

Integrating local language as acceptance act response strategies in academic discourse: Sociopragmatic approach

Dian Anik Cahyani^{1*}, Banu Wicaksono²

^{1*,2} English Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, PGRI Jombang University, Jombang, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: diananik.stkipjb@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO**Article History:**

Submitted: 2 December 2025

Revised: 6 January 2026

Accepted: 3 February 2026

Published: 3 May 2026

Keywords:

Academic Discourse,
Acceptance Act, Local
Language, Sociopragmatic

ABSTRACT

Pragmatic competence plays a crucial role in communication, particularly in academic discourse. Previous studies on sociopragmatics have largely focused on second language learners' speech acts; however, limited attention has been paid to adult learners in higher education who strategically employ the local language. Specifically, this research examines Acceptance Act Response (AARs) strategies through a sociopragmatic lens and remains underexplored in multilingual academic contexts in Indonesian higher education. This research aims to investigate how adult learners in higher education utilise local language in academic discourse as a sociopragmatic for expressing AARs strategies. This research adopts a qualitative approach, and the data are described descriptively. The research was conducted in Indonesian Language Education at PGRI Jombang University. Data were collected through classroom observations and audio recordings of academic interactions involving local language use. The recorded data were analysed descriptively. The findings reveal that adult learners frequently use local language as a pragmatic strategy to express AARs in academic discourse. Several AARs strategies were identified, including: absolution, dismissal, formal, thanking, intensifiers, requests, expressing emotion, and questioning. Among these strategies, absolution was the most frequently used (25.3%), while expressing empathy was not observed in the data. These patterns indicate that local language serves as an effective resource for managing social relations and maintaining pragmatic

appropriateness. It implies that lecturers should pay closer attention to instructional practices to support the development of adult learners' pragmatic competence. Integrating awareness of the local language into academic instruction can enhance learners' sociopragmatic competence and reduce the risk of pragmatic failure.

Copyright © 2026, Cahyani & Wicaksono
This is an open-access article under the CC-BY-SA.



How to cite:

Cahyani, D., A. & Wicaksono, B. (2026). Integrating local language as acceptance act response strategies in academic discourse: Sociopragmatic approach. *Celtic: A Journal of Culture, English Language Teaching, Literature and Linguistics*, 13(1), 152-175. <https://doi.org/10.22219/celtic.v13i1.43112>

INTRODUCTION

Beyond simply communicative competence, understanding what to say, how to say it, and when to say it to whom is also necessary. Since pragmatic competence has been positioned as a crucial element of communicative language ability in later models of communicative competence (Canale, 1980; Light et al., 2014) it is essential for enabling language learners to communicate successfully in authentic social contexts. (Saleem et al., 2021) asserts that pragmatic competence encompasses both sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistics. The former concerns the impact of social and contextual factors on our linguistic choices. At the same time, the latter is concerned with the particular resources that a given language provides for expressing particular illocutions.

Language, besides being a means of communication, also resembles the locators' identities. The diversity of language use, including among the local languages used by lecturers and students, is a linguistic phenomenon that uniquely represents intention, either implicitly or explicitly. Academic discourse is a socially situated mode of communication in which knowledge, identities, and power relations are constructed within higher education contexts. Research in sociopragmatics highlights that academic interaction is not linguistically neutral but is shaped by sociocultural norms and pragmatic expectations that guide how participants construct meaning. These dynamics influence how speakers negotiate politeness, authority, and solidarity, while strategically employing local linguistic resources to achieve communicative goals in academic settings (Putri et al., 2025).

In the academic context, direct and indirect communication also become concerns. According to (Prayitno et al., 2020) classroom interaction discourse is dominated by interactions between the teacher and students, or between the lecturer and graduates. Classroom interaction discourse is marked with initiation, students' responses, and feedback. These processes result in several norm shifts within the class, including the language choice. Studies on sociopragmatic competence further show that pragmatic features such as speech acts and discourse markers play essential roles in achieving alignment, politeness, and mutual understanding in academic communication. Translanguaging and code-switching practices are recognised as communicative strategies that help clarify content, overcome linguistic barriers, and support participation in academic interactions (Kholiq, 2025).

In recent decades, speech acts have been a major focus of research on second language pragmatics (Alerwi & Alzahrani, 2020; Chang & Ren, 2020; Tsoumou, 2020) with extensive attention to various acts such as apologies, refusals, requests, congratulations, and compliments. Among these, the acceptance act response (AARs) has drawn particular interest due to its potentially face-threatening nature. While prior research has explored speech acts such as apologies and refusals, few studies examine how local languages function as strategies for acceptance acts in Indonesian higher education. Inappropriate or culturally incongruent AARs may lead to communication breakdowns, misinterpretations, or even unintended offence, especially in cross-cultural interactions.

Consequently, understanding how learners perceive, interpret, and produce AARs is essential for fostering pragmatically appropriate communication in a language. This emphasis highlights the need for continued investigation into the pragmatic competence required for effective and socially sensitive language use. Therefore, a fundamental investigation is required to demonstrate the distinctiveness of local language's potential usage. The other gap concerns how a specific interaction plays an important role in using local language as the choice of words in communication.

Recent research on acceptance has surged, focusing either on a specific language or examining multiple languages from a cross-cultural viewpoint. Building on (Blumkulka, 1983) contemporary studies have extended analyses to new speech-act types and contexts, showing that acceptance and its opposite, refusal, have complex pragmatic structures sensitive to the illocutionary type of the prior move and to social parameters such as power and distance. For example, Caponetto (2023) demonstrates that acceptance and refusal depend on the type of initial call, and empirical work on

compliment responses finds that acceptance is a dominant strategy across cultures (Rabab et al., 2024), which demands targeted teaching interventions.

This study aimed to examine adult learners' responses to acceptance act responses (AARs) in academic discourse, using local language. It presents and discusses the variety of strategies used by adult learners' speakers of the local language, along with sociopragmatic features, and accompanies their attempts to realise the act of acceptance response strategies. The results are expected to shed light on the process of adult learners' acceptance, deepening understanding of language use, specifically the local language. To gain these results, the study poses the following research questions: What are adult learners' acceptance act responses (AARs)? and

How do adult learners use local language as acceptance act responses in academic discourse? Local language used in relation to the use of direct and indirect directive speech acts generating directive speech acts in spoken academic discourse represented in the local languages being used (Prayitno et al., 2020). The diversity of language use, including among the local languages used by lecturers and students, is a linguistic phenomenon that uniquely represents intention, either implicitly or explicitly. According to Turner in (Darmojuwono, 2011), language in a multilingual and multicultural society reflects the locutor's identity based on the sociocultural norms and values they uphold. In this case, sociocultural context is seen as a dynamic context that affects the directive strategies in spoken academic discourse with multicultural background.

This research is focused on one local language, with the consideration that the local languages are the majority of those used in East Java, both in academic interactions and in daily life. Classroom interaction discourse is marked with initiation, students' responses, and feedback. The following is the local language AARs strategy used in academic discourse based on classifying the directive speech acts of Searle in (Saleem, Yasmin, et al., 2021).

Table 1. The Framework of Local Language Acceptance Act Response (AARs) Strategy

Coding Values	Strategy	English Expression
1	Absolution	"That is OK"
2	Dismissal	"It doesn't matter" "Don't worry"
3	Formal	"I accept your apology" "I forgive you"

4	Thanking	"Thanks (for apologising)"
5	Intensifiers	"It's OK, really " "It's Ok, It's Ok"
6	Requests	" Please return it as soon as possible "
7	Expressing Empathy	" I understand that stuff happens "
8	Expressing Emotion	" I'm disappointed "
9	Questioning	" How could you do that to me? "

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research employs a qualitative research design that was considered appropriate, using a descriptive analysis to examine how local language is used as an AAR strategy in academic discourse by adult learners. The research focuses on adult learners' interactions in a natural academic discourse setting. This design provides insights into how AARs' strategies in academic discourse use a sociopragmatic approach. Therefore, the sociopragmatic approach is used to reflect the social relationship between the locutors and interlocutors in order to interpret the implied meaning of their conversation (Prayitno et al., 2020).

Participant

The study was conducted with fourth-semester adult learners of Indonesian Language Education (ILE), twenty-four adult learners, and with six-semester adult learners of English Language Education (ELE), twenty-five adult learners, at PGRI Jombang University. The participants in this study included one lecturer and forty-nine adult learners.

Table 2. The Participants Demographic

Coding Values	Characteristics	Total
Gender	Male	10
	Female	39
Age	18 - 19	24
	20 - 22	25
Education	ILD	24
	ELE	25
Ethnic	Javanese Ethnic	49

Instruments

In research, an instrument is any device used to collect data or information relevant to the study's objectives. To ensure that the collected data are accurate and consistent, instruments must be carefully designed (Rahayu, 2020; Solikah, 2025). The instruments used in this research were observation, note-taking, and audio recording. The researchers used a voice recorder to capture the teaching-learning process in classroom-related AARs strategies in academic discourse.

Data Collections

Data were collected through classroom observations, note-taking, and audio recordings of interactions between the lecturer and adult learners in an academic setting. The researchers transcribed dialogues to analyse how adult learners used local language to express acceptance act responses (AARs) strategies in academic discourse, then analysed them using an interactive technique from Miles and Huberman. Obtaining informed consent is a fundamental ethical and regulatory requirement for research involving human subjects (Cini, 2018). Ethical guidelines generally define informed consent as a universal prerequisite for ethical scientific research that involves human participants. Participants' comprehension of the research being conducted is critical to informed consent. Ensuring that participants comprehend the research allows them to attend to both elements of informed consent, information disclosure and voluntariness (Kadam, 2017). Recording provides direct evidence of the information provided, the process used to assess understanding, and any additional interactions between the investigator and the participant. Subject to adequate safeguards on access and use, the recording of the consent process represents a positive contribution to improving research practice while ensuring ongoing protection.

Data Analysis Procedures

The collected data were analysed using a sociopragmatic approach to examine how acceptance act responses (AARs) strategies in academic discourse used local language by adult learners. First, the teaching-learning process in classroom interactions was transcribed from recorded conversations. Then, expressing of acceptance act responses (AARs) strategies in academic discourse were identified and classified into

nine types; Absolution (A), Dismissal (D), Formal (F), Thanking (T), Intensifiers (I), Requests (R), Expressing Empathy (EE), Expressing Emotion (EEm), and Questioning (Q). Next, adult learners' local language as acceptance act responses (AARs) strategies were interpreted. The data analysis procedures utilise the Miles and Huberman model (Wijaya et al., 2018), which includes (1) data collection, starting with a literature review to verify and substantiate the existence and relevance of the problem being studied. The next step involves observations, the aim is to collect data directly from relevant sources so that the research is based on real information, achieving a comprehensive understanding. (2) Data reduction, which is done to select relevant information to help solve problems and eliminate irrelevant elements in the analysis process. (3) Data display, this activity can be in the form of tables and writing. In this case, the researchers present a process for collecting information that is organised around the required categories or groupings, in this case, the transcriptions of recorded conversations grouped by the dimensions of the acceptance act responses (AARs) strategy for local language. (4) Conclusion: After sufficient data has been collected, the next step is to conclude.

RESULTS

Before presenting the results, it is important to outline the analytical focus guiding this study. This research examines how adult learners in higher education utilise local language in academic discourse as a sociopragmatic resource for expressing AARs strategies. By examining patterns of local language use, this section illustrates how adult learners manage interpersonal relations, maintain pragmatic appropriateness, and negotiate meaning in multilingual academic settings. The findings presented below highlight the range of AAR strategies identified in the data and demonstrate how local language functions as a pragmatic resource in academic communication.

Interaction patterns in spoken academic discourse reveal variation in communication strategies, including politeness, modesty, appreciation, and respect, among the lecturer and adult learners in the classroom. Using effective communication strategies within the classroom is beneficial for achieving teaching and learning goals. Effective communication can convey meaning from the interlocutor and incorporate cultural language backgrounds. That is why sometimes, the lecturer and the student need to use the local language in the teaching process. Processing language with local language and dialect is really important to show politeness, age, social distance, and how to create a sense of focus in classes, and how to use language critically with each

other. Using strategies in language can help lecturers or adult learners understand deeper meaning.

The Results Data of adult learners' acceptance act responses (AARs) Strategy of Local Language

Table 3. The Results Data of Local Language as Acceptance Act Responses (AARs) Strategy

Coding Values	Strategy	Total	Total %
1	Absolution (A)	21	25,3
2	Dismissal (D)	6	7,2
3	Formal (F)	7	8,4
4	Thanking (T)	3	4
5	Intensifiers (I)	11	13,2
6	Requests (R)	11	13,2
7	Expressing Empathy (EE)	0	0
8	Expressing Emotion (EEm)	4	5
9	Questioning (Q)	20	24
Total Amount		83	100

The results data of adult learners who used local language as acceptance act responses (AARs) in academic discourse.

a. Local Language as Acceptance Act of *Absolution Strategy* in Academic Discourse

Participant	Local Language Utterances	English Utterances
DN	: Howone wis preian yo rek	It looks like the holiday guys.
Z	: nggih e, pun males berangkat e niki wau	Yes, it makes lazy to go to campus today
DN	: lha piye, kosong tah?	So, do you want free for today?
Z	: <i>Mboten</i>	<i>No, that's ok</i>

The Javanese as an acceptance act of absolution strategy used in the above conversation is marked by the use of the word *mboten*, which means *No, that's ok*. The above finding shows the use of cooperation in the expression of certain vocatives. The use of vocatives affects the form of speech acts, which eventually results in cooperation between the locutor and the interlocutor. The use of local language in academic discourse often serves not only as a medium of communication but also as a pragmatic strategy to maintain social relationships among participants. In the data presented, participants DN and Z alternately employ Javanese in a conversation related to their academic activities.

This phenomenon can be understood as a speech act that carries specific functions, one of which is an acceptance act that serves as an absolution strategy, or the release from academic responsibility. In the first utterance, DN uses Javanese "*Howone wis preian yo rek*" followed by an English equivalent "*It looks like a holiday, guys.*" This utterance is not merely descriptive but also functions as an invitation to interpret the absence of lectures as a kind of "*holiday.*" The local language here establishes intimacy and solidarity, while English is employed to emphasise the statement within an academic frame.

Z's response, "*nggih e, pun males berangkat e niki wau*" (Yes, it makes lazy to go to campus today), shows acceptance of DN's proposition. The local language expression also serves as an act of acceptance and absolution, as Z implicitly validates the reason for not attending class, thus socially absolving both participants of guilt regarding their academic obligation. Subsequently, when DN emphasises with "*lha piye, kosong tah?*" (So, do you want free for today?), Z replies with "*Mboten*" (No, that's ok). The use of Javanese "*Mboten*" concludes the interaction politely, signalling final acceptance and confirmation. This indicates that local language is strategically used to close negotiations without conflict, maintain social harmony, and validate the act of absolution regarding their academic duties.

Theoretically, this phenomenon can be explained through the concept of code-switching, which argues that code-switching is not merely a linguistic matter but carries significant social and interactional meaning. The alternation between Javanese demonstrates both situational switching to align with the academic context and metaphorical switching to reinforce solidarity. Javanese utterances such as "*nggih*" and "*mboten*" function as positive politeness strategies to strengthen closeness and as negative politeness strategies to avoid potential conflict, reinforcing the role of

local language as a pragmatic resource for acceptance and the act of absolution strategy in academic discourse.

Thus, the interaction illustrates how local language operates not merely as a linguistic variation but also as a pragmatic strategy for negotiating academic responsibility. Within academic discourse, *the local language serves as an act of acceptance and absolution, highlighting the role of the vernacular in building solidarity, alleviating the psychological burden of rule-breaking, and preserving politeness in communication among participants.* Cultural context plays an important role in shaping politeness forms, functions, and strategies for using the local language. In a classroom context, lecturers and graduates not only speak to explain, advise, motivate, and provide information, but also to maintain interpersonal relationships by focusing on one another's faces.

b. Local Language as Acceptance Act *Dismissal Strategy* in Academic Discourse

Participant	Local Language Utterances	English Utterances
Q	: Nid, WA mu iki gak popo tah?	Nid, your WA Web is on, isn't it?
A	: <i>Gak</i>	<i>It doesn't matter</i>
DN	: Mbak Anida ini WA Web mu nyala?	Anida, your WA Web is on, isn't it?
A	: <i>Nggih, gak opo - opo</i>	<i>Yes, it doesn't matter</i>

The use of local language in academic discourse can serve as a dismissal strategy, particularly when students attempt to downplay or neutralise a potentially face-threatening act. In the provided data, participant Q asks A, "*Nid, WA mu iki gak popo tah?*" (*Nid, your WA Web is on, isn't it?*). A dismisses the concern by responding in Javanese "*Gak*", later reinforced by English "*It doesn't matter.*" Similarly, when DN repeats the inquiry, A responds with "*Nggih, gak opo-opo*" (*Yes, it doesn't matter*). These responses indicate that the speaker is not troubled by the situation. Here, the local language functions not merely as a means of answering but as a strategy to dismiss concerns, showing solidarity.

This phenomenon is referred to as facework, in which individuals attempt to preserve their social image during interaction. By using local language expressions such as "*gak opo-opo*" (*it doesn't matter*), A mitigates the seriousness of the inquiry and avoids unnecessary tension. In pragmatic terms, this dismissal strategy represents an

acceptance act that reframes the interlocutor’s concern as trivial, thereby reducing the potential for conflict. Within bilingual interactions, code-switching reinforces the pragmatic function of the local language and softens the dismissal. This strategy reveals that local language not only expresses acceptance but also strategically dismisses possible discomfort, thus playing a critical role in shaping academic discourse interactions.

Dismissal strategies have a function as negative politeness, minimising imposition by assuring the interlocutor that no harm has been done. In this context, A’s responses, “Gak” (*it doesn’t matter*) and “Nggih, gak opo-opo” (*yes, it doesn’t matter*), are polite dismissals that reassure peers while also signalling acceptance. The strategy maintains social equilibrium by preventing escalation or prolonged discussion. Furthermore, the local language’s cultural grounding in Javanese politeness norms adds weight to the dismissal, since expressions like “gak opo-opo” are commonly used to defuse concerns with humility. This cultural dimension illustrates how local language strengthens the pragmatic force of dismissal strategies, making them effective tools for managing interaction in academic discourse.

c. Local Language as Acceptance Act *Formal Strategy* in Academic Discourse

Participant	Local Language Utterances	English Utterances
DN	: Fit, dari mana?	Fit, where are you from?
F	: Dalem Bu, niki Bu ngeprint	Yes, Mom, I have to print out this file.
DN	: Sampeyan terlambat 25 menit ini	You were late 25 minutes.
F	: Nggih, ngapunten Bu	Yes, Mom, I am sorry.

In academic discourse, local language often performs pragmatic functions beyond its communicative role, particularly when students interact with a lecturer in formal contexts. The data show participant F responding to DN’s question in Javanese: “Dalem Bu, niki Bu ngeprint” (*Yes, Mom, I have to print out this file*). Later, when reprimanded for being late, F replies with “Nggih, ngapunten Bu” (*Yes, Mom, I am sorry, Mom*). These utterances illustrate the use of local language as a formal acceptance act strategy. The use of honorific forms such as “Dalem” and “Nggih” indicates politeness, deference, and acknowledgement of authority. Here, local language does not simply function as code-switching, but as a formal strategy of acceptance that reinforces hierarchical respect within the academic setting.

The use of Javanese honorifics such as “*dalem*” and “*ngapunten*” corresponds to *negative politeness strategies* that acknowledge the lecturer’s authority and minimise face threats. Furthermore, as student F’s utterances are designed to protect their own face (as a respectful student) while also attending to the lecturer’s positive face (as an authority figure deserving deference). Thus, the local language serves as a formal strategy of acceptance, expressing apology, acknowledging fault, and adhering to academic norms. In the provided exchange, the local language functions alongside English, creating a bilingual discourse that balances informality with academic formality.

While English is used to translate or parallel utterances (“*You were late 25 minutes*” and “*I am sorry, Mom*”), Javanese is employed to convey politeness and formality in the interaction. The student’s use of Javanese formal markers (*Dalem, Nggih, Ngapunten*) provides a culturally resonant means of demonstrating acceptance and apology. Such utterances not only recognise the authority of the lecturer but also reinforce the hierarchical, respectful dynamics of academic communication, showing how local language fulfils formal pragmatic functions.

d. Local Language as Acceptance Act *Thanking Strategy* in Academic Discourse

Participant	Local Language Utterances	English Utterances
DN	: Dari mana Mas?	Where are you from?
K	: Niku wau dikengken ngintun ten sabin riyen	I was asked to go to the rice field.
DN	: Panen?	Harvesting?
K	: Nggih	Yes
DN	: Panen apa?	What kind of harvest?
K	: Niku pantun	Paddy harvest
DN	: Yo wis ndang duduk	Sit down please
K	: <i>Maturnuwun Bu</i>	<i>Thankyou Mom</i>

In academic discourse, thanking expressions serve not only as politeness markers but also as acts of acceptance that affirm the interlocutor’s role and authority. In the provided data, participant K responds to DN’s invitation, “*Yo wis ndang duduk*” (Sit down, please), with the Javanese expression “*Maturnuwun Bu*” (Thank you, *Mom*). This response functions as an act of acceptance and thanks, employing the local language to both accept the offer and formally express gratitude. The utterance

establishes a respectful relational frame between student and lecturer. Rather than a simple acknowledgement, “*maturnuwun*” (*Thankyou Mom*) operates as a culturally embedded form of gratitude, highlighting the role of local language in maintaining respect, acknowledging assistance, and fostering harmonious academic interaction.

By thanking the lecturer, the student attends to the addressee’s positive face, demonstrating appreciation and recognition as a strategy of positive politeness. In Javanese culture, expressions of thanks like “*maturnuwun*” carry greater formal weight than their English equivalent “thank you,” as they are tied to hierarchical respect. Therefore, the act of thanking in the local language not only acknowledges the lecturer’s invitation but also signals cultural deference. This demonstrates how local language reinforces politeness and strengthens the act of acceptance in academic discourse. The present data resonates with these findings, as the students’ use of “*maturnuwun*” illustrates a formalised gratitude strategy appropriate for academic settings.

In this data, the act of thanking is better expressed in the local language, as it carries cultural resonance and formal respect. By choosing “*maturnuwun*” rather than the Indonesian language “*terimakasih*,” the student reinforces the hierarchical nature of the interaction and accepts the lecturer’s authority. Such pragmatic choices confirm that local language is strategically employed to enhance the force of thanking in academic discourse. By responding with “*maturnuwun*”, the student simultaneously accepts the lecturer’s directive and expresses gratitude in a culturally appropriate manner. This dual function highlights that thanking in the local language is not merely formulaic but a formalised act of acceptance embedded within cultural politeness norms.

e. Local Language as Acceptance Act *Intensifiers Strategy* in Academic Discourse

Participant	Local Language Utterances	English Utterances
D	: Presentasi aku rek makane budhal isuk	I have a presentation today, guys, so I am going to campus early.
C	: Ooo nek gak presentasi, budhal e <i>rodhok ditelatno</i> ngunu	Ooo, if you do not have a presentation, you will go to campus <i>very late</i>

In academic discourse, the use of local language often plays a pragmatic role in reinforcing acceptance through intensifiers. In the given data, participant C responds

to D's statement "*Presentasi aku rek makane budhal isuk*" (I have a presentation today, guys, so I am going to campus early) by saying "*Ooo nek gak presentasi, budhal e rodhok ditelatno ngunu*" (Ooo if you do not have a presentation, you will go to campus very late). The local language intensifier "*budhal e rodhok ditelatno ngunu*" strengthens the acceptance of D's claim while at the same time exaggerating it. Instead of simply acknowledging, participant C employs intensification to show alignment, humour, and solidarity.

This demonstrates how intensifiers in local languages operate not just semantically but also pragmatically, enhancing acceptance and emphasising social bonds among participants. In this case, participant C's intensification functions as an acceptance act, showing that she not only agrees with D's statement but also upgrades the meaning to create stronger solidarity. The notion of contextualization cues also applies, as the use of "*rodhok ditelatno*" signals alignment and shared understanding. The intensifier thus transforms a simple agreement into a socially meaningful act of acceptance, embedded in the cultural and academic setting.

The strategic use of local language intensifiers in academic discourse also reflects cultural communicative styles. Javanese expressions such as "*rodhok*" and "*ngunu*" soften the message while simultaneously intensifying the meaning, creating a balance between humour and agreement. This aligns with face-work theory, as intensifiers allow the speaker to reinforce acceptance without threatening the other's face. By intensifying D's claim, C validates her reason for going early, while also teasing in a friendly manner. Such linguistic strategies show how local language provides pragmatic tools unavailable in direct English equivalents, highlighting the cultural depth of intensifiers in negotiating acceptance within academic interactions.

Overall, the data illustrate how local language functions as an acceptance act intensifier strategy in academic discourse. Instead of simply confirming, participant C strengthens acceptance by intensifying D's statement. This dual-function agreement, plus its emphasis, reveals the pragmatic richness of the local language in fostering solidarity and involvement. The speakers strategically employ intensifiers in their local language to negotiate interpersonal closeness and cultural identity in institutional contexts. In line with this, the present example shows that intensifiers are not only rhetorical devices but also socially situated strategies that reinforce acceptance.

f. Local Language as Acceptance Act *Requests Strategy* in Academic Discourse

Participant	Local Language Utterances	English Utterances
-------------	---------------------------	--------------------

C	:	Bisik-bisik e, gak krungu aku. <i>Rodhok banter suara e!</i>	Whispering, I can't hear your voice. <i>Louder your voice, please!</i>
Y	:	(kemudian presenter mengeraskan suaranya ketika membaca kesimpulan)	(Then the presenter raises his voice when reading the conclusion)

In academic discourse, requests are often framed to maintain politeness and solidarity among participants. The data illustrate how participant C uses local language in “*Bisik bisik e, gak krungu aku. Rodhok banter suara e!*” (*Whispering, I can't hear your voice, louder your voice, please!*) to request in a soft and culturally acceptable manner. Participant Y responds by fulfilling the request, raising his voice as he presents the conclusion. This exchange exemplifies acceptance act requests strategy, where local language enables requests to be framed politely, and acceptance is demonstrated through compliance, thus ensuring harmony in academic communication.

However, in this data, the face threat is minimised through local language softeners, turning the request into a polite act of collaboration. Politeness strategies in requests vary across cultures, and indirectness is often preferred to maintain harmony. Here, the use of “*Rodhok banter suara e!*” signals a direct request in Javanese, which makes acceptance easier. Y's compliance illustrates the success of this politeness-driven request strategy within the academic setting. Classroom discourse also highlights that local languages play a key role in formulating and responding to requests. Javanese interactions and noted that speakers frequently employ local honorifics and softeners to avoid direct imposition.

In bilingual academic settings, code-switching into the local language is often used when requests are sensitive, as it provides a culturally appropriate way to lessen the burden of compliance. The present data support these findings, showing that local language functions as a strategic resource to ensure that requests are both polite and effective, facilitating smooth communication in academic discourse without damaging social relations. Local language in academic contexts not only conveys meaning but also strengthens politeness, facilitates cooperation, and ensures that requests are successfully negotiated and fulfilled within the classroom environment. In summary, the requester employs Javanese softeners to minimise imposition, while the presenter complies, thereby fulfilling the acceptance act.

g. Local Language as Acceptance Act *Expressing Emotion Strategy* in Academic Discourse

Participant	Local Language Utterances	English Utterances
D	: <i>Lho, diganti artikel e!</i>	<i>Lho, the article was changed!</i>
N	: Iyo	Yes
DN	: Kenapa kok diganti?	Why was it changed?
N	: Mboten ketinggal, ngeblur.	Not visible, blurred
WA	: Ancene Bahasa Inggris kabeh abstrak e. Bu <i>pripun niki</i> , Bahasa Inggris sedoyo abstraknya	The whole abstract is in English. <i>Mom, how about it?</i> The whole abstract is in English.

In academic discourse, local language often functions as a vehicle for expressing emotions while simultaneously serving as an act of acceptance. In the given data, participant WA reacts emotionally with “*Ancene Bahasa Inggris kabeh abstrak e. Bu pripun niki, Bahasa Inggris sedoyo abstraknya*” (*The whole abstract is in English. Mom, how about it? The whole abstract is in English*). This utterance shows both frustration and concern, but it is framed through local language to soften the emotional tone. By using Javanese, WA acknowledges the situation while expressing emotional discomfort. The acceptance is implicit; the speaker accepts the reality of the abstracts being fully in English, yet voices concern. This dual role acceptance and emotional expression highlights the pragmatic power of local language in shaping academic interactions.

This emotional expression in the local language reduces the face-threatening potential of complaints by embedding them in culturally polite forms. In this case, WA’s utterance demonstrates positive politeness, aligning with the group’s shared struggle with English texts. Thus, expressing emotion in the local language is both an acceptance of the academic reality and a strategy for maintaining solidarity. In a Javanese context, terms such as “*ancene*” and “*pripun niki*” convey nuanced emotional tones while remaining polite. The present data reflects that WA expresses disappointment but in a respectful and culturally appropriate way, ensuring that the emotional act does not undermine academic harmony.

By choosing Javanese, WA mitigates potential conflict, softening what could be perceived as a complaint about academic requirements. The notion of

contextualization cues also applies to the switch to local language signals that the emotional stance is not confrontational but communal. This indicates that local language helps transform emotions into socially acceptable acts of acceptance, balancing personal feelings. Such strategies are vital in academic discourse, where emotional expression must coexist with institutional norms of respect and deference. Therefore, local language, as an acceptance act expressing emotion strategy, reveals the pragmatic and cultural depth of bilingual communication in academic contexts, showing how emotions can be expressed without undermining respect in academic contexts.

h. Local Language as Acceptance Act *Questioning Strategy* in Academic Discourse

Participant	Local Language Utterances	English Utterances
Q	: <i>Nid WA Web mu iki nyala, gak popo tah?</i>	<i>Nid your WA Web is on, isn't it?</i>
A	: Gak popo	It doesn't matter
DN	: Mbak Anida ini WA Web mu nyala.	Anida, your WA Web is on.
A	: Nggih mboten nopo-nopo	Yes, it doesn't matter.

In academic discourse, questioning is not only a means of seeking information but also an act of acceptance. In the data, the questions "*Nid, WA Web mu iki nyala, gak popo tah?*" (*Nid your WA Web is on, isn't it?*) represents local language use as an indirect way of confirming and accepting the situation. The responses "*Gak popo*" (*It doesn't matter*) demonstrate acceptance through minimal acknowledgement, showing that the act of questioning is not confrontational but cooperative. In this context, questioning becomes a strategy to verify shared understanding while simultaneously expressing acceptance of the interlocutor's perspective.

Thus, the use of local language softens the pragmatic force of questioning, embedding it within a culturally appropriate frame of solidarity and politeness. However, when combined with acceptance, questions function as indirect expressions, signalling recognition of the interlocutor's authority or situation. By using local codes, speakers align with positive politeness strategies, emphasising familiarity and solidarity. In this way, questioning acts as a bridge; it accepts the communicative frame while maintaining the cultural norms of deference and respect, especially when directed toward peers or seniors. In Indonesian academic settings, local language

questions like “*gak popo tah*” often combine curiosity with implicit acceptance, softening directness and showing attentiveness.

In conclusion, the data illustrate that local-language questioning in academic discourse is not merely interrogative but also serves as an act of acceptance. By asking in Javanese or mixed local codes, speakers acknowledge the situation while simultaneously aligning with cultural politeness norms. Thus, Local Language as Acceptance Act Questioning Strategy demonstrates how questioning in academic discourse can mitigate threats to face, foster solidarity, and sustain harmonious interaction. This underlines the pragmatic flexibility of local languages in academic settings, where acceptance and inquiry often merge seamlessly.

The findings of this research show that adult learners in Higher Education used local language in academic discourse as a pragmatic competence strategy in acceptance acts such as absolution, dismissal, formal thanking, intensifiers, requests, expressions of emotion, and questioning. In this research, adult learners often use the absolution strategy (25,3%) in acceptance acts and expressing empathy (0%) was not found in this research.

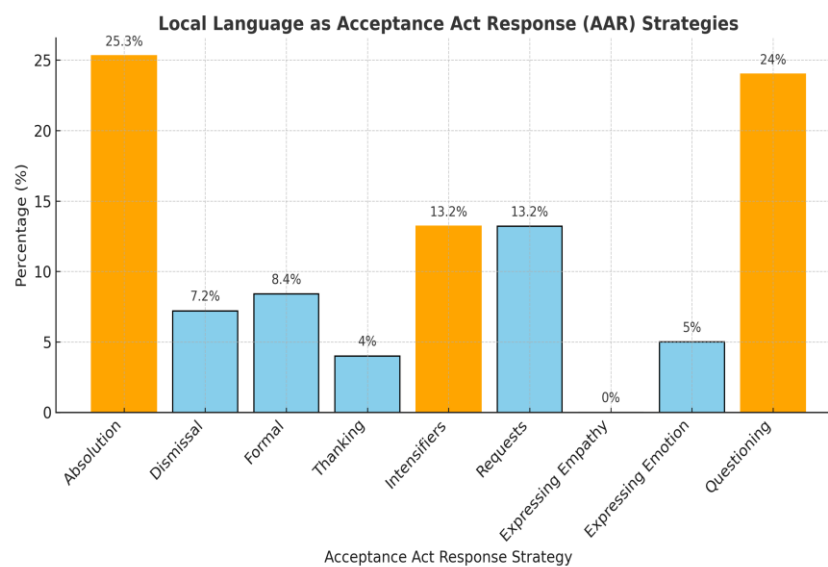


Figure 1. Adult learners' acceptance act responses (AARs) strategy of the local language

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that Absolution (25.3%) and Questioning (24%) are the most prominent Acceptance Act strategies, reflecting learners' pragmatic management of interpersonal relations and meaning construction in academic discourse. Absolution

functions primarily as a face-saving strategy, enabling learners to accept ideas while reducing personal responsibility and potential conflict. In line with Brown and Levinson's politeness theory in (Sadeghoghli & Niroomand, 2016), this indirectness reflects learners' sensitivity to social harmony in collaborative academic settings. In contrast, Questioning serves an interactional and epistemic function, allowing learners to seek clarification and negotiate understanding without committing to agreement immediately. Local-language questioning facilitates shared interpretation and active participation. The comparable use of these strategies suggests that learners strategically balance relational politeness and meaning negotiation, indicating that local language use represents a pragmatic resource rather than a communicative constraint.

The moderate use of Intensifiers and Requests (13.2% each) indicates that learners employ local language to manage acceptance with varying degrees of emphasis and negotiation. Intensifiers function to reinforce alignment and signal stronger commitment, reflecting learners' emotional involvement while maintaining interpersonal solidarity. Moreover, the results resonate with previous studies by (Thi et al., 2020 ; González-díaz, 2021; Gulkhayo & Qizi, 2022) that argue that intensifiers function as markers of intensity, signalling the scale of a speaker's emotions, attitudes, behaviours, and evaluations. These scholars emphasise that intensifiers do more than modify an utterance; they provide insight into the speaker's stance, reinforcing the emotional and interpersonal weight of their expressions. In line with the findings of (Khorsheed et al., 2022), the findings indicate that intensifiers played a significant role in either maximising or minimising face threats, depending on the context. Importantly, the use of intensifiers in these instances was not indicative of a lack of confidence or personal assertiveness, as suggested by (Oishi, 2020).

Requests, by contrast, serve as a polite negotiation tool, allowing learners to seek clarification or adjustment without imposing directly. In line with (Utin et al., 2024), the degree of politeness varies depending on the setting and the speaker's role at the moment. As a result, the extent of politeness expected in requests can vary depending on the context and the level of familiarity between the interlocutors, as well as social class and status. Moreover, the results resonate with previous studies by (Zhong & Zhang, 2023) which stated the conversations (in both English and Chinese), the explicit instruction draws students' attention not only to pragmalinguistic formulas and sociopragmatic norms, but also how request sequences play out across turns beyond the scope of the adjacency pair, including pre-request and post-expansion

moves that ascertain the availability of the recipient to grant a request and hammer out the details of the granting.

Meanwhile, the lower frequencies of Formal acceptance (8.4%) and Expressing Emotion (5%) suggest that highly conventionalised or affective acceptance acts are less salient in peer-based academic interaction, where efficiency and collegiality are prioritised. Nonetheless, their occasional use demonstrates learners' context-sensitive pragmatic flexibility, reinforcing that acceptance strategies are strategically selected rather than uniformly applied. (Abbas & Nurkamto, 2021) argue that the speech act of expressing wants indicates the speaker's willingness to do something. It can be something good that happens and something terrible that doesn't, and the speech act of expressing optimism expresses someone's belief about what they have planned or done. It can help the speaker build confidence in the future. One of the benefits of being optimistic is to have a stronger immune system since it buffers it against psychological stressors.

The relatively low occurrence of Dismissal (7.2%) and Thanking (4%) suggests that adult learners selectively avoid acceptance strategies that may be interactionally marked in peer-based academic discourse. Dismissal is likely minimised because it poses a higher risk of face threat, which could disrupt group cohesion during collaborative tasks. Thanking, while inherently polite, is less salient among peers with established rapport, as gratitude is often implicit rather than expressed verbally. This pattern aligns with previous research indicating that thanking is more prevalent in hierarchical interactions than in peer contexts. Notably, the absence of Expressing Empathy (0%) indicates a strong orientation toward task completion over affective alignment. This absence underscores the context-dependent nature of pragmatic competence in academic settings and suggests a potential area for pedagogical intervention to expand learners' sociopragmatic repertoire.

CONCLUSION

In communicating, the strategies of local languages, such as Javanese, are often used by adult learners of Higher Education in academic discourse. In this research, adult learners often use the absolution strategy (25,3%) in acceptance acts and expressing empathy (0%) was not found in this research. Adult learners' in Higher Education used local language in academic discourse as a pragmatic competence strategy in acceptance act of absolution strategy as much 21 (25,3 %), dismissal strategy 6 (7,2%),

formal strategy 7 (8,4%), thanking strategy 3 (4%), intensifiers strategy 11 (13,2 %), request strategy 11 (13,2 %), expressing empathy strategy 0 or (0%), expressing emotion strategy 4 (5%), and questioning strategy 20 (24%). This study extends sociopragmatic understanding by demonstrating that local languages function as culturally embedded pragmatic resources, shaping acceptance acts through context-sensitive strategies such as absolution and questioning in academic discourse, thereby making a theoretical contribution.

As a practical implication, teachers can foster pragmatic competence by integrating explicit sociopragmatic instruction into classroom practice, using authentic academic interactions, role-plays, and reflective discussions to raise learners' awareness of appropriate acceptance strategies and cultural norms in both local and target languages. Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the relatively small sample size limits the generalizability of the findings to broader higher education contexts. Second, the focus on a single local language and specific academic settings may not capture the full range of pragmatic variation across different regions or disciplines. Third, the study relies primarily on observed acceptance acts without triangulation through interviews or introspective data, which may affect the depth of interpretation regarding learners' intentions. Future research should involve larger and more diverse participant groups, comparative analyses across languages, and mixed-method approaches to strengthen the validity and applicability of sociopragmatic findings in academic discourse.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

AUTHOR (S) CONTRIBUTION

Cahyani, D.A.: Conceptualisation (lead), methodology (lead), writing-original draft (lead), analysis and interpretation of the data (lead), reviewing (lead). Wicaksono, B.: methodology (supporting), writing-original draft (supporting), reviewing (supporting).

REFERENCES

Abbas, A., & Nurkamto, J. (2021). *Functioning expressive speech acts in the 2019 Indonesian presidential election debates*. *Langkawi, Journal of the Association*

for Arabic and English, 7(1), 81–94.

- Alerwi, A. A., & Alzahrani, A. (2020). Using sitcoms to improve the acquisition of speech acts by EFL students: Focusing on request, refusal, apology, and compliment response. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, 7(1), 63–79. www.jallr.com
- Blum-kulka, S. (1983). *Requests and apologies: A cross-cultural study of speech act realization patterns (CCSARP) 1*. 5(3).
- Canale, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1(1), 1–47. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/1.1.1>.
- Caponetto, L. (2023). The pragmatic structure of refusal. *Synthese*, 201(6), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-023-04177-4>
- Chang, Y., & Ren, W. (2020). Sociopragmatic competence in American and Chinese children's realization of apology and refusal. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 164, 27–39. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2020.04.013>
- Cini, E. (2018). Informed consent in clinical studies. *Malta Medical Journal*, 30(1), 22–25. <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/40069>
- Darmojuwono, S. (2011). Peran unsur etnopragmatis dalam komunikasi masyarakat multikultural. *Linguistik Indonesia*, 29(1), 19–34.
- González-Díaz, V. (2021). Intensificatory tautology in the history of English: A corpus-based study. *Journal of English Linguistics*, 49(2), 182–207. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0075424221999095>
- Gulkhayo, U., & Qizi, Z. (2022). *Intensification as a Multilevel System of Modern English*. 12, 29–31.
- Kadam, R. A. (2017). Informed consent process: A step further towards making it meaningful! *Perspectives in Clinical Research*, 8(3), 107–112. https://doi.org/10.4103/picr.PICR_147_16
- Kholiq, M. (2025). Dynamics of language use in socio-academic contexts and their implications for language teaching. *Qalamuna: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, dan Agama*, 17(1), 281–294. <https://doi.org/10.37680/qalamuna.v17i1.5812>
- Khorsheed, N. N., Dzakiria, H., & Sarjit Singh, M. K. (2022). A comparative study on intensifiers in opinion articles on Rudaw Portal. *Koya University Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 5(1), 70–76. <https://doi.org/10.14500/kujhss.v5n1y2022.pp70-76>
- Light, J., & McNaughton, D. (2014). Communicative competence for individuals who

- require augmentative and alternative communication: A new definition for a new era of communication? *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 30(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.3109/07434618.2014.885080>
- Oishi, E. (2020). Discourse markers as indicators of connectedness between expositive illocutionary acts. *Pragmatics and Society*, 11(1), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ps.17028.ois>
- Prayitno, H. J., Jamaludin, N., & Jha, G. K. (2020). The politeness comments on the Indonesian president Jokowi's Instagram official account viewed from politico pragmatics and the character education orientation in the disruption era. *Indonesian Journal on Learning and Advances Education*, 1(2), 52-71.
- Putri, D., Kristanto, B., & Dian, I. (2025). *The sociopragmatic competence paradox: Examining the gap between linguistic and interactive skills in efl academic presentations in science and technology contexts*. 04(01), 44–65.
- Rabab, G., Alghazo, S., Al-hajji, R., & Jarbou, S. (2024). A pragmatic analysis of compliment response strategies by Emirati Arabic speakers. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2024.2350814>
- Rahayu, S. (2020). Types of speech acts and principles of mother's politeness in mother and child conversation. *KEMBARA: Jurnal Keilmuan Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya*, 6(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.22219/kembara.v6i1.11695>
- Sadeghoghli, H., & Niroomand, M. (2016). Theories on politeness by focusing on Brown and Levinson's politeness theory. *International Journal of Educational Investigations*, 3(2), 26–39. <http://www.ijeionline.com/attachments/article/51/IJEI.Vol.3.No.2.03.pdf>
- Saleem, T., Anjum, U., & Tahir, S. (2021). The sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic strategies in L2 pragmatic competence: A case of Pakistani ESL learners. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 50(2), 185–206. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17475759.2021.1877176>
- Saleem, T., Yasmin, M., & Saleem, A. (2021). Linguistic politeness of Pakistani English and British English speakers: Culture and gender perspectives. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 8(1), Article 1996917. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2021.1996917>
- Solikah, U., Sumardi, S., & Ngadiso, N. (2025). Willingness to communicate in English: A case study in the Indonesian EFL context. *Celtic: A Journal of Culture, English Language Teaching, Literature and Linguistics*, 12(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.22219/celtic.v12i1.38795>
- Thi, L., Chi, G., Phan, D., & Truc, A. (2020). *International Journal of Systemic*

*Functional Linguistics Isolating Intensifiers in Verbal Processes Found in English
Literary Discourse. 3(2).*

- Tsoumou, J. M. (2020). Analysing speech acts in politically related Facebook communication. *Journal of Pragmatics, 167*, 80–97.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2020.06.004>
- Utin, I. D. (2024). Request as a speech act: A study of the features of the spoken Nigeria English. *NIU Journal of Social Sciences, 10(2)*, 345–353.
- Wijaya, H. (2018). *Analisis data kualitatif model Spradley (etnografi)*. Sekolah Tinggi Theologia Jaffray. <https://www.neliti.com/publications/269015/analisis-data-kualitatif-model-spradley-etnografi>
- Zhong, L., & Zhang, Y. (2023). Computerized mediated explicit instruction and EFL learners' knowledge of speech acts: Investigating the role of EFL learners' language proficiency and perceptions. *Heliyon, 9(9)*, Article e19738.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e19738>