

# Developing a teaching module for strengthening linguistic politeness in early childhood education

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## Abstract

*Linguistic politeness among children today often fails to reflect moral values in communication and tends to deviate from the principle of qaulan karīman as emphasized in Islamic teachings. Therefore, strengthening linguistic politeness from an early age is essential. This study aims to develop a teaching module designed to strengthen linguistic politeness among early childhood learners through the integration of pantun, proverbs, and expressions. This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the ADDIE model, which includes the stages of analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. The research participants consisted of three school principals and six kindergarten teachers from three early childhood education institutions located in Bogor, Palembang, and Sekadau. Data was collected through interviews, needs analysis questionnaires, expert validation instruments, and practitioner evaluation sheets. The findings revealed that no existing teaching module specifically focuses on strengthening children's linguistic politeness through pantun, proverbs, and expressions. Therefore, a thematic teaching module was developed by integrating these linguistic forms as instructional media. The developed module obtained validation results from experts, including an Islamic Education expert (96%, highly feasible), a language expert (68%, feasible), and an Islamic psychology expert (92%, highly feasible). Practitioners also provided positive responses to the module. These results indicate that the developed teaching module is feasible and appropriate for use in early childhood education to strengthen linguistic politeness and support character development.*

**Keywords:** *Linguistic Politeness; Teaching Module; Pantun; Early Childhood Education; Character Education*

## Abstrak

Kesopanan berbahasa di kalangan anak-anak saat ini seringkali tidak mencerminkan nilai-nilai moral dalam berkomunikasi dan cenderung menyimpang dari prinsip qaulan karīman sebagaimana ditekankan dalam ajaran Islam. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengembangkan modul pembelajaran yang dirancang untuk memperkuat kesopanan berbahasa di kalangan peserta didik usia dini melalui integrasi pantun, peribahasa, dan ungkapan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan Penelitian dan Pengembangan (R&D) dengan model ADDIE, yang mencakup tahap analisis, desain, pengembangan, implementasi,

dan evaluasi. Peserta penelitian terdiri dari tiga kepala sekolah dan enam guru taman kanak-kanak dari tiga lembaga pendidikan anak usia dini yang berlokasi di Bogor, Palembang, dan Sekadau. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, kuesioner analisis kebutuhan, instrumen validasi ahli, dan lembar evaluasi praktisi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa belum ada modul pengajaran yang secara khusus berfokus pada penguatan kesopanan linguistik anak-anak melalui pantun, peribahasa, dan ungkapan. Oleh karena itu, modul pengajaran tematik dikembangkan dengan mengintegrasikan bentuk-bentuk linguistik tersebut sebagai media pembelajaran. Modul yang dikembangkan memperoleh hasil validasi dari para ahli, termasuk seorang ahli Pendidikan Islam (96%, sangat layak), seorang ahli bahasa (68%, layak), dan seorang ahli psikologi Islam (92%, sangat layak). Para praktisi juga memberikan tanggapan positif terhadap modul tersebut. Hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa modul pengajaran yang dikembangkan layak dan sesuai untuk digunakan dalam pendidikan anak usia dini guna memperkuat kesopanan linguistik dan mendukung pengembangan karakter.

**Kata kunci:** Kesopanan Linguistik; Modul Pengajaran; Pantun; Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini; Pendidikan Karakter

## Introduction

Children have the right to receive quality education as mandated by the Indonesian National Education System Law (2003). In the current digital era, providing character education to shape children's moral development presents significant challenges. One observable aspect of character development is linguistic politeness. Linguistic politeness is closely associated with *akhlāqul karīmah* (noble character), as both the Qur'an and Hadith encourage Muslims to communicate with kindness, respect, and empathy.

Al-Qathani (2005) explains that politeness is closely related to wisdom and derives from the Arabic term *hilman*, which refers to calmness, patience, and forgiveness. However, the digital era has significantly influenced children's communication patterns. From an early age, children are exposed to social media and online interactions that often contain harsh language, ridicule, and expressions that contradict the values of politeness. Without proper guidance, such exposure may shape children's communication habits and potentially influence their character development.

Therefore, strategies are needed to strengthen linguistic politeness from an early age. One possible approach is through the integration of traditional linguistic forms such as pantun, proverbs, and expressions. These forms of oral tradition contain moral messages, cultural wisdom, and refined language structures that can support children's language development while simultaneously fostering character values.

Previous studies have highlighted the educational value of these cultural linguistic forms. Nisa et al. (2020) found that proverbs reflect several principles of linguistic politeness, including humility, wisdom, and appreciation. Wahab (2012) also stated that proverbs represent refined linguistic manners in Malay culture. Furthermore, Junaidi et al. (2020) reported that pantun tends to comply with linguistic politeness principles. Mirawati et al. (2025) demonstrated that pantun can enhance children's expressive language abilities, while Yoga (2024) emphasized that pantun reflects the cultural values and moral wisdom of Malay society.

Despite these findings, there is still limited research on instructional modules that specifically integrate pantun, proverbs, and expressions into early childhood education to strengthen linguistic politeness. Therefore, this study aims to develop a teaching module that integrates these cultural linguistic forms to enhance linguistic politeness among early childhood learners.

## **Research Method**

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the ADDIE model proposed by Branch (2009), which consists of five stages: analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. The research began with a needs analysis conducted through interviews, questionnaires, and document analysis of existing teaching modules. The respondents consisted of three school principals and six kindergarten teachers from three early childhood education institutions: TK Asri (Bogor), TK IT Azzahra (Palembang), and TK Negeri II Sekadau (West Kalimantan). These schools were selected to represent different regions of Indonesia.

Based on the needs analysis and literature review, the researchers developed an initial module design referred to as Prototype 1. The prototype was then evaluated by three experts: an Islamic education expert, a language expert, and an Islamic psychology expert. After incorporating expert feedback, the module was revised to produce Prototype 2. Prototype 2 was then implemented in schools and evaluated by practitioners. Their feedback was used to refine the module and produce Prototype 3, which represents the final product.

Data was collected through interviews, questionnaires, validation sheets, and documentation studies. Qualitative data from interviews and expert feedback were analyzed descriptively, while quantitative data from questionnaires were analyzed using percentage scores to determine the feasibility level of the module. The feasibility category of the final product was determined based on percentage scores adapted from Arikunto (2009), as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Product Feasibility Category

Percentage	Qualification
80% < X 100%	Highly Feasible
60% < X 80%	Feasible
40% < X 60%	Fairly Feasible
20% < X 40%	Not Feasible
X < 20%	Highly Not Feasible

Source: Adapted from Arikunto (2009)

## Results and Discussion

### A. Result

The development of the teaching module for strengthening linguistic politeness in early childhood was conducted from April to September 2025. This study adopted the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) as the framework for developing the instructional module. The research findings are presented as follows.

#### 1. Needs analysis

The study began with a needs analysis stage aimed at identifying the necessity for a teaching module that focuses on strengthening linguistic politeness among early childhood learners. At this stage, interviews and needs analysis questionnaires were administered to respondents consisting of school principals and teachers. Based on interviews with eight respondents, three school principals and six kindergarten teachers from Sumatra, Java, and Kalimantan, several important findings were identified.

First, eight respondents (89%) stated that there is currently no teaching module specifically designed to develop linguistic politeness among early childhood learners. Meanwhile, one respondent (11%) reported that although language development modules exist, they are generally integrated with other skill areas and are not specifically focused on linguistic politeness. Second, all respondents agreed that a teaching module specifically designed to improve linguistic politeness among early childhood learners is highly needed. This need arises from teachers' observations that children's linguistic politeness has declined in the digital era, as children are frequently exposed to inappropriate language through media and social interactions. Third, school principals and teachers agreed that children should be introduced to pantun, proverbs, and expressions as part of language learning. These forms of linguistic heritage represent positive cultural values that contain elements of linguistic politeness, including refined word choices and meaningful expressions.

Fourth, teachers reported difficulties in teaching linguistic politeness through pantun, proverbs, and expressions due to the absence of specific learning guidelines or teaching modules that support such activities. Teachers are therefore required to be creative in selecting language forms that match children’s developmental stages. Fifth, teachers expressed the need for a teaching module containing pantun, proverbs, and expressions that are appropriate for children aged 5–6 years. The learning materials should align with children’s cognitive development, learning objectives, accessibility of activities, and thematic structures within the curriculum. Finally, all respondents expected that the introduction of pantun, proverbs, and expressions could contribute to improving children’s linguistic politeness. Through repeated exposure to polite linguistic forms, children—who naturally tend to imitate what they hear and observe—are expected to develop greater awareness of respectful language use. The results of the questionnaire completed by the school principals are presented in the following table 2.

**Tabel 2.** Result of the Needs Analysis Questionnaire

No	Question	Answer		Description
		Yes	No	
1.	Is there already a module to improve early childhood language development?	I	IIII III	Yes 11% No 89%
2.	Is a module needed to improve language politeness in early childhood?	IIII III		Yes 100% No 0%
3.	Do young children need to be introduced to pantun, expressions, and proverbs?	IIII III		Yes 100% No 0%
4.	Do teachers experience difficulties in teaching politeness through pantun, expressions and proverbs?	IIII II	II	Yes 78% No 22%
5.	Is a module containing pantun, expressions and proverbs appropriate for children’s age needed?	IIII III		Yes 100% No 0%
6.	Are pantun, expressions and proverbs expected to improve children’s language politeness?	IIII III		Yes 100% No 0%

The needs analysis questionnaire results further confirmed these findings. The questionnaire responses indicated that 100% of teachers expressed the need for a teaching module aimed at strengthening linguistic politeness through pantun, proverbs, and expressions. In addition to field needs assessment, existing

teaching modules used by the participating schools and modules issued by the Ministry of Education were also analyzed. The analysis revealed that no existing module specifically focuses on strengthening linguistic politeness through pantun, proverbs, and expressions for kindergarten level B (ages 5–6). Therefore, the development of such a teaching module is considered necessary.

## **2. *Development of the teaching module***

The developed module consists of two main sections: the introductory section and the main content section. The introductory section provides an overview of the module and includes the cover page, preface, user guidelines, table of contents, and module introduction. The introduction contains a concept map, module relevance, brief module description, learning outcomes, and explanations of the module components. The main content section of the module consists of twelve components: module identity, learning objectives, learning facilities and materials, learning model, learning activities (introduction, core activities, and closing activities), trigger questions, assessment, assessment results, enrichment and advice, glossary, and references.

Prior to designing the module, the researchers conducted a material analysis by reviewing relevant literature, academic journals, government regulations, educational videos, and other instructional resources. The selected materials were adjusted to match the cognitive, affective, psychological, and motor development of children aged 5–6 years. Based on the Merdeka Curriculum, the thematic learning sequence for kindergarten level B includes themes such as transportation, occupations, water–air–fire, recreation, my homeland, and the universe. The researchers developed pantun, selected relevant proverbs and expressions, and integrated them into these themes.

Consultations were also conducted with Islamic education experts to ensure the accuracy of Qur'anic verses, translations, and prayers included in the module. Although the module focuses primarily on linguistic politeness, it also incorporates the six developmental domains of early childhood education as outlined in the Indonesian Ministry of Education Regulation No. 137 of 2014: religious and moral values, physical-motor development, cognitive development, language development, socio-emotional development, and arts. After the learning materials were designed, the teaching module was developed in complete form. A sample of the module cover page design is presented below in figure 1.



Source: Personal Documentation

**Figure 1.** initial module cover design

After the design stage, Prototype 1 of the module was developed and submitted to experts for evaluation. The experts involved in the validation process included an Islamic Education expert, a language expert, and an Islamic psychology expert. Their feedback was used to improve the quality and suitability of the module before proceeding to the implementation stage. The suggestions provided by the experts and the revisions made to the module are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Expert Feedback and Revisions of Prototype 1

Expert	Suggestions	Revisions
<b>Am T (Islamic Education expert)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adjust the time allocation for each learning activity according to the learning objectives.</li> <li>2. Include the lecture method as part of the instructional approach.</li> <li>3. Incorporate prayers in each learning theme to support moral and spiritual development.</li> <li>4. Enrichment activities should be repeated to strengthen learning outcomes.</li> <li>5. Ensure that the six developmental aspects of early childhood education are included in each theme.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learning time allocation was revised based on the learning objectives.</li> <li>2. The suggestion was incorporated into the module usage guidelines.</li> <li>3. Additional prayers were included in themes that previously did not contain them.</li> <li>4. The suggestion was included in the guidelines.</li> <li>5. Additional developmental aspects were added to themes where they were previously absent.</li> </ol>
<b>An (Language Expert)</b>	Use language that is appropriate for children's developmental stage.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revisions were made to pantun in Theme 1.</li> </ol>

	Ensure the learning materials align with the learning topics. Pay attention to punctuation usage. Improve the evaluation section.	
<b>RK (Islamic Psychology Expert)</b>	1. Ensure that the vocabulary used in pantun, expressions, and proverbs is appropriate for children aged 5–6 years. 2. Provide additional guidance on how teachers should use the module.	1. Vocabulary revisions were made to pantun in Theme 1.

Based on the experts’ suggestions, several revisions were made to improve the module. After the revision process, Prototype 2 was produced and distributed to practitioners for implementation. After receiving feedback from practitioners, the module was revised again to produce Prototype 3, which represents the final product of this development research. The final version of the module cover is presented in Figure 2.

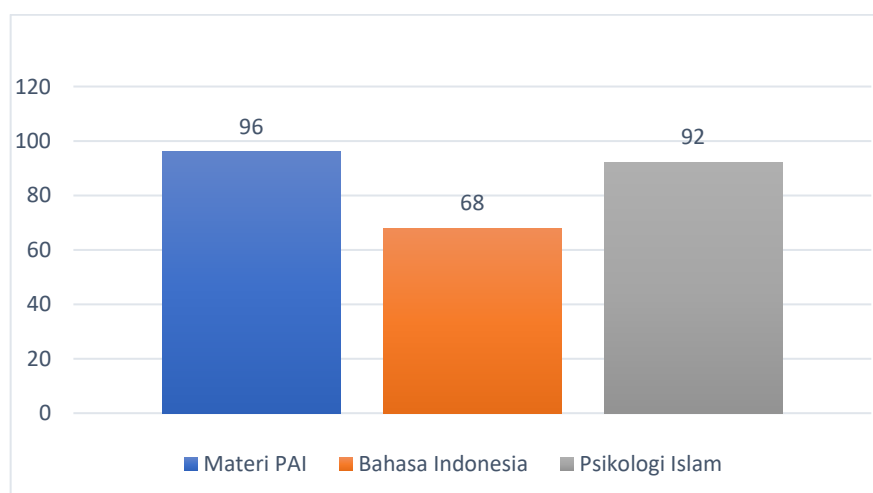


Source: Personal Documentation

**Figure 2.** Final design of the teaching module

### 3. Feasibility evaluation of the teaching module

The feasibility test represents the final stage of the ADDIE development model. At this stage, the final module (Prototype 3) was evaluated by experts and practitioners. The results of expert validation are presented in Figure 3.



Source: Research data processed by the author

**Figure 3.** Results of expert feasibility evaluation

Based on the expert validation results, the developed teaching module achieved the following feasibility scores:

**Table 4.** Results of the expert validation

Expert	Score	Category
Islamic Education expert	96%	Highly feasible
Language expert	68%	Feasible
Islamic psychology expert	92%	Highly feasible

These results indicate that the teaching module is feasible and appropriate for use in teaching linguistic politeness to children aged 5–6 years. The practitioner responses to the module are summarized in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Practitioner Feedback on the Teaching Module

No	Practitioner	Education	Comment
1	SU	Bachelor (ECE)	Interesting and easy to implement.
2	IM	Bachelor (ECE)	The module is complete and applicable.
3	NC	Bachelor (ECE)	The language is simple and understandable.
4	IS	Bachelor (ECE)	Good but may not apply to all students.
5	LS	Bachelor (ECE)	Very interesting and easy to understand.
6	LI	Bachelor (ECE)	Very inspiring.
7	ER	Bachelor (ECE)	Simple language and easy to teach.
8	LU	Bachelor (ECE)	Interesting and motivating for teachers.

In addition to expert validation, practitioners also provided positive responses toward the module. Most practitioners stated that the module is interesting, easy to understand, and applicable in classroom learning. Several practitioners expressed that the module is inspiring and motivates teachers to teach linguistic politeness to children. However, one practitioner noted that although the module is beneficial, its implementation may vary depending on

the characteristics of students in different educational contexts. Overall, practitioners provided positive responses to the module. Most teachers stated that the module is clear, engaging, and applicable in classroom learning. The responses also indicate that the module motivates teachers to teach linguistic politeness more effectively.

## B. Discussion

Teaching modules play an important role as instructional materials that support the learning process. According to Prastowo (2012), a module should function as a substitute for the explanatory role of educators by presenting learning materials in a clear and understandable manner according to students' age and level of knowledge. Similarly, Kosasih (2021) emphasizes that teaching modules are essential components of instructional materials, as they contain learning objectives, instructional methods, learning activities, and evaluation tools.

Learning in early childhood education has distinctive characteristics. Within the Merdeka Curriculum framework, learning activities in early childhood education integrate three developmental elements: religious and moral values, personal identity, and foundational literacy, numeracy, science, technology, engineering, and arts (Retnaningsih & Khairiyah, 2022). The module developed in this study particularly supports the development of religious and moral values, socio-emotional skills, and foundational literacy.

The development of linguistic politeness in children is closely related to the cultivation of moral values. In Islamic teachings, linguistic politeness is strongly emphasized. The Qur'an instructs believers to speak in the best manner, as stated in Surah Ali Imran (79) and Surah Al-Isra (53), which encourages individuals to use kind and respectful language in communication. Similarly, a hadith narrated by At-Tabrani highlights that spreading greetings and speaking kindly are among the actions that lead to divine forgiveness.

وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّانِينَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ

"Rather, be pious scholars of the Lord because of what you have taught of the scripture and because of what you have studied." (QS. Ali Imran:79)

وَقُلْ لِعِبَادِي يَقُولُوا الَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنْزِعُ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا

"And tell my servants to say that which is best. Indeed, satan induces dissension among them. Indeed, satan is ever, to mankind, a clear enemy" (QS. Al Isra: 53)

إِنَّ مِنْ مُوجِبَاتِ الْمَغْفِرَةِ بَدْلُ السَّلَامِ، وَحُسْنُ الْكَلَامِ

“Among the causes that lead to Allah’s forgiveness are spreading greetings of peace and speaking kindly.” (HR. Thabrani)

Linguistic politeness is also discussed in linguistic theories of politeness. According to Leech (1993), politeness principles regulate how individuals use language to maintain harmonious social interactions. Language that lacks politeness may cause misunderstandings and social conflict (Room, 2013). Therefore, strengthening linguistic politeness in early childhood education is crucial in shaping children’s communication habits and social behavior.

The findings of this study indicate that integrating pantun, proverbs, and expressions into teaching modules can effectively support the development of linguistic politeness among young learners. These forms of traditional oral literature contain moral values, cultural wisdom, and aesthetic language that can enrich children’s linguistic experiences. These findings are consistent with previous studies. Heryanto et al. (2023) found that pantun can serve as an effective medium for character education and language learning. Mirawati et al. (2025) also reported that pantun can improve expressive language skills among early childhood learners. In addition, Yoga (2024) explained that pantun reflects the knowledge, feelings, and cultural values of Malay society, making it a valuable medium for transmitting moral and cultural values to younger generations.

The feasibility test results also support the effectiveness of the developed module. The module received high validation scores from experts and positive responses from practitioners, indicating that it is appropriate for implementation in early childhood education. These results are consistent with the development research principles outlined by the Ministry of Education, which state that educational products must undergo expert validation in terms of content, presentation, and language before broader implementation (Sarip et al., 2022). Overall, the findings demonstrate that a culturally contextualized teaching module that incorporates pantun, proverbs, and expressions can serve as an effective strategy for strengthening linguistic politeness while simultaneously supporting language development and character education in early childhood.

## **Conclusion**

Strengthening linguistic politeness should be introduced through formal education from an early age. Integrating pantun, proverbs, and expressions into teaching modules reinforces the role of language as a medium for internalizing moral and social values. This approach produces a new conceptual framework

for politeness learning that does not merely emphasize linguistic rules but also incorporates cultural elements as a medium for character development. Such a concept highlights that polite language learning is rooted in local cultural values and can serve as an effective strategy for cultivating linguistic politeness among children from an early age. This study concludes that the development of a teaching module aimed at strengthening linguistic politeness through pantun, proverbs, and expressions provides an innovative solution to the declining level of children's politeness in the digital era. The developed module has been proven feasible and effective as a learning tool that supports the achievement of character education goals through thematic learning. Therefore, the findings of this study provide both conceptual and practical foundations indicating that linguistic politeness education should be systematically designed, carefully planned, and integrated with religious values to build a strong foundation of polite character that children will carry into adulthood. The findings of this study not only address the research objectives but also contribute a conceptual model of linguistic politeness learning as an effective approach for strengthening character values in early childhood education.

## Recommendations

Early childhood educators are encouraged to utilize the teaching module for strengthening linguistic politeness consistently by applying creative, engaging, and developmentally appropriate learning approaches. Educational institutions may also adopt the module as a supporting instructional resource within the curriculum while providing training and facilities that support its effective implementation.

Furthermore, policymakers are expected to integrate this module into character education programs based on local cultural values. Future researchers may consider developing a digital version of this module for various educational levels and examining the long-term impact of the module on children's linguistic politeness development. Parents are also encouraged to collaborate with teachers to ensure that the cultivation of polite language habits is consistently reinforced both at home and at school.

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