in intercultural communication between native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language, not only from the point of view of the speaker in the conversations but also from the point of view of other native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language, the main research questions and sub-research questions to be addressed are as follows:

1. How do native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language evaluate (im)politeness in intercultural requests from the speaker's perspective?
  - 1a. How do native and non-native speakers' perceptions of (im)politeness in intercultural requests vary as the speaker in an interaction?
  - 1b. How do native speakers' perceptions of (im)politeness in intercultural requests vary as the speaker in an interaction?
  - 1c. How do non-native speakers' perceptions of (im)politeness in intercultural requests vary as the speaker in an interaction?
  - 1d. What is the correlation between (im)politeness perceptions by native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language as the speaker and contextual factors such as the (in)sincerity of the request and the severity of the offence? If any, how does this relate between these three factors?

These research questions were addressed through an analysis of perceptions towards intercultural requests by native and non-native speakers of Myanmar-language (Burmese) speakers. The data studied here mainly concerns intercultural requests.

### 4. Material and method

#### 4.1 Population and sample

The population of this pilot study includes university students from arts and science universities in Myanmar. As this study is about intercultural (im)politeness, the data is collected from two groups of the population: a Burmese group (native speakers of the Myanmar [Burmese] language) and a non-Burmese group (non-native speakers of the Myanmar [Burmese] language). In Myanmar, there are 135 ethnic groups, and they have their respective mother tongues. In order for members of Burmese and non-Burmese ethnic tribes to communicate, and among these non-Burmese ethnic tribes, the Myanmar language is used as a lingua franca. The native speakers of the Myanmar language are Burmese, and non-native speakers are non-Burmese – to be precise, people from other ethnicities in Myanmar whose mother tongue is not the Myanmar language. They had to respond to the questionnaire from the speaker's perspective. For the data collection in this pilot study, the population is 40 participants (20 participants for each subgroup). The main aim of the pilot study is to ensure that the respondents understand the tasks well and to settle any prospective problems.

Another aim is to test the reliability of the rating scale items of the questionnaire. Though the size of the sample size seems small, it is adequate for a pilot study, and the number of participants will be doubled in the main study.

As for permission to collect data, requests were made to a university of arts and science in Myanmar. After getting approval to collect the data, Google Form links to the questionnaire were distributed to the students. In order to promote the homogeneity of data, only university students were allowed to participate in responding to the questionnaires. The participants were selected using a purposive sampling method since they have to be university students and native or non-native speakers of the Myanmar language.

## 4.2 Demographic information of the participants

Five items of demographic information of the participants were collected, as these factors influence perceptions of (im)politeness. These factors were age, educational background, gender, ethnic background (to classify whether they are native or non-native speakers), and student status. All of the participants are university students and half of them are non-native speakers of the Myanmar language. The following is information on the age, educational background, and gender of the members of the native and non-native-speaker groups.

Table 1. Age of participants in comparison between native and non-native speakers

Participants	Age Group				
	16–20	21–30	31–40	41–50	51–60
Native speakers	6	12	2	0	0
Non-native speakers	5	7	5	2	1

The table above shows the age of the participants who are native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language. Most of the participants are in the age group of (21–30) at 12. Although the age group of (21–30) is the most prevalent in the non-native-speaker group, participants are divided among four age groups.

Table 2. Educational background of the participants

Participants	Educational level			
	Undergraduate student	Postgraduate student pursuing a diploma degree	MA/MSc student	Doctoral student
Native Speakers	7	11	1	1
Non-native speakers	7	6	3	4

The table above describes the educational background of the participants. In both groups of speakers (native and non-native), most of the participants are postgraduate students.

*Table 3. Gender of the participants*

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>Native speakers</b>	10	10
<b>Non-native speakers</b>	11	9

The table above features the gender of the participants in both the native- and non-native-speaker groups. In both cases, the number of male and female is nearly the same.

### 4.3 Tool

The data collection of the current study includes a questionnaire containing rating scales. Precisely, the (im)politeness evaluation of the two groups on the intercultural requests, (in)sincerity of the requests and severity of the requests are examined via rating scales, including 5-point Likert scales. The aim and research questions in this paper deal with Burmese and non-Burmese people's evaluations of (im)politeness in intercultural requests. The participants' specific perceptions of "polite" or "impolite" towards the intercultural requests were to be elicited. The data collection method of rating scales is the most appropriate means of gathering the perception data here.

The rating scale items were located under eight intercultural requests in the Myanmar language. These requests were extracted as naturally occurring computer-mediated language, which is the language used on Facebook between Burmese (native speakers of the Myanmar language) and non-Burmese (non-native speakers of the Myanmar language), and from movie scripts containing dialogues between Burmese and non-Burmese. These eight items of intercultural requests are selected based on Brown and Levison's (1987) social variables of a conversation.

According to Brown and Levison (1987), a social variable has three factors: social power, social distance, and size of imposition. These factors can either be present or absent, and there are eight possible combinations of presence and absence among the three, resulting in eight social variables (See Table 4). For example, in social variable 1, the speaker has more social power than the hearer; there is social distance between them; and the size of the imposition of the utterance is high. The social variables of each item are as follows.

Table 4. Underlying social variables in the 8 intercultural requests

No.	Social variables		
	Power	Distance	Ranking of imposition
1.	+	+	+
2.	–	–	–
3.	+	+	–
4.	+	–	–
5.	+	–	+
6.	–	+	+
7.	–	+	–
8.	–	–	+

note:

power: {–} = the speaker does not have power over the hearer; {+} = the speaker has more power than the hearer

distance: {+} = distance; {–} = no distance

ranking of imposition: {+} = high; {–} = low

The questionnaire was designed in the form of an online survey using Google Forms. In the first part of each questionnaire, after providing a brief description and instruction, the informants' personal information about age, gender, ethnic group, and student status was asked to make sure to gather a homogenous sample of data. In the second part of each questionnaire, in section 2, the eight intercultural requests and their respective 5-point Likert scales were located. The Likert scales range from 1 (very impolite) to 5 (very polite), in which the participants had to evaluate the degree of politeness level in those requests. Apart from rating politeness in each request, the informants were asked to evaluate the severity of the offence by selecting a point on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very offensive) to 5 (very mild) and to assess the sincerity of each request on a third 5-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 (very insincere) to 5 (very sincere).

The original version of the questionnaire was compiled in the Myanmar language since the intercultural requests in the questionnaires were extracted from movies and naturally occurring computer-mediated language on Facebook. The distributed version of the questionnaire was in the Myanmar language to ensure a clear understanding. The responses were also gathered in the Myanmar language. The English version of this questionnaire was translated from the Myanmar-language version in order to enable consultation with the supervisor and be presented in the study. In order to provide a precise translation, a back-translation procedure was used to translate the questionnaire.

#### 4.4 Reliability and validity of the research material

In order to ensure the content validity of the questionnaire, the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) by Rovinelli and Hambleton (1977) was calculated on the questionnaire items. Firstly, three Myanmar linguistic professors or linguistics department heads who are experts in pragmatics and sociolinguistics and know the Myanmar context well were requested to rate the items. The ratings range from 1 to 3 options: Yes = 1 (for a questionnaire item that was congruent with the research question); No = -1 (for a questionnaire item that was not congruent with the research question); and Uncertain = 0 (for a questionnaire item that was uncertain to be congruent with the research question). All the statements mentioned in the questionnaires were submitted to the experts to rate the congruence between the research question and the questionnaire statements. The Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) score was calculated from the following equation: I-O index = Summation of scores for each objective/ Number of experts. Questionnaire items with scores exceeding 0.50 were deemed eligible for inclusion in the questionnaire.

Conversely, those items with scores below 0.50 were regarded as unsuitable and required modification and reassessment by experts. Consequently, these modified items were submitted again to the same panel of three experts to evaluate their IOC scores further. The panel of experts gave the approval of content validity of the questionnaire items as in the following.

Table 5. Validity test result for the questionnaire

No.	Experts	IOC value given by each expert	Content validity
1.	Expert 1	8/8 (1)	Yes
2.	Expert 2	8/8 (1)	Yes
3.	Expert 3	8/8 (1)	Yes

After receiving the approval of the panel, the questionnaire was distributed to the respondents. As for reliability, there are quantitative data collection items, namely rating scales, in the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha was used to attain high reliability and the internal consistency of those items. The Cronbach's alpha score was .806 (Figure 1), which implies the questionnaire is highly reliable.

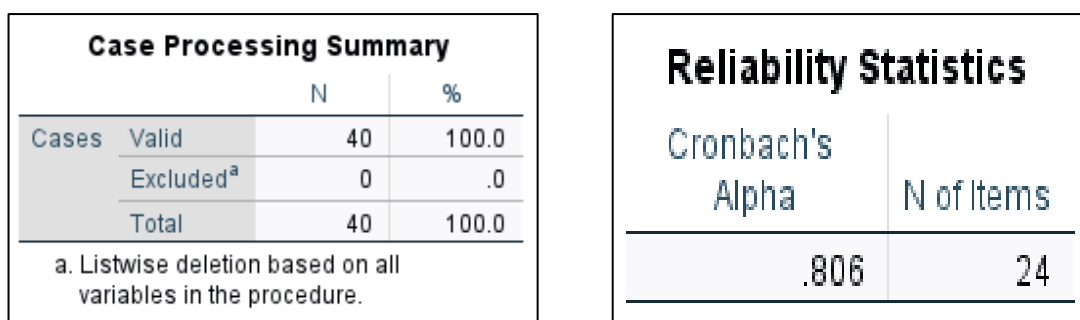


Figure 1. Reliability test result for the questionnaire: The speaker's perspective

#### 4.5 Data collection procedures

The pilot study was carried out when the content validity result of the questionnaire was ensured sufficient to collect the intended data. The Myanmar-language version of the questionnaire, designed in Google Forms, was distributed to students. Responses from 40 participants from both groups (Burmese and non-Burmese) were gathered. An explanation of the questionnaire, its aim, structure, guarantee of anonymity, and pledge to use the data only for research purposes were mentioned in a brief description at the beginning of the questionnaire. Moreover, it was also mentioned that the respondents could opt out of participation.

#### 4.6 Data analysis procedures

The data analysis of this study contains quantitative parts. Descriptive statistics (percentage and frequency) and inferential statistics (Spearman correlation test) were the data analysis methods for the quantitative data. As described earlier, in each intercultural request mentioned in the questionnaire, there are three 5-point Likert scales to be rated by the informants. The data obtained from these three 5-Likert scales was analysed using the aforementioned data analysis methods.

The data analysis procedures for the rating-scale items in the questionnaire are as follows:

- (1) The participants' perceptions of (im)politeness of the requests, which were obtained via the first 5-point Likert scale, were calculated in frequency and shown in percentages. The five points were: very polite (5), polite (4), neither polite nor impolite (3), impolite (2), and very impolite (1).
- (2) The overall ratings of the (Burmese/non-Burmese) participants in this scale were shown in percentages in the form of a bar chart.
- (3) The second 5-point Likert scale for each request in the questionnaire was used to obtain the respondents' perceptions of the severity of the offence, with the possible choices being: very severe (1), severe (2), neither severe nor mild (3), mild (2), and very mild (1). The third 5-point Likert scale for each request was the respondents' perceptions of the sincerity of the request, with five options: very insincere (1), insincere (2), neither insincere nor sincere (3), sincere (2), and very sincere (1). Both of these participants' ratings on this scale were also calculated in frequency and shown in percentages.
- (4) The overall ratings of the (Burmese/non-Burmese) participants for these two Likert scales were shown in percentages in the form of a table.
- (5) For each intercultural request, the Spearman correlation test was run in order to investigate whether there is a correlation between the perceived (im)politeness and the severity of the offence, whether there is a correlation between the severity of the offence and the perceived (in)sincerity of the request, and whether

there is a correlation between the perceived (in)sincerity of the request and its perceived (im)politeness.

- (6) In order to calculate these three correlations, SPSS software was used.
- (7) The comparison of the variations of the informants' perceptions of politeness, the offence's severity, and the request's sincerity between Burmese and non-Burmese people as speakers/producers were described and discussed.

## 5. Results and discussions

The aim of the current research paper is to investigate how (im)politeness is processed in making requests in intercultural communication between native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language, not only from the perspective of speakers in the conversations but also from the perspective of native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language. The results and their related discussions are presented in terms of the respective research questions.

1. How do native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language evaluate (im)politeness in intercultural requests from the speaker's perspective?

### 5.1 Perceptions of (im)politeness in intercultural requests by native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language (speaker's perspective)

#### Intercultural Request 1

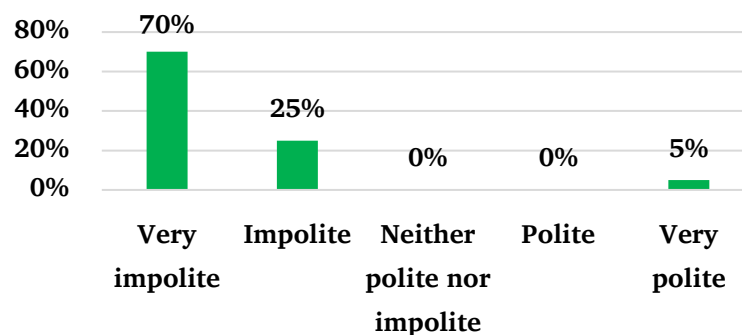


Figure 2. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 1 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Intercultural Request 1 is shifted to the speaker perspective in Figure 2. Out of all the respondents, 70% categorized the request as “Very impolite” while 25% labelled the request as “Impolite”.

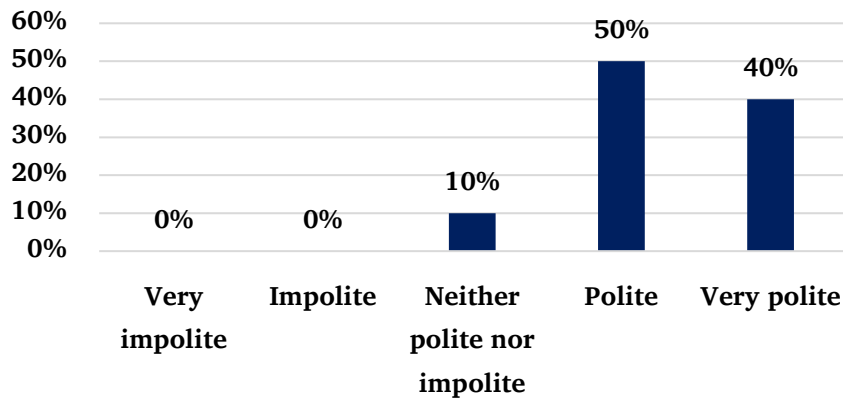


Figure 3. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 1 by non-native speakers (speaker's perspective)

As demonstrated in Figure 3, non-native speakers' perspective as regard the perception of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 1 is shown. A significant number of the respondents have a positive rating for the request with 50% classifying it as "Polite" and 40% as "Very polite".

#### Intercultural Request 2

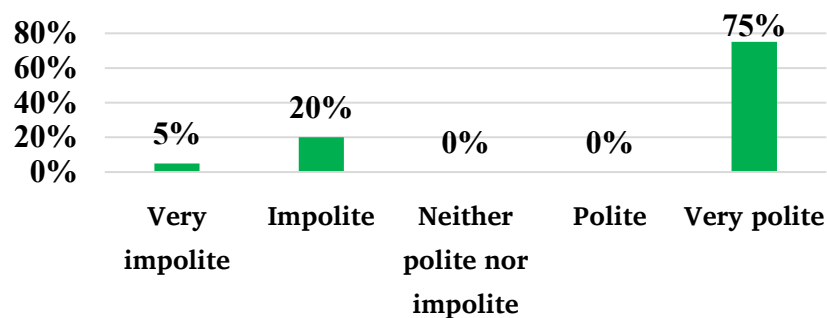


Figure 4. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 2 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Figure 4 shows native speakers' perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 2 from the speaker's perspective. The majority of respondents (75%) classified the request as "Very polite", while 20% regarded it as "Impolite". A small minority (5%) found the request to be "Very impolite".

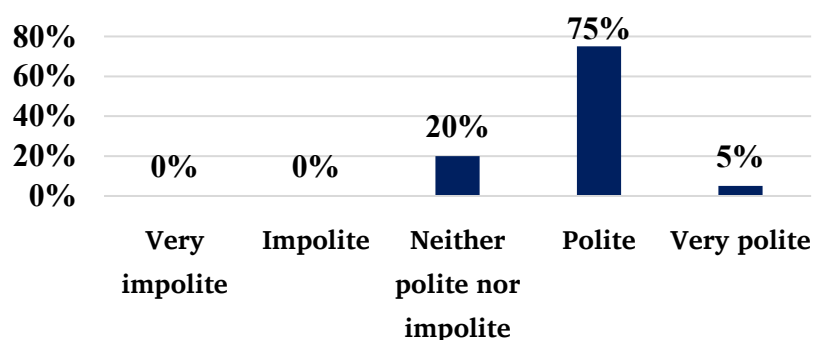


Figure 5. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 2 by non-native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Non-native speakers' opinions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 2 are depicted in Figure 5. According to the research, 20% of respondents thought the request was neither polite nor impolite, while 75% thought it was polite. Just 5% thought it was very polite. Interestingly, not a single respondent thought the request was impolite or very impolite.

### Intercultural Request 3

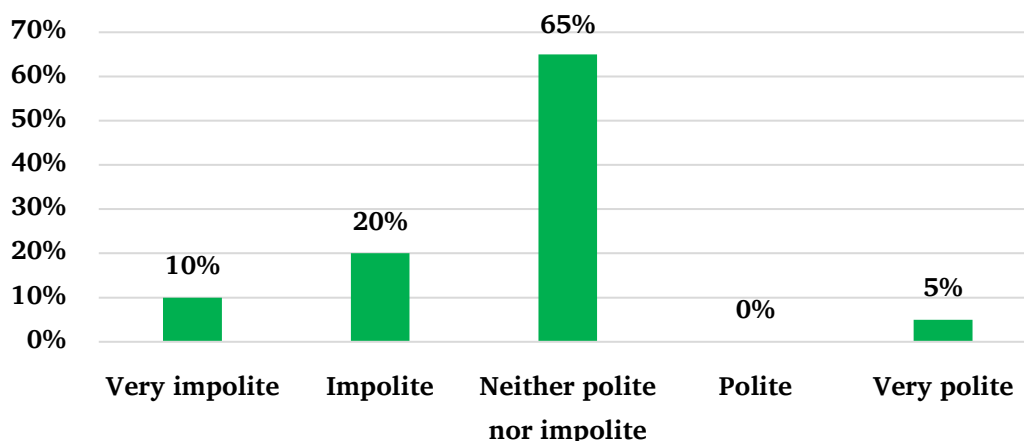


Figure 6. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 3 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Native speakers' opinions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 3 are shown in Figure 6. Sixty-five percent thought the request was neither polite nor impolite. In contrast, 10% thought it was very impolite, and 20% thought it was impolite.

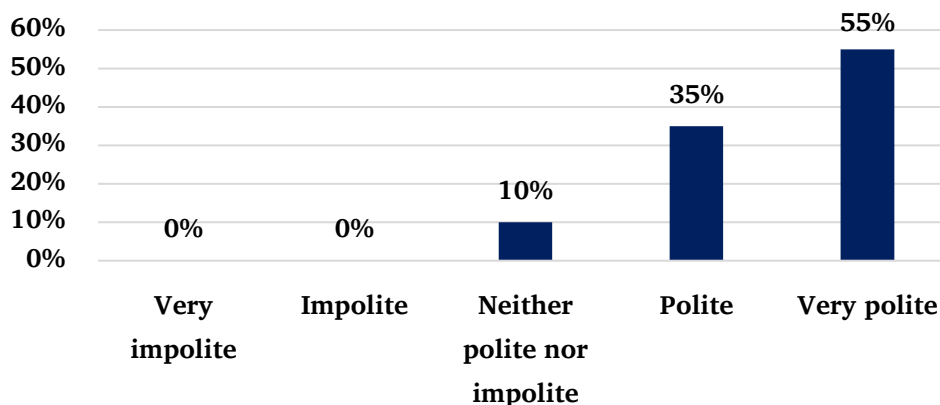


Figure 7. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 3 by non-native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Figure 7 shows how non-native speakers perceive Intercultural Request 3's (im)politeness. Thirty-five percent thought the request was polite, and a sizable majority, 55%, thought it was very polite. None of the respondents thought it was impolite or very impolite, and only 10% thought it was neither polite nor impolite.

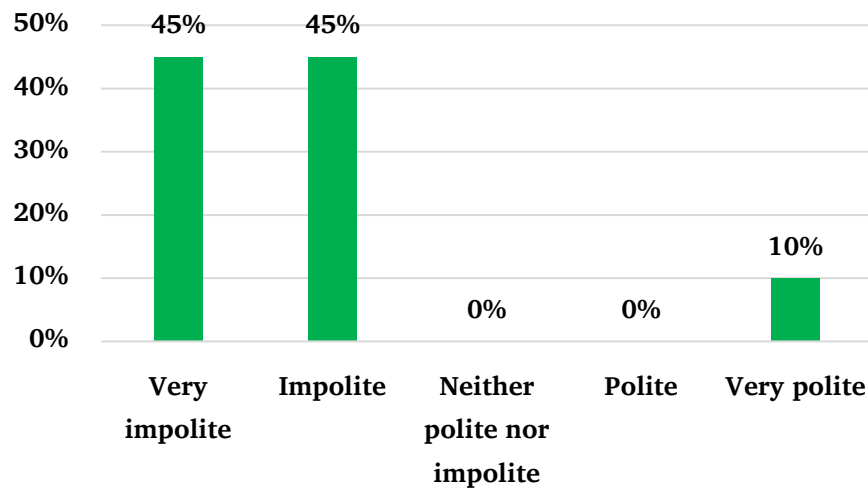
**Intercultural Request 4**

Figure 8. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 4 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Native speakers' opinions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 4 are displayed in Figure 8. Forty-five percent of respondents rated it as very impolite, and 45 percent rated it as impolite. The request was rated as neither polite nor impolite by none of the respondents, and just 10% thought it was very polite.

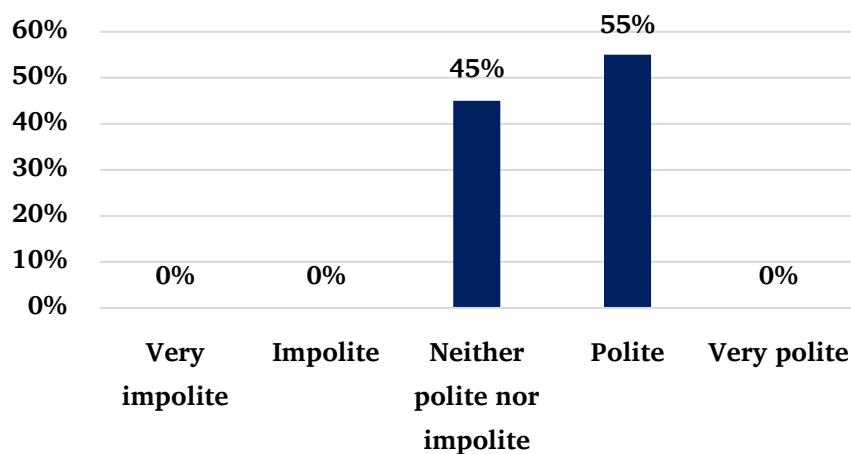


Figure 9. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 4 by non-natives speakers (speaker's perspective)

Non-native speakers' perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 4 are depicted in Figure 9. Of those surveyed, 55% thought the request was polite, and 45% thought it was neither polite nor impolite.

## Intercultural Request 5

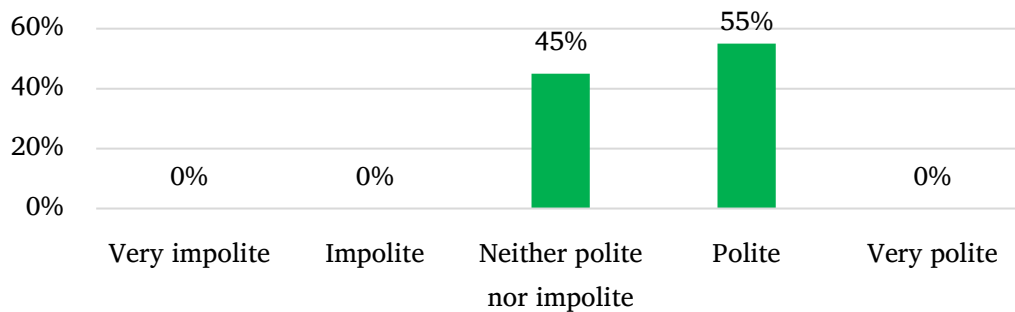


Figure 10. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 5 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Native speakers' opinions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 5 are shown in Figure 10. Of those surveyed, 55% thought the request was polite, and 45% thought it was neither polite nor impolite.

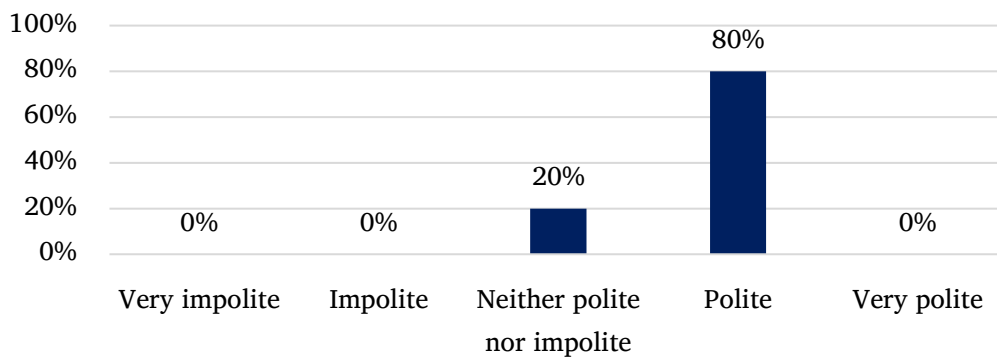


Figure 11. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 5 by non-native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Figure 11 shows how non-native speakers perceive Intercultural Request 5's (im)politeness. Twenty percent thought the request was neither polite nor impolite, but a sizable majority (80%) thought it was polite. None of the respondents thought the request was very polite, very impolite, or impolite.

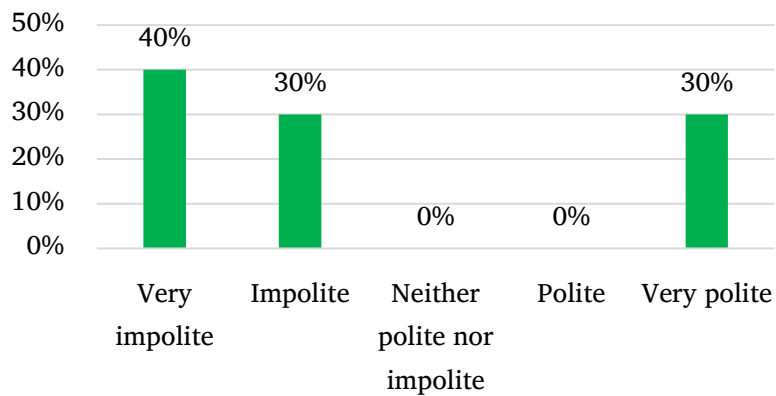
**Intercultural Request 6**

Figure 12. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 6 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Native speakers' opinions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 6 are displayed in Figure 12. According to the data, 30% of respondents thought the request was impolite, 40% thought it was very impolite, and 30% thought it was very polite. The request was evaluated as neither polite nor impolite, or polite by none of the respondents.

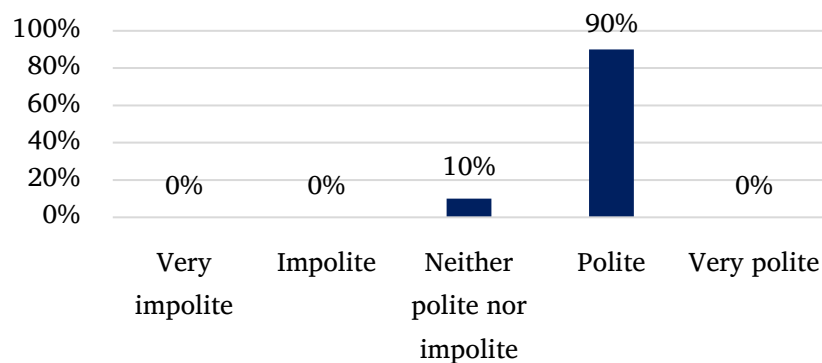


Figure 13. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 6 by non-native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Non-native speakers' opinions on (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 6 are depicted in Figure 13. Ninety percent of respondents thought the request was polite, and 10% thought it was neither polite nor impolite. None of the respondents thought the request was very impolite, impolite, or very polite.

### Intercultural Request 7

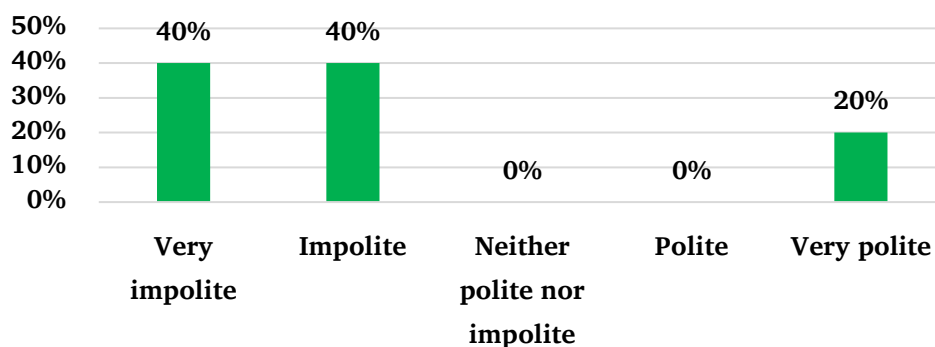


Figure 14. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 7 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Native speakers' opinions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 7 are shown in Figure 14. Forty percent of respondents rated the responses as both very impolite and impolite. Just 20% of respondents thought the request was very polite, and none of them thought it was either polite or neither polite nor impolite.

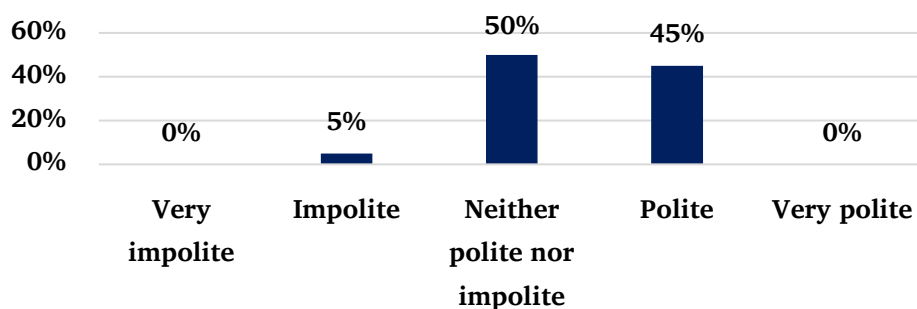


Figure 15. Perceptions of (Im)politeness in Intercultural Request 7 by Non-native Speakers (Speaker's Perspective)

Figure 15 shows how non-native speakers perceive Intercultural Request 7's (im)politeness. Forty-five percent thought the request was polite, and 50% thought it was neither polite nor impolite. None of the respondents thought it was very impolite or very polite, and just 5% thought it was impolite.

### Intercultural Request 8

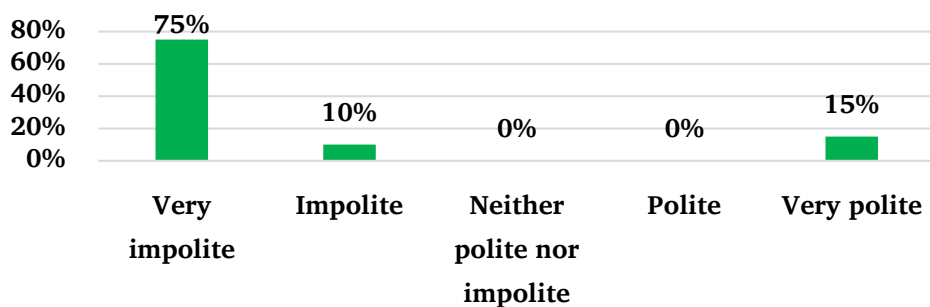


Figure 16. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 8 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Native speakers' opinions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 8 are displayed in Figure 16. According to the data, 10% thought the request was impolite, 15% thought it was very polite, and 75% thought it was very impolite.

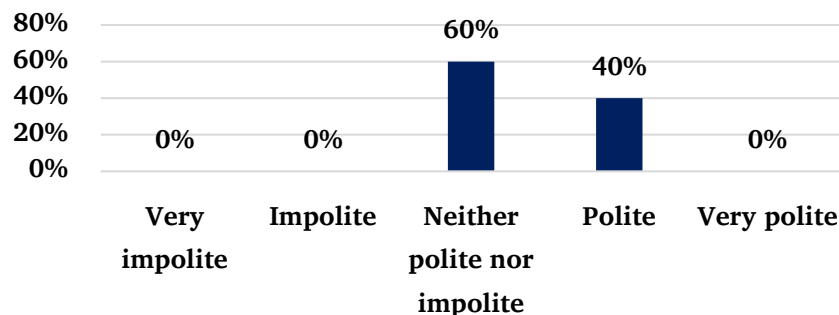


Figure 17. Perceptions of (im)politeness in Intercultural Request 8 by non-native speakers (speaker's perspective)

In summary, the native and non-native speakers express obvious differences in their (im)politeness perceptions (polite, neutral and impolite) towards intercultural requests one, three, four, six, seven, and eight. In intercultural requests two and five, native and non-native speakers reveal different perceptions within the same category of "Polite (Very polite + polite)" or "Impolite (Very impolite + impolite)". It is noted that (im)politeness perceptions are different depending on the different types of intercultural request. Each intercultural request is made in various social variables (social power, social distance, and rank of imposition).

This finding justifies what Kecskés (2015) claims about the impoliteness processing in intercultural communication. In fact, Kecskés (2015) argues that impoliteness may operate differently in intercultural interactions than in L1 communication. He postulated that the prioritization of semantic analysability in an utterance for non-native speakers and their L1-based prior experience in meaning processing have a significant impact on the processing of politeness and impoliteness in intercultural interactions. Hence, the polite or impolite connotation of words and utterances may be diminished or an evaluative polite/impolite role may arise in inappropriate contexts. Concerning propositional meanings, interlocutors may occasionally be oblivious to impoliteness due to its conveyed implicitly or through paralinguistic mechanisms that operate differently for speakers with diverse first language backgrounds. On the other side of this variation among native and non-native speakers in evaluation (im)politeness perceptions, it is worth discussing whose assessments should be taken into account as important. In his book of 2014, three factors, such as (1) interaction, (2) Norms and cultural models, (3) role of context, are mentioned as the decisive root for (im)politeness procession in intercultural interactions.

- 1b. How do native speakers' perceptions of (im)politeness in intercultural requests vary as the speaker of the interaction?

Although there are five scales in the perceptions of (im)politeness, the options can generally be divided into three categories “Impolite (Impolite + Very impolite)”, “Neither polite nor impolite”, and “Polite (Polite + Very polite)”. In all intercultural requests, the native speakers express no variability in their perceptions of (im)politeness. In Intercultural Request 1 (Figure 2), the majority of native speakers rated it in the category of “Impolite”, especially “Very impolite” at 70%. In Intercultural Request 2 (Figure 4), the option “Very polite” was rated at 75%. In Intercultural Request 3 (Figure 6), a decisive number of respondents chose the option “Neither polite nor impolite” at 65%. In Intercultural Request 4 (Figure 8), 90% of native speakers stood in the category of “Impolite” (Very impolite + Impolite). In Intercultural Request 5 (Figure 10), the decisive number of participants selected the option “Polite” at 55%. However, another number of participants also rated it as “Neither polite nor impolite” at 45%. In Intercultural Request 6 (Figure 12), 70% of the respondents rated it in the category of “Impolite” (Very impolite + Impolite). In Intercultural Request 7 (Figure 14), most of the native speakers rated this request as in the category of “Impolite (Very impolite + Impolite)”. In Intercultural Request 8 (Figure 16), 75% of the native speakers rated it as “Very impolite”. In the overall understanding, native speakers’ perceptions towards most of the intercultural requests is in the category of “Impolite”.

Locher and Watts (2005, p. 16) argue “We consider it important to take native speaker assessments of politeness seriously and to make them the basis of a discursive, data-driven, bottom-up approach to politeness.” This view is supported by Kecskés’s (2014) statement that (im)politeness has occurred depending on the norms of the target language, otherwise, the language of the native speakers. However, Kecskés (2014) further suggests the necessity to know about the language of non-native speakers in intercultural interactions to interpret (im)politeness appropriately. House and Kádár (2021b) argue that the differences in the pragmatic scope of expressions can be significantly seen in languages which are typologically distant linguacultures.

Regarding the sub-research questions 1b and 1c, an interesting finding from this study is that there is no “in-group variations” in (im)politeness perceptions in both groups of native and non-native speakers. Chang and Haugh (2011, p. 20) comment “And while we have focused here on intercultural differences in evaluations of (im)politeness, the data suggests that there is also considerable intracultural variation.” This remark by Chang and Haugh (2011) and the finding related to intracultural variation in Haugh and Chang (2019) and in Hodeib (2021) demonstrate that (im)politeness evaluation is also varied among people from the same culture. This view is justified by “in-group” variations in (im)politeness assessments among both groups of native and non-native speakers.

Likewise, Haugh (2010b) and Kecskés (2014) claim individual cognition in (im)politeness assessments. It can be deduced that politeness perception is varied even in individuals. Haugh and Hinze (2003) demonstrate that (im)politeness includes shared normative expectations

and connections within a group, especially in a particular speech community. Kecskés (2014) suggests that communication techniques and strategies are not shared in intercultural interactions. According to these claims by Haugh (2010b) and Kecskés (2014), the in-group variation within non-native speakers is understandable in a fine-grained way. However, the absence of in-group variation within both native and non-native speakers is worth discussing and studying further.

- 1c. How do non-native speakers' perceptions of (im)politeness in intercultural requests vary as the speaker of the interaction?

In the case of non-native speakers, different scenarios were investigated. The native speakers' perceptions towards the intercultural requests lean towards the category of "Impolite". The non-native speakers take the opposite view of "Polite". There is no variability in their perceptions in all eight intercultural requests. A special discussion could be conducted regarding Intercultural Request 7 where exactly half the participants rated the request as "Neither polite nor impolite", with not so great a gap with the option "Polite" at 45% (Figure 15). In Intercultural Request 1 (Figure 3), the majority of the participants chose the category of "Polite (Very polite + polite)" at 90%. In Intercultural Request 2 (Figure 5), 75% of the non-native speakers chose the option of "Polite". In Intercultural Request 3 (Figure 7), 90% of the respondents rated it in the category of "Polite (Very polite + polite)". In Intercultural Request 4 (Figure 9), over half of the participants selected it as "Polite" at 55%. In Intercultural Request 5 (Figure 11), 80% of the non-native speakers rated it as "Polite". Ninety percent of the non-native speakers rated Intercultural Request 6 as "Polite" (Figure 13). Unlike with the ratings in previous intercultural requests, the majority of the non-native speakers rated Intercultural Request 8 as "Neither polite nor impolite" (Figure 17).

Kecskés (2014) demonstrates that intercultural (im)politeness relies heavily on the norms of a lingua franca. Without knowing the norms of the target language, non-native speakers can face problems in producing and processing utterances in intercultural interactions. There are no previous scientific studies on norms of the Myanmar language, which is the lingua franca of intercultural communication in Myanmar and the language studied in this study. Only proto-scientific studies exist and thus it is worth investigating further.

- 1d. What is the correlation between (im)politeness perceptions by native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language as the speaker and contextual factors such as the (in)sincerity of the request and the severity of the offence? If any, how does this relate between these three factors?

## 5.2 Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in intercultural requests by native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language (speaker's perspective)

Before the data interpretation is done, the descriptions of the numbers in the “scales” row in the following tables are mentioned as follows. In the scales of severity, 1 is “Very Severe”, 2 is “Severe”, 3 is “Neither severe nor mild”, 4 is “mild”, and 5 is “mild”. In the scales of (in)sincerity, 1 is “Very Sincere”, 2 is “Sincere”, 3 is “Neither Sincere Nor Insincere”, 4 is “Insincere”, and 5 is “Very Insincere”. The native and non-native speakers’ perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity show a huge gap in all intercultural requests when they rate the questionnaire from the role of speaker.

### Intercultural Request 1

*Table 7. Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 1 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)*

Scales	1	2	3	4	5
Severity	90%				10%
(In)sincerity				100%	

Native speakers’ evaluation of Intercultural Request 1’s severity and (in)sincerity are shown in Table 7. According to the data, 10% of respondents gave the severity a rating of 5, while 90% gave it a rating of 1.

*Table 8. Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 1 by non-native speakers (speaker's perspective)*

Scales	1	2	3	4	5
Severity		85%	15%		
(In)sincerity	10%	45%	45%		

Non-native speakers’ assessments of Intercultural Request 1’s severity and (in)sincerity are shown in Table 8. According to the data, 15% of respondents gave the severity a rating of 3, while 85% gave it a rating of 1. Ten percent gave it a score of 1, 45% gave it a score of 2, and 45% gave it a score of 3 for (in)sincerity.

## Intercultural Request 2

*Table 9.* Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 2 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

<b>Scales</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Severity</b>	10%	90%			
<b>(In)sincerity</b>	30%	30%	35%		5%

Native speakers' assessments of Intercultural Request 2's severity and (in)sincerity are shown in Table 9. According to the data, 10% of respondents gave the severity a rating of 1, while 90% gave it a rating of 2. Thirty-five percent gave it a score of 3, 30% gave it a score of 2, 30% gave it a score of 1, and 5% gave it a score of 5 for (in)sincerity.

*Table 10.* Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 2 by non-native speakers (speaker's perspective)

<b>Scales</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Severity</b>			25%	25%	50%
<b>(In)sincerity</b>			5%	50%	45%

Non-native speakers' assessments of Intercultural Request 2's severity and (in)sincerity are shown in Table 10. According to the data, 25% of respondents gave it a score of 3, 25% gave it a score of 4, and 50% gave it a score of 5. Fifty percent gave it a score of 4, 45% gave it a score of 5, and 5% gave it a score of 3 for (in)sincerity.

## Intercultural Request 3

*Table 11.* Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 3 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

<b>Scales</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Severity</b>	5%	50%	45%		
<b>(In)sincerity</b>	25%	75%			

Native speakers' assessments of Intercultural Request 3's severity and (in)sincerity are displayed in Table 11. According to the data, 5% of respondents gave the severity a rating of 1, 45% gave it a rating of 3, and 50% gave it a rating of 2. 75% gave it a score of 2.

*Table 12.* Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 3 by non-native speakers (speaker's perspective)

<b>Scales</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Severity</b>			5%	45%	50%
<b>(In)sincerity</b>		10%	50%	40%	

Non-native speakers' assessments of Intercultural Request 3's severity and (in)sincerity are shown in Table 12. According to the data, 5% of respondents gave the severity a rating of 3, 45% gave it a rating of 4, and 50% gave it a rating of 5. Ten percent gave it a score of 2, 40% gave it a score of 4, and 50% gave it a score of 3 for (in)sincerity.

#### **Intercultural Request 4**

*Table 13.* Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 4 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

<b>Scales</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Severity</b>		5%	85%	10%	
<b>(In)sincerity</b>	90%	5%		5%	

The severity and (in)sincerity ratings of native speakers in Intercultural Request 4 are shown in Table 13: 85% of respondents gave the severity a score of 3, 10% gave it a score of 4, and 5% gave it a score of 2. For (in)sincerity, 90% gave it a score of 1, and 5% gave it a score of 2 or 3.

*Table 14.* Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 4 by non-native speakers (speaker's perspective)

<b>Scales</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Severity</b>	20%	80%			
<b>(In)sincerity</b>		65%	35%		

Non-native speakers' assessments of Intercultural Request 4's severity and (in)sincerity are shown in Table 14. According to the data, 20% of respondents gave the severity a score of 1, while 80% gave it a score of 2. 35% gave it a score of 3, and 65% gave it a score of 2 for (in)sincerity.

## Intercultural Request 5

*Table 15.* Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 5 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Scales	1	2	3	4	5
Severity				90%	10%
(In)sincerity		100%			

Native speakers' assessments of Intercultural Request 5's severity and (in)sincerity are displayed in Table 15. According to the data, 10% of respondents gave the severity a rating of 5, while 90% gave it a rating of 4. It received a score of 2 from 100% for (in)sincerity.

*Table 16.* Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 5 by non-native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Scales	1	2	3	4	5
Severity		5%	15%	55%	25%
(In)sincerity	30%	55%	10%	5%	

Non-native speakers' assessments of Intercultural Request 5's severity and (in)sincerity are shown in Table 16. According to the data, 55% of respondents gave the severity a rating of 4, 25% gave it a rating of 5, 15% gave it a rating of 3, and 5% gave it a rating of 2. Fifty-five percent gave it a score of 2, 30% gave it a score of 1, and 10% gave it a score of 3.

## Intercultural Request 6

*Table 17.* Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 6 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

Scales	1	2	3	4	5
Severity	70%	30%			
(In)sincerity		10%	90%		

Native speakers' assessments of Intercultural Request 6's severity and (in)sincerity are shown in Table 17. According to the data, 30% of respondents gave the severity a score of 2, while 70% gave it a score of 1. Ninety percent gave it a score of 3, while 10% gave it a score of 2 for (in)sincerity.

*Table 18.* Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 6 by non-native speakers (speaker's perspective)

<b>Scales</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Severity</b>			55%	45%	
<b>(In)sincerity</b>		5%	25%	70%	

Table 18 shows how non-native speakers perceive the severity and (in)sincerity of Intercultural Request 6. According to the data, 45% of respondents gave the severity a rating of 4, while 55% gave it a rating of 3. Seventy percent gave it a score of 4, 25% gave it a score of 3, and 5% gave it a score of 2 for (in)sincerity.

### Intercultural Request 7

*Table 19.* Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 7 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

<b>Scales</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Severity</b>	15%	50%	25%		10%
<b>(In)sincerity</b>			90%	10%	

Native speakers' assessments of Intercultural Request 7's severity and (in)sincerity are shown in Table 19. According to the data, 10% gave it a rating of 4, 25% gave it a rating of 3, 15% gave it a rating of 1 and 10% of rating of 5, and 50% gave it a rating of 2. Ninety percent of respondents gave it a score of 3, and 10% gave it a score of 4, for (in)sincerity.

*Table 20.* Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 7 by non-native speakers (speaker's perspective)

<b>Scales</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Severity</b>			5%	80%	15%
<b>(In)sincerity</b>	15%	80%	5%		

Non-native speakers' assessments of Intercultural Request 7's severity and (in)sincerity are shown in Table 20. According to the data, 80% of respondents gave the severity a score of 4, 15% gave it a score of 5, and 5% gave it a score of 3. 80% of respondents gave it a score of 2, 15% gave it a score of 1, and 5% gave it a score of 3 for (in)sincerity.

## Intercultural Request 8

*Table 21.* Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 8 by native speakers (speaker's perspective)

<b>Scales</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Severity</b>	70%			30%	
<b>(In)sincerity</b>				100%	

Native speakers' assessments of the severity and (in)sincerity of Intercultural Request 8 are shown in Table 21. According to the data, 30% of respondents gave the severity a score of 4, while 70% gave it a score of 1.

*Table 22.* Perceptions of severity and (in)sincerity in Intercultural Request 8 by non-native speakers (speaker's perspective)

<b>Scales</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Severity</b>		25%	75%		
<b>(In)sincerity</b>	10%	60%	30%		

Non-native speakers' assessments of Intercultural Request 8's severity and (in)sincerity are shown in Table 22. According to the data, 25% of respondents gave the severity a rating of 2, while 75% gave it a rating of 3. Sixty percent of respondents gave it a score of 2, 30% gave it a score of 3, and 10% gave it a score of 1 for (in)sincerity.

As for the data analysis for the correlations, Spearman's correlation was carried out by SPSS software by using data from (im)politeness perceptions, (in)sincerity of the request and severity of the offence. The respective results from Spearman's correlation test on the rating scores obtained from the native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language from the perspectives of speaker, hearer and meta-participant can be seen.

Table 23. Comparison between native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language: The correlation between (im)politeness perceptions as the speaker of the intercultural requests and two contextual factors – the (in)sincerity of the request and the severity of the offence

Intercultural request	(Im)politeness perceptions & (in)sincerity of the request		(Im)politeness perceptions & the severity of the offence		(In)sincerity of the request and the severity of the offence	
	NS	NNS	NS	NNS	NS	NNS
1						
2						
3	Â (+)					
4						
5						Â (–)
6					Â (–)	
7						
8				Â (+)		

note:

+ = positive correlation

– = negative correlation

In terms of the above table expressing the correlation from the speaker's perspective, it can be clearly seen that there are a few correlations among three different perceptions in the intercultural requests from the point of view of native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language. In the native speakers' responses, two correlations are found in intercultural requests 3 and 6. The former is the positive correlation between (im)politeness perceptions and (in)sincerity of the request, and the latter is the negative between (in)sincerity of the request and the severity of the offence.

The finding of the correlation between (im)politeness perceptions and (in)sincerity of the request in this study is justified by Blum-Kulka (2005). He mentions that the assessment of politeness is related to perceptions of (in)sincerity. However, he did not attest to the notion of correlation whether positive or negative. Thus, this kind of notion between politeness evaluation and perceptions of (in)sincerity should be examined. Previous studies such as Chang and Haugh (2011), Haugh and Chang (2019) and Hodeib (2021) endorse the association of politeness with (in)sincerity.

From the responses of non-native speakers, two correlations can be investigated in intercultural requests 5 and 8. The correlation in Intercultural Request 5 is the negative correlation between (in)sincerity of the request and the severity of the offence. In Intercultural Request 8 it is the positive correlation between (im)politeness perceptions and the severity of

the offence. This finding endorses what Brown and Levison (1987) claimed; and the claim of Brown and Levison (1987) regarding the size of imposition and face-threatening acts is also valid for intercultural communication. In the time of Brown and Levison (1987), the discussion about politeness was mainly based on intracultural interactions. Moreover, Olshtain (1989) explains that the speaker's decision to make a request may be influenced by their evaluation of the severity of the offence. The detailed data analysis results calculated in SPSS for the information mentioned in this table can be seen.

The analysis of data regarding (im)politeness perceptions reveals a lack of clear correlation between these perceptions and the contextual factors of (in)sincerity and offence severity in intercultural communication. This absence of correlation is observed among both native Myanmar-language speakers and non-native speakers, indicating that cultural backgrounds significantly influence (im)politeness evaluations during intercultural requests. In contrast, such correlations are typically evident in intracultural communication. The study highlights that specific intercultural requests elicited some correlation perceptions from native speakers, particularly in requests 3 and 6, while non-native speakers demonstrated correlations in requests 5 and 8. Overall, the findings support the assertion that no significant correlation exists between (im)politeness perceptions and the contextual factors studied within intercultural interactions.

The study of correlation between (im)politeness perceptions and its contextual factors (severity of the offence and (in)sincerity of the request) can be noted as fulfilment responding to the research gap left by Haugh and Chang (2019). Haugh and Chang (2019) note that evaluations of politeness variability have traditionally been elucidated by considering variations in gender, age, and/or social background among the participants. Moreover, they contend that it would be intriguing to explore the correlation between perceptions of politeness in apologies and context-specific elements such as the sincerity of the apology and the severity of the offence for which the apology is offered. Moreover, research has established a correlation between perceived insincerity and low politeness (Blum-Kulka, 2005; Pinto, 2011). Concerning the severity of the offence, the overall ranking of the imposition, or the ranking of the offence in acts that threaten face, are seen as a decisive element in the manifestation of politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1987). These concepts of Haugh and Chang (2019) are also followed by Hodeib (2021) in which the correlation between the severity of the offence and (in)sincerity of the apology and the correlation between (in)sincerity of the apology and (im)politeness perception. Though the study follows the trend of Hodeib (2021) in examining correlations between (im)politeness perception and its contextual factors, the differences can be seen in the studied speech act (Request), the type of communication (Intercultural interactions), and the number of correlations between (im)politeness perceptions and the severity of the offence.

The study reveals that the lack of clear correlation between (im)politeness perceptions and contextual factors in intercultural requests stems from differing evaluations by native and non-native speakers regarding (im)politeness, severity, and (in)sincerity. Given the limited literature on related studies, it is somewhat challenging to develop a comprehensive discussion in this study. Native speakers frequently classify requests they view as polite under categories deemed impolite or neutral by others. This discrepancy poses questions about issues of (im)politeness in intercultural dialogues and how participants navigate these challenges. The research also notes that its findings are specifically related to the speech act of “Request”, necessitating further investigation into (im)politeness within intracultural communication in Myanmar. A comparative analysis could enrich the existing literature, although current constraints hinder an extensive discussion on the correlation among (im)politeness, severity, and (in)sincerity. Variances in outcomes may relate to the distinct qualities of each intercultural request, such as differences in social power and distance.

## Conclusion

In this pilot study, evaluation of intercultural (im)politeness is investigated in the context of Myanmar from the perspective of third-wave politeness research by adopting two loci of Kádár and Haugh’s (2013) theoretical framework. The aim of the study is to investigate how (im)politeness is processed in making requests in intercultural communication between native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language, not only from the point of view of the speaker in the conversation but also from the point of view of native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire are also tested, guaranteeing its ability to be employed in the main study. As the main result, it is put forward that the different perceptions of (im)politeness by native and non-native speakers of the Myanmar language are revealed in intercultural requests. Moreover, there is no “in-group variation” among the two different groups of speakers in evaluating (im)politeness. Another result demonstrates that evaluation of (im)politeness is not related to contextual factors (severity of the request and (in)sincerity of the request) in intercultural communication. This research contributes to the understanding of (im)politeness in intercultural communication from the Myanmar perspective. Due to the scope of this study, the studied data was confined to only two loci of the studied framework.

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