

## Linguistic Microaggressions in Indigenous Educational Community Environments: A Pragmatic Study of Language Use

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### Abstract

Linguistic microaggression is a subtle form of discriminatory communication that frequently occurs in multicultural educational interactions and may affect social relationships, cultural identity, and language practices within indigenous communities. This study aimed to examine the forms and levels of linguistic microaggression in indigenous community environments and to analyze the relationship between indigenous educational environments and pragmatic language politeness. An explanatory sequential mixed methods design was employed. Quantitative data were collected from 30 participants representing native-speaking communities, religious education communities, and migrant communities in Kerinci and Sungai Penuh through a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, the Kruskal–Wallis test, and Spearman rank correlation. Qualitative data were obtained through in-depth interviews, conversational observations, and naturalistic recordings and analyzed using thematic analysis. The quantitative findings revealed significant differences in pragmatic language politeness among the three community groups ( $\chi^2 = 29.000, p < 0.001$ ). A strong positive relationship was found between intercultural and ethnolinguistic engagement and pragmatic language politeness ( $\rho = 0.866, p < 0.001$ ), while linguistic microaggression dimensions showed moderate negative correlations with pragmatic language politeness ( $\rho = -0.500, p < 0.05$ ). Qualitative findings identified recurring patterns of microinsult, microinvalidation, and microassault, alongside mitigation, face-saving, and intercultural adaptation strategies used to maintain social harmony. The study concludes that linguistic microaggression is closely associated with sociocultural values, identity negotiation, and power relations, while indigenous education contributes to the development of pragmatic sensitivity and culturally respectful communication.

## Introduction

Language is the primary medium of social interaction, yet it is not always neutral. Linguistic microaggressions, in the form of subtle utterances or actions that contain negative or discriminatory attitudes, often arise unconsciously and can produce psychological and social effects for their recipients (Banks & Ward, 2025; Petrou et al., 2026; Kim et al., 2026). Various studies show that language-based microaggressions can appear in everyday interactions, both in academic spaces and in public communication (Harrison & Tanner, 2018a; Smith et al., 2023). This phenomenon is not only related to race or gender, but also appears in cross-cultural interactions and minority communities, including indigenous communities, where language functions as a social identity. In such contexts, microaggressive utterances can affect social relationships, respect for cultural identity, and everyday language practices (Ilma & Rohmah, 2026; Hasanova & Otebekova, 2026; Passi et al., 2026).

The educational environment of indigenous communities, including territorial communities of 'native speakers,' religious communities, and migrant communities, plays an important role in shaping pragmatic patterns of language use, including how individuals respond to linguistic microaggressions (Holtgraves, 2023; Zhu, 2025; Xu, 2025). Indigenous education that emphasizes politeness, social hierarchy, and respect for cultural norms can moderate the impact of microaggressions while also shaping adaptive communication strategies. Recent research shows that cultural values, socialization practices, and local interactional norms have a significant influence on how individuals interpret and respond to microaggressive utterances (Harrison & Tanner, 2018a; Smith et al., 2023). The Indonesian government also emphasizes the importance of inclusive learning environments through Permendikdasmen Number 3 of 2025 concerning 'Quality Education for All,' which encourages the elimination of verbal and symbolic discrimination. This policy provides a foundation for research on linguistic microaggressions and emphasizes the need for education that supports fair, safe communication that respects linguistic diversity (Putra et al., 2025; Arnette, 2025; Johnson et al., 2025).

Education in indigenous communities, including native-speaking, religious, and migrant communities, shapes the language use and communication practices of their members. Cultural norms such as politeness, respect for social hierarchy, and awareness of social status play an important role in members' speech choices and communication strategies. Studies such as *Politeness: Cultural Dimensions of Linguistic Choice* (Nuruddin Hidayat, 2018) show that politeness norms are strongly influenced by local cultural conventions. In formal educational environments, teacher-student interactions also show how politeness and language regulation are practiced systematically (Ningsih et al., 2020). In indigenous communities such as Melayu Batu Bara, address systems and politeness strategies show that language use is not only a matter of communication, but also a reflection of social structure and cultural identity (Polnaya et al., 2023; Efrizah et al., 2025). Through indigenous education and daily social interaction, community members learn to use language and pragmatic strategies appropriate to the social context, which can help avoid or reduce potential linguistic microaggressions while maintaining community identity and harmony (Zhu, 2025; Ma et al., 2026; Enwere et al., 2024).

The study of pragmatics and implied meaning is important because language not only conveys information, but also reflects values, norms, and social identity. Utterances that appear simple may contain implicit meanings, such as insinuation or subtle criticism, that affect social relationships and respect for cultural norms. Research on politeness strategies and conversational implicature shows that the choice of speech style is influenced by local cultural values, including how speakers manage potential face-threatening acts in everyday interactions (Nuruddin Hidayat, 2018). Adaptive language strategies allow communication to remain effective without creating conflict, such as the use of indirect speech, hedges, or other forms of mitigation frequently found in cross-cultural communication and local communities in Indonesia (Ningsih et al., 2020). Therefore, research on linguistic microaggression that highlights pragmatic aspects and implied meaning can enrich theoretical understanding of the relationship among language, culture, and power, while also providing a practical basis for language education that respects diversity and social sensitivity (Abdullayeva, 2024; Zalli, 2024; Pecson & Lugtu, 2026).

Research on linguistic microaggression in the context of indigenous communities remains very limited, leaving theoretical and empirical gaps between local ethnolinguistic studies and contemporary microaggression theory. Ethnolinguistic studies in Indonesia generally focus on language maintenance, cultural transmission, and the construction of ethnic identity (Tannia

A. P. Et al., 2024), but have not examined implicit dynamics such as insinuation, symbolic domination, or subtly degrading utterances in internal community interactions. Conversely, global literature shows that linguistic bias works covertly and operates through indirect speech acts that require pragmatic interpretation (Elder, 2021; Harrison & Tanner, 2018b; Holtgraves, 2023b). Thus, research is needed that integrates local ethnolinguistic perspectives with microaggression theory and pragmatics to understand how members of indigenous communities interpret and respond to potentially discriminatory utterances within their own cultural contexts (Glasgow & Kim, 2026; Samsul Imraq et al., 2025; Marra et al., 2022).

The novelty of this study lies in its attempt to integrate three dimensions simultaneously: linguistic microaggression, pragmatic language strategies, and the influence of indigenous community-based educational environments. Previous studies have generally placed these three aspects separately and have not examined their relationships within a single, comprehensive analytical framework. The research data were obtained through a Likert-scale survey that revealed the intensity of experiences and practices of microaggression, tendencies in the use of pragmatic strategies, and the level of respondents' exposure to indigenous educational values. The quantitative approach used enables statistical analysis to test relationships and effects among variables, including through correlation and regression tests. Thus, this study is expected to provide empirical understanding of the contribution of indigenous education to the dynamics of linguistic microaggression and preferences for pragmatic strategies in communication. These findings not only enrich educational linguistics research, but are also relevant as a basis for formulating policies and educational practices that are more inclusive and linguistically sensitive.

This study aims to measure the level of educational linguistic microaggression that emerges in indigenous communities (native speakers, religious communities, and migrant communities) and to analyze the influence of the indigenous educational environment on pragmatic language practices in response to microaggressive utterances through a quantitative survey. The qualitative component is used to clarify the statistical results, identify patterns of language use, and understand the sociocultural contexts that influence the occurrence of microaggression.

## Methods

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed methods design that integrates quantitative and qualitative approaches in a complementary and sequential research framework. This design was selected because the study aimed not only to identify the prevalence and patterns of linguistic microaggression experienced by students statistically, but also to gain a deeper understanding of the contexts, experiences, and underlying factors contributing to the emergence of this phenomenon. Thus, the numerical findings obtained in the quantitative phase could be further explained and interpreted through qualitative exploration in the subsequent phase.

In the first phase (QUAN), a quantitative approach was employed to measure the level of linguistic microaggression experienced by students and to examine the relationships among linguistic microaggression, ethnolinguistic identity, and perceptions of an inclusive academic environment. Data were collected through a survey using a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire developed based on indicators of linguistic microaggression adapted from previous studies and contextualized for higher education institutions in Kerinci Regency and Sungai Penuh City. The respondents consisted of students from several Islamic higher education institutions selected using a sampling technique appropriate to the characteristics of the study population. Prior to data collection, the instrument was tested for validity and reliability to ensure measurement accuracy. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive

statistics to describe the levels and forms of linguistic microaggression experienced by students, and inferential statistics to examine relationships among the study variables. The findings provided information regarding general patterns, trends, and student groups exhibiting different levels of linguistic microaggression experiences. These quantitative findings subsequently served as the basis for determining the focus of exploration in the qualitative phase.

In the second phase (QUAL), a qualitative approach was employed to explain, elaborate, and interpret the findings obtained from the quantitative phase. Interview participants were selected purposively based on the survey results, particularly students who demonstrated high, moderate, and low levels of linguistic microaggression, thereby enabling the collection of diverse perspectives regarding their experiences. Qualitative data were gathered through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and analysis of relevant documents. The exploration focused on the forms of linguistic microaggression experienced by students, the contexts in which they emerged within academic interactions, the meanings participants attributed to these experiences, and the strategies they used to respond to them.

The integration of the two phases was carried out through a connecting and integration strategy, whereby the quantitative findings were used as the basis for participant selection and the development of interview guidelines in the qualitative phase. Subsequently, findings from both phases were compared, connected, and synthesized during the interpretation stage to generate a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of linguistic microaggression. Through this integration process, the study not only explains how frequently linguistic microaggression occurs and how it relates to other variables, but also reveals the reasons, experiences, and sociocultural contexts underlying the emergence of this phenomenon in students' academic lives.

## Participants

The participants in this quantitative study consisted of 30 respondents selected using purposive sampling according to the needs of the analysis of linguistic microaggression in the educational environment of indigenous communities. Of the total respondents, 33% (n = 10) came from the Kerinci-Sungai Penuh native-speaking community, 33% (n = 10) were students or santri from religious education communities, and 33% (n = 10) came from migrant communities who live and study in the Kerinci and Sungai Penuh areas. This percentage distribution enabled the researcher to capture variations in linguistic experiences and perceptions of microaggression across three different sociocultural ecosystems, so that the resulting data are more representative of the communication dynamics formed within the context of local indigenous communities.

Table 1. Demographic Variables of the Participants (N = 30)

No	Variable Category	Subcategory	n	%
1	Gender	Male	14	47%
		Female	16	53%
2	Educational Level	Senior High School (SMA/MA)	14	47%
		Bachelor's Degree (S1)	16	53%
3	Community Group	Native Speakers (Kerinci–Sungai Penuh)	10	33%
		Religious Education Community	10	33%
		Migrant Community	10	33%

At the qualitative stage, participants were selected based on the results of the quantitative survey using a combination of maximum variation sampling and extreme case sampling techniques. This combination was justified by referring to the work of Michael Quinn Patton, who explains that maximum variation sampling helps identify common patterns that emerge across diverse cases, while extreme case sampling enables an in-depth exploration of the strongest or most unusual manifestations of a phenomenon.

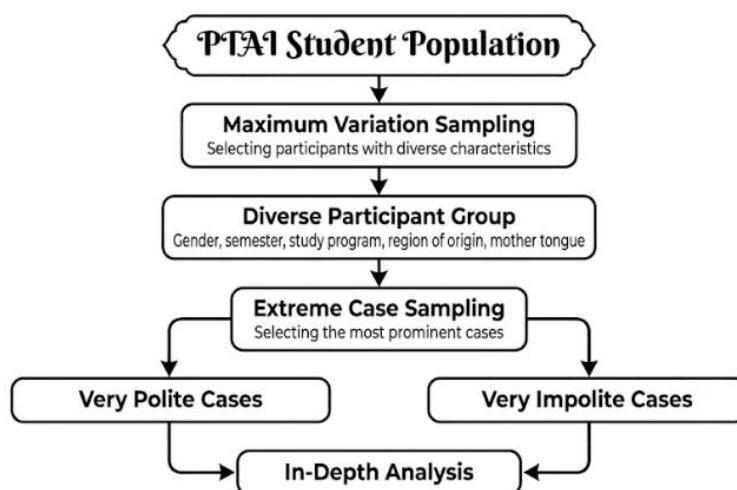


Figure 1. Maximum Variation Sampling and Extreme Case Sampling Technique

This strategy aims to capture the diversity of experiences related to linguistic microaggressions while also enabling an in-depth exploration of cases exhibiting the highest and lowest levels of linguistic microaggressions. Informants were selected by categorizing respondents based on their linguistic microaggression scores obtained from the survey into high, moderate, and low groups. Of the 30 respondents who participated in the quantitative phase, 12 informants were selected to participate in the qualitative phase. These informants consisted of four participants from the native Kerinci Sungai Penuh speech community, four participants from religious educational communities, and four participants from migrant communities. Within each community group, informants were selected to represent variations in linguistic microaggression scores, ensuring the inclusion of participants with high, moderate, and low scores. This approach enabled the study to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the variations in linguistic microaggression experiences across different communities.

Qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations of communicative interactions, and naturalistic recordings of conversations occurring in both educational settings and everyday social life. The final number of informants was set at 12 because thematic saturation had been achieved, meaning that additional data collection no longer produced new themes or significant information. The qualitative findings were subsequently used to explain and deepen the understanding of the statistical patterns identified in the quantitative phase, in accordance with the principles of the explanatory sequential mixed methods design.

## Instrumen

The research instruments consisted of both quantitative and qualitative instruments. The quantitative instrument was a linguistic microaggression questionnaire developed based on the categories of microassault, microinsult, and microinvalidation proposed by Sue et al. (2007), using a five-point Likert scale to measure participants' perceptions and experiences of linguistic microaggression. Instrument validation was conducted through expert judgment,

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Cronbach’s Alpha reliability testing in accordance with established psychometric instrument development standards (DeVellis, 2017; Hair et al., 2019). The questionnaire also collected demographic information, including age, gender, educational level, cultural background, and frequency of local language use, to support the interpretation of participants’ social contexts (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The qualitative instruments consisted of a semi-structured interview guide designed to explore experiences of linguistic microaggression, pragmatic response strategies, the influence of indigenous education, and cultural identity. This approach was selected because of its flexibility in following participants’ narrative accounts (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). In addition, a pragmatic observation checklist was used to record speech acts, politeness strategies, interactional dynamics, and situational contexts based on pragmatic analysis frameworks and politeness principles (Haugh, 2018). Quantitative data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed from the literature on linguistic microaggression, indigenous educational environments, and pragmatic language practices. All questionnaire items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Higher scores indicated greater levels of experience, perception, or frequency related to the construct being measured.

Table 2. Measurement Dimensions and Indicators

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Number of Items Scale 1-5</b>	<b>Score Range</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
Microassault	Explicit linguistic discrimination	5	5–25	Use of terms that demean ethnic identity, mockery of local dialects, intentional verbal stereotypes, rejection of local language use, and direct discriminatory comments.
Microinsult	Subtle linguistic disrespect	5	5–25	Expressions that belittle language proficiency, condescending corrections, negative evaluations of local accents, assumptions of the inferiority of local languages, and sarcastic remarks regarding the communication styles of particular groups.
Microinvalidation	Linguistic exclusion and denial	5	5–25	Ignoring linguistic identity, dismissing experiences of language-based discrimination, assuming that local languages are irrelevant, minimizing cultural differences, and excluding minority-group perspectives in academic communication.

Indigenous Educational Environment	Cultural and linguistic inclusiveness	8	8–40	Support for the use of local languages, appreciation of cultural identity, representation of local culture in learning activities, inclusive policies, interpersonal relationships that respect diversity, and psychological safety in communication.
Pragmatic Language Practices	Context-sensitive language use	7	7–35	Linguistic politeness, appropriate language variety selection according to context, proper forms of address, sensitivity to local cultural norms, strategies for maintaining interactional harmony, code-switching ability, and language adaptation in multicultural situations.

Overall, the research instrument consisted of 30 statement items. Prior to its use in the main study, the instrument underwent a content validity process involving three experts in sociolinguistics, multicultural education, and research methodology. The experts' evaluations indicated that all items demonstrated a satisfactory level of alignment with the constructs being measured and were considered suitable for use after several editorial revisions were made.

Subsequently, construct validity was assessed through item-total correlation analysis and measurement model evaluation. All items demonstrated correlation values that met the required minimum criteria and were therefore considered valid. Instrument reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha coefficients, with an acceptance criterion of  $\geq 0.70$ . The results indicated that all constructs achieved reliability values above the recommended threshold, demonstrating good internal consistency and confirming that the instrument was appropriate for measuring the study variables.

### Data Collection

Data collection was conducted in two stages following the sequential explanatory mixed methods design, consisting of a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase to clarify and elaborate statistical findings through more contextualized data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Felton & Graesser, 2020). In the quantitative phase, cross-sectional data were collected through online questionnaires administered via Google Forms and offline distribution to participants from native speaker, religious, and migrant communities in order to identify patterns of perception across social groups (Nadal, 2020; Williams et al, 2021). Following the preliminary analysis of the survey data, the qualitative phase was conducted by selecting informants through maximum variation sampling and extreme case sampling to capture diverse experiences of linguistic microaggression, including participants with the highest scores, lowest scores, and unique response patterns (Palinkas et al., 2015).

The qualitative phase was conducted after the completion of the quantitative analysis to explain and elaborate on the statistical findings obtained in the previous stage, consistent with the principles of the explanatory sequential mixed methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

Qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews, conversational observations, and naturalistic recordings. Interviews were conducted with 12 informants selected based on the quantitative survey results using a combination of maximum variation sampling and extreme case sampling techniques (Palinkas et al., 2015). Each interview lasted approximately 30-60 minutes and followed a semi-structured interview guide focusing on experiences of linguistic microaggression, perceptions of the indigenous educational environment, and pragmatic language practices (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Conversational observations were carried out in various academic and social settings to examine language use, politeness strategies, code choice, and manifestations of linguistic microaggression in naturally occurring interactions. In addition, naturalistic recordings were employed to capture spontaneous and authentic communication practices that might not emerge during interviews (Taguchi & Roever, 2020).

All interview and recording data were transcribed verbatim, preserving relevant linguistic features such as code-switching, code-mixing, pauses, repetitions, and other interactional elements. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the procedures proposed by Braun & Clarke (2021), including data familiarization, open coding, category development, and theme generation. To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, source and method triangulation were applied by comparing evidence from interviews, observations, and naturalistic recordings, while member checking was conducted with selected participants to verify the accuracy of interpretations. The analysis was conducted iteratively until stable themes emerged and were able to comprehensively explain the quantitative findings in accordance with the explanatory sequential mixed methods approach.

Data analysis was conducted through several stages. First, the researcher repeatedly read all interview transcripts to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data. Second, open coding was performed by identifying meaning units related to language politeness practices, ethnocentric attitudes, ethnolinguistic identity, and intercultural communication experiences. Third, codes sharing similar meanings were grouped into broader categories through the process of axial coding. Fourth, these categories were synthesized into major themes that explained the patterns of relationships between students' sociolinguistic backgrounds and their language politeness practices. To enhance the credibility of the findings, the study employed method triangulation by comparing data obtained from observations, interviews, and recordings of naturally occurring speech. Furthermore, the integration of quantitative and qualitative data was carried out during the interpretation stage using an explanatory sequential mixed methods approach. Under this approach, the qualitative themes were used to explain and enrich the statistical findings obtained during the quantitative phase, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

### **Data Analysis**

Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical software to examine the relationships among linguistic microaggression experiences, the Indigenous Educational Environment, and Pragmatic Language Practices. The analysis began with descriptive statistics to summarize respondents' characteristics and the distribution of scores for each research variable through means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages (Field, 2018; Pallant, 2020). Prior to conducting inferential analyses, data normality was assessed using the Shapiro Wilk test because of the relatively small sample size ( $N = 30$ ) (Field, 2018). The results indicated that the data did not meet the assumption of normality; therefore, non-parametric statistical procedures were employed. Differences in linguistic microaggression dimensions (microassault, microinsult, and microinvalidation), Indigenous Educational Environment, and Pragmatic Language Practices among three community groups the native Kerinci–Sungai

Penuh speech community, the religious educational community, and the migrant community were examined using the Kruskal Wallis H test. When significant differences were identified, post hoc pairwise comparisons with appropriate adjustments were conducted to determine which groups differed significantly from one another. Furthermore, Spearman’s rank-order correlation analysis was performed to examine the direction and strength of the relationships among microassault, microinsult, microinvalidation, Indigenous Educational Environment, and Pragmatic Language Practices. All statistical analyses were conducted at a significance level of 0.05 ( $\alpha = .05$ ).

### Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Data integration was conducted following the explanatory sequential mixed methods design, where quantitative findings informed the development of the qualitative phase and the final interpretation of results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The process involved three stages: connecting, building, and merging. In the connecting stage, survey results were used to select qualitative participants based on variations in linguistic microaggression scores. In the building stage, significant quantitative findings guided the development of interview protocols and observation focuses. Finally, in the merging stage, quantitative results were compared and linked with qualitative themes through joint display analysis, allowing the identification of convergence, complementarity, and divergence between datasets. The joint display combined statistical findings, qualitative themes, and representative participant quotations in a single analytical matrix. For example, higher levels of microinvalidation among migrant communities were explained through themes related to linguistic identity marginalization, while the negative relationship between indigenous educational environments and microaggression was supported by participants’ accounts of inclusive language practices. The final interpretation was achieved through meta-inference, integrating statistical evidence and qualitative narratives to provide a comprehensive understanding of linguistic microaggression, its social context, and its implications within indigenous educational communities.

Table 3. Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

<b>Quantitative Findings</b>	<b>Qualitative Findings</b>	<b>Representative Quote</b>	<b>Meta-Inference</b>
Students from the Migrant Community exhibited the highest mean rank in language politeness.	Students were accustomed to interacting with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.	“We have to adjust the way we speak when communicating with friends from different regions.”	Exposure to intercultural communication enhances pragmatic sensitivity and the use of politeness strategies.
A strong correlation was found between Intercultural and Ethnolinguistic Engagement and Pragmatic Language Politeness ( $\rho = 0.866$ ).	Participants who actively engaged in multilingual interactions demonstrated greater awareness of communication norms.	“When speaking with older people or individuals from different cultural backgrounds, I am more careful in choosing my words.”	Intercultural engagement contributes to the development of pragmatic competence.
Microaggression showed a moderate	Students perceived politeness as an important aspect of	“Speaking politely is important because it reflects	Learning motivation encourages the use

relationship with language politeness.	their academic and professional identity.	professionalism as a university student.”	of more polite language strategies in academic contexts.
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In the final stage, the quantitative and qualitative findings were not reported separately but were synthesized into an integrated narrative. Qualitative themes and participant quotations were used to explain why certain statistical patterns emerged, while the quantitative findings provided insights into the strength and direction of the trends identified within the study population. Through this integration strategy, the study achieved a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon than would have been possible using either research approach independently.

## Results and Discussion

The results of the analysis show that each group has a different way of interpreting linguistic microaggression, influenced by educational background, interactional experience, and cultural values. The discussion then connects these findings with pragmatic concepts and previous research to emphasize that social factors and educational environments influence individual sensitivity to implicit meanings in everyday communication.

### Levels of Linguistic Microaggression in Indigenous Communities

#### *Quantitative Results*

##### **Instrument Validity and Reliability**

Prior to the main analysis, the research instrument was tested for validity and reliability to ensure that each construct accurately and consistently measured the intended concepts. Content validity was established through expert judgment involving specialists in language education, sociolinguistics, and research methodology, who evaluated the relevance, clarity, and appropriateness of each item. The evaluation confirmed that all items were representative of the constructs under investigation and suitable for data collection.

Construct validity was assessed using Corrected Item Total Correlation, with most items exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.30, indicating adequate representation of the measured constructs. Instrument reliability was subsequently evaluated using Cronbach’s Alpha, demonstrating satisfactory internal consistency across the research variables.

Table 4. Construct Validity of the Research Instrument

Variable	Number of Items	Corrected Item–Total Correlation Range	Interpretation
Microaggression (MA)	5	0.889 – 0.964	Valid
Microinsult (MI)	5	0.873 – 0.959	Valid
Microinvalidation (MV)	5	0.901 – 0.966	Valid
Intercultural and Ethnolinguistic Engagement (IEE)	8	0.485 – 0.897	Valid
Pragmatic Language Politeness (PLP)	7	0.240 – 0.806	Mostly Valid *

As shown in Table 4, all items in the Microaggression, Microinsult, Vocational Motivation, and Intercultural and Ethnolinguistic Engagement constructs met the validity criterion, with Corrected Item Total Correlation values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.30. For the

Pragmatic Language Politeness construct, most items were valid, although one item (PLP6) showed a value below the threshold. Nevertheless, this item was retained because of its theoretical and conceptual importance. Reliability testing was subsequently conducted to examine the internal consistency of the instrument. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Reliability of the Research Instrument

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Microaggression (MA)	5	0.966	Very High
Microinsult (MI)	5	0.962	Very High
Microinvalidation (MV)	5	0.968	Very High
Intercultural and Ethnolinguistic Engagement (IEE)	8	0.929	Very High
Pragmatic Language Politeness (PLP)	7	0.868	High
Overall Instrument	30	0.744	Reliable

As presented in Table 5, all constructs achieved Cronbach's Alpha values above the recommended threshold of 0.70. The Microaggression, Microinsult, Vocational Motivation, and Intercultural and Ethnolinguistic Engagement scales demonstrated very high reliability, while the Pragmatic Language Politeness scale showed high reliability. The overall Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.744 indicates that the instrument possesses satisfactory internal consistency and is suitable for use in the main study.

### Statistical Assumption Testing

Prior to conducting inferential analyses, statistical assumption tests were performed to determine the suitability of applying parametric statistical techniques. Normality was assessed using the Shapiro Wilk Test, which is recommended for relatively small sample sizes ( $n = 30$ ).

Table 6. Results of the Shapiro-Wilk Normality Test

Variable	W	Sig. (p)	Interpretation
Microaggression (MA)	0.744	< 0.001	Not Normal
Microinsult (MI)	0.734	< 0.001	Not Normal
Microinvalidation (MV)	0.758	< 0.001	Not Normal
Intercultural and Ethnolinguistic Engagement (IEE)	0.597	< 0.001	Not Normal
Pragmatic Language Politeness (PLP)	0.680	< 0.001	Not Normal

The Shapiro–Wilk test results indicated that all study variables had significance values below 0.05. These findings suggest that the data distributions did not satisfy the normality assumption required for parametric analyses.

Variance homogeneity was subsequently evaluated to determine whether the variances were equivalent across groups. The results showed that each group exhibited extremely limited score variation, with standard deviations approaching zero. Consequently, the homogeneity assumption could not be adequately assessed using conventional parametric procedures. Based on these findings, the assumptions required for parametric statistical analyses were not fully met. Therefore, subsequent analyses were conducted using nonparametric statistical procedures, which were more appropriate for the characteristics of the data. In addition, homogeneity of variance was examined using Levene's Test.

Table 7. Results of the Homogeneity of Variance Test (Levene's Test)

Group	Mean	SD
Native Speakers	94.00	0.00
Religious Education	105.00	0.00
Migrant Community	116.00	0.00

When Levene's Test was applied, SPSS was unable to estimate the homogeneity statistic validly because all groups had a standard deviation of zero, indicating that all respondents within each group obtained exactly the same score. As a result, the Levene statistic was mathematically undefined.

### Kruskal-Wallis Test

Because the assumptions required for parametric analysis were not satisfied, group differences were examined using the Kruskal–Wallis H Test.

Table 8. Kruskal–Wallis Test Results

Variable	$\chi^2$ (H)	df	Sig. (p)
Pragmatic Language Politeness (TOTAL)	29.000	2	< 0.001

The Kruskal–Wallis test revealed a statistically significant difference in pragmatic language politeness among the three respondent groups,  $\chi^2(2) = 29.000$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there were no differences among the groups was rejected.

### Spearman Rank Correlation Analysis

After identifying group differences through the Kruskal–Wallis test, a Spearman Rank Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among Microaggression (MA), Microinsult (MI), Microinvalidation (MV), Intercultural and Ethnolinguistic Engagement (IEE), and Pragmatic Language Politeness (PLP). Spearman's rho was selected because the data did not meet the normality assumption required for Pearson correlation analysis.

Table 9. Spearman Correlation Matrix

Variable	MA	MI	MV	IEE	PLP
MA	1.000				
MI	1.000	1.000			
MV	1.000	1.000	1.000		
IEE	-0.866	-0.866	-0.866	1.000	
PLP	-0.500	-0.500	-0.500	0.866	1.000

Note. Correlations were calculated using Spearman's rho ( $\rho$ ).

The results demonstrated extremely strong relationships among Microaggression, Microinsult, and Microinvalidation ( $\rho = 1.000$ ), indicating that the three motivational dimensions moved consistently within the study sample. Furthermore, the Spearman correlation analysis yielded the following results:

Table 10. Spearman Correlations

Variable Relationship	$\rho$ (Spearman)	p-value	Interpretation
MA ↔ PLP	-0.500	< 0.05	Moderate
MI ↔ PLP	-0.500	< 0.05	Moderate
MV ↔ PLP	-0.500	< 0.05	Moderate

IEE ↔ PLP	0.866	< 0.001	Very Strong
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The findings indicate that Intercultural and Ethnolinguistic Engagement (IEE) has a strong positive relationship with Pragmatic Language Politeness (PLP) ( $\rho = 0.866, p < 0.001$ ). This suggests that students who engage more frequently in intercultural interactions tend to demonstrate a greater ability to adapt their language use to social norms and communicative contexts. In contrast, Microaggression, Microinsult, and Microinvalidation exhibited moderate negative correlations with Pragmatic Language Politeness ( $\rho = -0.500, p < 0.05$ ), indicating a moderate inverse association within the study sample

### **Qualitative Results**

Qualitative analysis using Thematic Analysis produced several main themes that describe patterns of linguistic microaggression, politeness strategies, and sociocultural dynamics in cross-community interactions. These themes emerged from the process of coding and reviewing interview data, observations, and natural speech recordings.

### **Forms of Microaggression in Everyday Interaction**

The results of interviews and observations show that linguistic microaggression appears in various forms distributed across everyday interactions in educational and social environments. Participants reported comments with stereotypical nuances, the use of regional language to exclude interlocutors, or demeaning assessments of certain accents and word choices. Microinsult was the form that appeared most frequently, especially in classroom or group discussion contexts, while microassault appeared in informal conversations involving direct mockery. These findings emphasize that microaggression is subtle but consistently shapes communication experiences among communities.

Tabel 11. Excerpt 1 - Comment with a Demeaning Nuance toward Accent: 'Microinsult'

<b>Kerinci language - Sungai Penuh</b>	<b>Translation</b>	<b>Context</b>
<i>“Bahaso kau tu aga kasa, idak macam uhang kito betutu.”</i>	“Your language is not very polite, it's not like the way people speak here.”	A conversation between a senior student and a migrant student during a classroom group discussion.

This utterance constitutes a 'microinsult' because it contains a subtle evaluation that demeans the interlocutor's speech quality. The marker “ndak macam uhang kito” indicates a form of symbolic grouping between “orang asli” and “bukan orang asli.”

### **Politeness Strategies and Verbal Conflict Mitigation**

In dealing with these forms of microaggression, participants did not always choose direct confrontation. Most used mitigative politeness strategies, such as shifting the topic, responding with neutral expressions, or using indirect forms of refusal. These responses emerged as a result of local cultural norms that emphasize the importance of social harmony and hierarchical respect. Thus, mitigation strategies function as an important mechanism for maintaining smooth interaction and preventing the escalation of verbal conflict among different groups.

Tabel 12. Excerpt 2 - Topic-Shifting Response: 'Mitigation'

<b>Kerinci language</b>	<b>Translation</b>	<b>Context</b>
<i>"Iyo, iyo... dak apo. Kite bahas bae tugasnyo dulu lah."</i>	"Yeah, yeah... it's okay. Let's just discuss the assignment first."	The participant received a comment with an insulting nuance toward the accent but chose to maintain group harmony.

Analysis: The interlocutor avoided direct confrontation by responding neutrally and changing the topic. This shows a topic-shifting strategy as mitigation against potential conflict.

### **The Role of Indigenous Education in the Formation of Pragmatic Values in Language Use**

Indigenous education, whether through the family, ninik mamak, or religious institutions, was identified as a key factor in shaping pragmatic sensitivity to language. Participants with strong exposure to indigenous education showed a higher ability to recognize subtle forms of microaggression and to adjust verbal responses according to social context. Values such as politeness, tepa selira, and respect for older or higher-status individuals also enriched their pragmatic understanding. This shows that indigenous education functions not only as cultural transmission, but also as a guideline for communication regulation.

Tabel 13. Excerpt 3 - Indigenous Education as Speech Regulation

<b>Kerinci language</b>	<b>Translation</b>	<b>Context</b>
<i>"Dari kecil kami diajari, idak ilok memotong cakap uhang tuo. Kalo ado salah, omongnyo pelan-pelan bae."</i>	"From childhood, we were taught that it's impolite to interrupt someone older than us. If something is wrong, just say it politely."	An interview with a member of the native-speaking community who received indigenous education from childhood.

This utterance demonstrates indigenous values that shape pragmatic sensitivity: politeness, speech adjustment, and respect for age. These values influence how participants respond to potential microaggressions.

### **Cultural Identity and the Dynamics of Language Power**

This dynamic shows how the use of regional language and Indonesian contains dimensions of symbolic power. Native speakers are often considered more 'authoritative' in Kerinci-language conversations, while migrant groups tend to adjust themselves to avoid negative judgments about their accents or lexical choices. Cultural identity plays an important role in how microaggression is interpreted and negotiated. The following table presents excerpts of original data obtained from interviews, observations, and natural speech recordings. The quotations are presented in Kerinci/Sungai Penuh language, accompanied by bahasa, to show the pragmatic context and forms of linguistic microaggression that appear in interactions among communities.

Tabel 14. Narrative Excerpts Illustrating Patterns of Linguistic Microaggression

<b>Informant Code</b>	<b>Original Excerpt (Kerinci/Sungai Penuh)</b>	<b>Translation</b>	<b>Pragmatic Meaning/Analysis</b>
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INF-T01 (Mahasiswa Penutur Asli)	<i>"Iko bahaso awak, ndak usah becerito panjang. Paham lah."</i>	"This is our language, no need for long speeches. I understand."	A form of microinsult: the implication that the local language is superior and the interlocutor should understand.
INF-T04 (Komunitas Adat)	<i>"Anak rantau tu biaso lah, bahasonyo lain."</i>	"It's natural for a child who lives away from home to speak a different language."	Subtle microinvalidation: language difference is considered "normal," yet it contains social distance.
INF-K02 (Komunitas Keagamaan)	<i>"Kalau ngomong samo ninik mamak, ndak elok suaro tinggi."</i>	"When speaking with traditional figures, it is not appropriate to speak in a raised voice."	A marker of indigenous politeness norms. It functions as conflict mitigation by regulating directive speech acts in hierarchical interaction.
INF-P03 (Mahasiswa Perantauan)	<i>"Kadang kami dikato 'ndak fasih bahaso dusun', padahal kami lah usaha."</i>	"Sometimes we are called 'not fluent in the village language', even though we try."	An example of mild verbal microassault: a direct evaluation of language competence. Impact: it lowers the sense of social acceptance.
INF-A05 (Pendidikan Adat)	<i>"Dahi kecil, kami diajar 'jaga lidah', jangan malukan keluarga waktu becakap."</i>	"Since childhood, we were taught to 'watch our tongues', not to embarrass the family when speaking."	Illustrates the role of indigenous education in shaping pragmatic sensitivity and communication ethics based on family honor.
INF-T07 (Interaksi Sehari-hari)	<i>"Ndak pande mna teh? Iyo lah, bukannya uhang kito."</i>	"Not good at brewing tea? That's understandable, not one of us."	Microaggression based on domestic cultural identity. There is an assumption that outsiders do not understand local customs.
INF-R02 (Forum Kampus)	<i>"Kalau ilok bahaso Indonesia nyo, kadang dibilang sok Jakarta."</i>	"If we speak fluent Indonesian, sometimes we're called Jakartans."	A microinsult that associates the use of standard Indonesian with stereotypes of elitism. It shows the dynamics of language power.

INF-K05 (Lingkungan Keagamaan)	<i>“Cakplah pelan, jangan sampai menyakitkan hati jamaah.”</i>	“Speak softly, don't hurt the congregation's feelings.”	A politeness strategy-- the reinforcement of verbal empathy norms. It encourages conflict mitigation in ritual communication.
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### ***Pragmatic Patterns and Language Politeness***

The qualitative data were analyzed through a process of open coding, axial coding, and thematic coding. During the open coding stage, each quotation was coded according to its pragmatic strategy, politeness orientation, and underlying sociocultural factors. The coding process identified several major categories: (1) mitigation and indirectness (MIT), (2) face-saving strategies (FSA), (3) religious markers (REL), (4) assertive communication (AST), (5) intercultural adaptation (AIC), and (6) social harmony maintenance (HAR).

Table 15. Coding Categories and Major Themes of Language Politeness Practices

<b>Major Theme</b>	<b>Dominant Codes</b>	<b>Description of Findings</b>	<b>Participant Group</b>
Social Harmony-Based Politeness	MIT (Mitigation/Indirectness), HAR (Social Harmony Maintenance)	Participants tended to use indirect strategies, speech softening, and conflict avoidance to preserve interpersonal relationships and social harmony in everyday interactions.	Native Speakers
Religiously-Oriented Politeness	FSA (Face-Saving Strategy), REL (Religious Markers)	Politeness was expressed through face-saving strategies combined with religious expressions. Religious values were used to reduce tension and demonstrate respect toward interlocutors.	Religious Education Community
Adaptive Assertive Politeness	AST (Assertive Communication), AIC (Intercultural Adaptation)	Participants tended to provide more direct yet polite responses. Communication strategies were employed to clarify personal identity while adapting to multicultural environments.	Migrant Community

The qualitative analysis revealed that the politeness strategies used by participants in responding to microaggressions were strongly influenced by the social context and cultural norms of their respective communities. Native speakers, for example, tended to employ indirectness and hedging strategies to minimize potential conflict. One participant described how they responded to comments about their dialect:

## Use of Mitigation and Social Harmony Maintenance Strategies among Native Speakers

*“Iyo, bahaso kito kan dak samo... indak usah dibesar-besarkan.”*

(“Yes, our languages are different... there is no need to make a big issue out of it.”)

### Codes:

MIT (Mitigation/Indirectness)

HAR (Social Harmony Maintenance)

This quotation illustrates a pattern of mitigation and harmony preservation as part of local communicative ethics. Within the religious education community, politeness strategies were often framed through moral and religious values. One student described how they responded to a derogatory comment regarding their manner of speaking:

## Use of Face-Saving Strategies Combined with Religious Values

*“Kalau ado yang nyinggung, awak bilang dulu, ‘insyaAllah dak marah, tapi cubo dengar penjelasan awak.’”*

(“If someone says something offensive, I first say, ‘God willing, I am not upset, but please listen to my explanation.’”)

### Codes:

FSA (Face-Saving Strategy)

REL (Religious Marker)

HAR (Social Harmony Maintenance)

This response demonstrates the use of face-saving strategies combined with religious markers as a means of softening speech and reducing interpersonal tension. In contrast, participants from the migrant community more frequently employed direct yet polite communication strategies. They tended to provide explicit clarification or correction when confronted with mild microaggressions. One migrant student explained:

## Use of Assertive Communication and Intercultural Adaptation Strategies

*“Kalau ado yang bilang logat awak aneh, awak jawab langsung, ‘Memang awak dari luar, tapi awak belajar kok.’”*

(“If someone says my accent sounds strange, I respond directly, ‘Yes, I come from another region, but I am learning.’”)

### Codes:

AST (Assertive Communication)

AIC (Intercultural Adaptation)

FSA (Face-Saving Strategy)

This strategy reflects a communication style that is more assertive while remaining adaptive to multicultural environments. The integration of these quotations demonstrates that traditional education, social experiences, and cultural identity play significant roles in shaping pragmatic patterns and politeness practices. Communities with strong exposure to traditional cultural norms exhibited heightened sensitivity to face-threatening situations and tended to employ layered mitigation strategies. In contrast, migrant communities that regularly negotiate linguistic diversity in their daily lives displayed communication patterns that were more direct

and flexible. These findings suggest that politeness strategies are not merely linguistic styles but also reflections of cultural values and the dynamics of linguistic power within intercommunity social interactions.

### **Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings**

This study employed an explanatory mixed methods design, in which the quantitative findings served as the basis for exploring and explaining emerging phenomena through qualitative data. Integration was achieved by comparing the results of the statistical analyses with themes derived from in-depth interviews and field observations.

Quantitatively, the results of the Kruskal–Wallis test revealed significant differences in pragmatic language politeness among respondent groups with different sociolinguistic backgrounds. In addition, the Spearman correlation analysis indicated a significant relationship between intercultural and ethnolinguistic engagement and students’ pragmatic language politeness.

These findings were further supported by the qualitative data, which showed that students who were accustomed to interacting with individuals from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds tended to be more careful in selecting forms of address, politeness strategies, and language varieties used in both academic and social communication contexts. To clarify the data integration process, the quantitative and qualitative findings are presented in the following joint display.

Table 16. Joint Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

<b>Quantitative Findings</b>	<b>Qualitative Findings</b>	<b>Meta-Inference</b>
Significant differences in language politeness were found among respondent groups.	Students from multilingual environments demonstrated greater communicative adaptability.	Sociolinguistic background influences language politeness practices.
Intercultural engagement was positively correlated with pragmatic language politeness.	Participants reported that cross-cultural interactions increased their awareness in choosing words and communication strategies.	Intercultural experiences strengthen students’ pragmatic competence.
Learning motivation was associated with more reflective communication practices.	Students with stronger academic orientation tended to pay greater attention to academic communication norms.	Motivation serves as a supporting factor in the development of language politeness.

The integrated findings indicate that the quantitative and qualitative results mutually confirmed one another, thereby enhancing the credibility of the study’s interpretations. Consequently, pragmatic language politeness can be understood as the outcome of interactions among individual factors, social factors, and students’ intercultural experiences.

### **Interpretation of Linguistic Microaggression Levels in Indigenous Communities**

The results of this study show that linguistic microaggression in indigenous communities appears in different forms and intensities among native-speaking communities, religious communities, and migrant communities. These differences are influenced by social structure, cultural values, and communication patterns that develop within indigenous educational environments. In native-speaking communities, microaggression is more dominantly in the

form of microinsult and microinvalidation, such as comments that demean local language varieties or the neglect of regional language use in academic activities. Such utterances are often delivered indirectly so that they appear as ordinary conversation, but they can affect self-confidence, academic participation, and individuals' social attachment to the educational environment (Holtgraves, 2023a; Williams, 2020). From a pragmatic perspective, these forms are included in nonconventional indirect speech acts, namely utterances that contain aggressive meanings implicitly and require the recipient's inference to understand the actual intent (Holtgraves, 2023a).

Religious communities show a more normative and evaluative pattern of microaggression through criticism of language use or behavior considered inconsistent with religious values. A religious environment that emphasizes politeness and respect for authority causes frontal forms of microaggression to appear relatively rarely, although evaluative comments can still create social pressure on certain individuals, especially when delivered by authoritative figures such as religious teachers or indigenous leaders (Lino & Hashim, 2019). Meanwhile, migrant communities show higher levels of microaggression due to acculturation pressure and demands for social adaptation. Migrants tend to adjust their accents and language styles in order to be accepted in new environments, but these efforts often give rise to negative stereotypes toward their ethnolinguistic identities (Guardamagna, 2024).

These findings show that linguistic microaggression does not only appear through explicit insults, but also through implicatures, stereotypes, and indirect communication strategies influenced by cultural norms and social power relations in indigenous societies (Holtgraves, 2023a).

### **The Influence of Indigenous Education on Pragmatic Language Practices**

The regression results show that indigenous education has a significant influence on pragmatic sensitivity, responses to microaggression, and the tendency to produce microaggressive utterances. Individuals who grow up in indigenous environments tend to be better able to understand implicatures, read social contexts, and adjust language choices according to social and cultural relations (Huang, 2023; Ibrahim, 2021). Indigenous education functions as a form of 'informal pragmatic training' that shapes awareness of politeness and social sensitivity (Holtgraves, 2023).

In facing microaggression, the values of social harmony and respect for authority figures lead most individuals to choose mitigation strategies rather than direct confrontation. Responses such as silence, shifting the topic, or using more refined language are considered appropriate according to local cultural norms (Lino & Hashim, 2019). However, response patterns that are too passive may also reinforce the cycle of microaggression in educational environments because perpetrators may not realize the negative impact of their utterances (Williams, 2020). In addition, indigenous education can reduce explicit forms of microassault, but certain hierarchical norms can also unconsciously generate microinsult and microinvalidation through stereotypes or the use of terms that demean certain groups (Guardamagna, 2024; Umar, 2022). These findings show that language in indigenous communities functions not only as a communication tool, but also as a means of maintaining cultural identity and social structure.

### **Patterns of Microaggression and Sociocultural Context**

Qualitative data show that patterns of microassault, microinsult, and microinvalidation differ in each indigenous community. In native-speaking communities, microaggression is often understood as an effort to maintain the purity of the regional language and preserve cultural authority (Hua, 2020). Conversely, for outside groups, such actions may be perceived as a form

of implicit insult toward their linguistic identity. Religious communities more dominantly show microinvalidation, especially when certain language use or cultural practices are considered inconsistent with prevailing moral norms (Alim & Paris, 2020). Meanwhile, migrant communities show defensive microassault as a result of identity pressure and social stereotypes in multicultural environments (Kubota, 2022).

The analysis of interviews and observations shows that microaggression often appears within power relations and social hierarchies, such as interactions between indigenous leaders and community members or between religious teachers and students. The use of indigenous forms of address, politeness strategies, and indirect communication patterns influences how utterances are understood in particular cultural contexts. In some communities, directness is considered a symbol of cultural loyalty and honesty, whereas other communities emphasize negative politeness and caution in speech (Rahman & Yusuf, 2021). These findings affirm that linguistic microaggression in indigenous communities is a relational and contextual pragmatic phenomenon, influenced by the dynamics of identity, cultural norms, and social power in everyday interaction (Sue, 2019).

## Conclusion

The results of this study show that linguistic microaggression in indigenous communities is a phenomenon influenced by differences in cultural values, indigenous educational experiences, and pragmatic strategies used in everyday interaction. Findings in the three communities, native speakers, religious communities, and migrant communities, show different microaggression patterns according to each community's cultural orientation. The native-speaking community more dominantly shows microinsult related to efforts to maintain local identity, the religious community shows microinvalidation resulting from stricter moral norms, while the migrant community tends to show defensive microassault arising from the dynamics of intercultural contact.

The analysis of the influence of the indigenous educational environment strengthens the view that the process of indigenous socialization makes a significant contribution to the formation of pragmatic sensitivity, ways of responding to microaggression, and the tendency to produce microaggressive utterances. The internalization of values such as social hierarchy, local politeness norms, and religious or ethnic orientation has been shown to influence the forms and functions of microaggressive utterances that appear. The regression findings support the role of indigenous education as a determining factor in variations of linguistic behavior among communities.

The integration of qualitative data through interviews, observations, and speech analysis clarifies the sociocultural mechanisms underlying the statistical findings. Conversational context, power relations, and local politeness patterns become determining factors in whether an utterance is interpreted as a form of respect, cultural correction, or microaggression. The qualitative data also reveal that some indigenous communication practices that appear neutral from a quantitative perspective actually have an exclusive function or reinforce the dominance of certain identities.

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