



ANALYSIS OF KINDNESS VALUES IN AN ENGLISH SYLLABUS FOR INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING STUDENTS

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ABSTRAK

Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris di pendidikan tinggi tidak hanya ditujukan untuk mengembangkan kompetensi kebahasaan, tetapi juga perlu mendukung pembentukan nilai dan karakter yang relevan dengan kebutuhan profesional. Namun, kajian mengenai integrasi nilai karakter dalam dokumen kurikulum formal, khususnya silabus Bahasa Inggris untuk mahasiswa Teknik Industri, masih relatif terbatas. Sebagian penelitian sebelumnya lebih banyak membahas penerapan nilai karakter dalam praktik pembelajaran, sementara representasinya dalam struktur silabus belum banyak dikaji secara sistematis. Kondisi tersebut menunjukkan perlunya menganalisis sejauh mana nilai *kindness* diintegrasikan dalam desain silabus sebagai dasar untuk memastikan keterkaitan antara tujuan pembelajaran, aktivitas pembelajaran, dan asesmen. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis representasi nilai *kindness* dalam silabus mata kuliah Bahasa Inggris bagi mahasiswa Teknik Industri. Penelitian menggunakan metode analisis isi kualitatif terhadap satu silabus yang dipilih secara *purposive*. Analisis dilakukan pada deskripsi mata kuliah, capaian pembelajaran, asesmen, materi, media, persyaratan mata kuliah, dan rencana pembelajaran mingguan berdasarkan empat dimensi, yaitu moral (*akhlaq*), etika (*adab*), pendidikan karakter, dan pedagogi humanistik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai *kindness* belum terintegrasi secara sistematis. Dimensi moral tidak ditemukan, sedangkan dimensi etika dan pendidikan karakter hanya muncul secara implisit dan terbatas, terutama dalam aktivitas komunikasi. Dimensi humanistik lebih terlihat dalam aktivitas pembelajaran interaktif, tetapi belum dinyatakan secara eksplisit dalam capaian pembelajaran dan asesmen. Dengan demikian, silabus masih lebih berorientasi pada kompetensi kebahasaan, sehingga diperlukan integrasi nilai *kindness* yang lebih eksplisit, terencana, dan selaras antara capaian pembelajaran, aktivitas, dan asesmen.

Kata Kunci: analisis isi; silabus Bahasa Inggris; teknik industri; nilai karakter

ABSTRACT

English language instruction in higher education is expected not only to develop linguistic competence but also to support the development of values and character relevant to professional contexts. However, research on the integration of character values into formal curriculum documents, particularly English course syllabi for Industrial Engineering students, remains relatively limited. Previous studies have mainly focused on the implementation of character-related values in classroom practices, while their representation within syllabus structures has received less systematic attention. This gap highlights the need to examine how *kindness* values are embedded in syllabus design to ensure greater alignment among learning outcomes, learning activities, and assessment. This study aims to analyse the representation of *kindness* values in an English course syllabus for Industrial Engineering students. A qualitative content analysis was conducted on one purposively selected syllabus. The analysis covered the course description, learning outcomes, assessment, learning materials, media, course requirements,





and weekly teaching plan using four dimensions: moral (*akhlaq*), ethical conduct (*adab*), character education, and humanistic pedagogy. The findings indicate that *kindness* values were not systematically integrated into the syllabus. The moral dimension was entirely absent, while ethical and character-related dimensions appeared only implicitly and to a limited extent, particularly in communicative activities. Humanistic elements were more evident in interactive learning activities but were not explicitly reflected in the learning outcomes or assessment criteria. Overall, the syllabus remains predominantly oriented toward linguistic competence, indicating the need for more explicit and intentional integration of *kindness* values through coherent alignment among learning outcomes, learning activities, and assessment.

Keywords: content analysis; English course syllabus; industrial engineering; kindness values

INTRODUCTION

In today's higher education context, English courses are no longer seen as spaces for developing language skills alone. They are also expected to support students in building personal and professional values, especially those needed in real-world and industrial settings. Among these, kindness-oriented values such as respect, responsibility, and ethical communication play an important role in shaping how graduates interact and collaborate in the workplace. In this study, kindness is understood as a character strength oriented toward doing for others and taking care of them, one of the core traits within the broader domain of humanity in positive psychology (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Within an educational setting, this construct is operationalised through observable indicators such as respect, empathy, responsibility, and collaborative communication, which can, in principle, be traced across formal curriculum documents. These expectations should be reflected in the course syllabus, which serves as a key guide for learning. As a formal academic document, the syllabus not only organises instructional content but also reflects the priorities, values, and instructional goals of a course.

The prioritisation of values within the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), particularly for engineering students, should be upheld, as graduates are expected to communicate across disciplines and engage in problem-solving processes that require not only technical knowledge but also interpersonal and ethical awareness. Some research support that integrating positive character-related dimensions into classroom practices can enhance students' engagement and foster more constructive classroom interaction (Darmuki et al., 2021; Liu, 2022; Wang et al., 2021, 2022; Zalukhu et al., 2024; Zhao & Yang, 2022). It can support holistic students' moral development, critical thinking, social awareness, and ability to connect learning with real-life contexts (Basori et al., 2025; Durlak et al., 2022; Galpin et al., 2022; Huang et al., 2024; Kopec et al., 2023; Koshy et al., 2023; Lovett et al., 2024; Prasetyo et al., 2023; Putra & Harahap, 2025; Mulyadi et al., 2025; Sulistiowati et al., 2026; Sulyati, 2020). From a psychological perspective, positive emotional experiences, such as enjoyment, together with supportive classroom environments, contribute significantly to students' motivation and engagement in EFL contexts (Liu, 2022; Wang et al., 2021; Zhang & Wang, 2026; Zhao & Yang, 2022). Approaches such as loving pedagogy suggest that when teachers demonstrate care and provide emotional support, students tend to develop higher self-efficacy, stronger peer relationships, and greater engagement in learning activities (Tajik et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2022; Wu & Cai, 2025). However, most of these studies primarily focus on classroom implementation and teaching strategies, with relatively limited attention given to how such values are represented in formal documents like syllabus.



Recent studies have shown that values are more effectively developed when they are deliberately embedded in instructional design, rather than left to emerge incidentally during classroom interaction (Hidayat et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2024; Kopec et al., 2023). Meanwhile, Nurhayya and Tamela (2021), in their content analysis of student teachers' lesson plans, found that character-building values such as being religious, hardworking, responsible, collaborative, and communicative were present, yet unevenly distributed, communicative values appeared most frequently, while religious values were the least represented. This indicates that although character values can be identified in instructional documents, their integration is not uniform across all expected dimensions. This suggests a gap between what is enacted in classroom practice and what is structurally articulated in syllabus design.

This issue of imbalance also appears in English learning contexts for non-English majors, in this case, Industrial Engineering. To address this issue, this study examines to what extent kindness-oriented values are integrated into the English course syllabus for Industrial Engineering students. The analysis is guided by four complementary dimensions: moral (akhlaq) as inner values (Al-Ghazali, 1993), ethical (adab) as observable conduct (Al-Attas, 1980), character education as the intentional teaching of values (Lickona, 1991), and humanistic pedagogy as a learner-centered approach that supports holistic development (Rogers, 1969). Through qualitative content analysis, this study investigates whether these values are explicitly embedded, implicitly present, or largely absent within the syllabus.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative content analysis to examine how kindness-related values appear in an English course syllabus. The aim is to see whether these values are clearly stated, implied, or not present in the document.

The data were drawn from an English course syllabus designed for Industrial Engineering students at Universitas Teknologi Bandung. The syllabus was selected using a purposive sampling technique because it was developed by the first and second authors and is currently taught. A preliminary review also indicated that character values were not yet sufficiently reflected in its content. Meanwhile, this course plays an important role in fostering the character development of Industrial Engineering graduates through the implementation of case-based and project-based learning approaches. As a single-case, purposively selected document, this study does not aim for statistical generalisation; rather, it seeks an in-depth understanding of how kindness-related values are represented within one instructional document, with the findings intended to be analytically (rather than statistically) generalisable to similar ESP syllabi in comparable institutional contexts.

The syllabus includes important parts such as course description, learning outcomes, assessment, materials, and weekly teaching plans. All parts of the syllabus were analyzed through four value dimensions: moral, ethical conduct, character education, and humanistic pedagogy. Moral (akhlaq) refers to internal values that guide personal behaviour, such as honesty, responsibility, and self-awareness; in a syllabus, this may appear through words like responsibility, integrity, or reflection. Ethical (adab) refers to behaviour in interaction with others, especially in communication; this can be seen in words such as respect, politeness, collaboration, or appropriate communication. Character education focuses on how values are intentionally developed through learning (knowing, feeling, and doing), and may appear in phrases like developing confidence, demonstrating responsibility in tasks, or working collaboratively. Humanistic pedagogy refers to a learning approach that values students as



whole individuals, supporting both their thinking and feelings; this is often reflected in expressions such as active participation, student engagement, reflection, or meaningful learning. These indicators were used as practical guides to identify whether values were clearly stated, implied, or not present in the syllabus.

Each part was then coded as: ✓ (clear), (✓) (implied), or × (not present). The coding process involved dividing the text into sections, identifying the relevant value dimensions in each section, marking (checklisting) the values considered appropriate or applicable, and providing justification for each classification. To strengthen the trustworthiness of the coding, the coding results were discussed with two internal English lecturers, an internal Industrial Engineering lecturer, and an external lecturer to confirm that the interpretation of the syllabus content accurately reflected its intended meaning.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This study analysed how kindness-related values were represented in the English course syllabus for Industrial Engineering students. The analysis covered key components of the syllabus, including the course description, learning outcomes, assessment, learning materials, media, and the weekly teaching plan.

Table 1. Overview of Kindness Value Representation Across Syllabus Components

Component	Moral	Ethical	Character	Humanistic
Course Description	×	(✓)	✓	×
CPL (Graduate LO)	×	×	(✓)	✓
CPMK	×	×	×	×
Sub-CPMK	×	×	×	×
Assessment	×	×	×	×
Materials	×	×	×	×
Media	×	×	×	×
Course Requirements	×	×	×	×
Weekly Teaching Plan	×	(✓)	(✓)	✓

As shown in Table 1, value-related dimensions were not consistently embedded across the syllabus components. The complete coding results are presented in Appendix 1. Moral (akhlaq) values were not identified in any section. Ethical conduct and character-related elements appeared only in limited and indirect forms, while humanistic aspects were mainly visible in teaching methods. Here are the descriptions of the findings.

Course description

The analysis began with the course description because it shows the main focus of the course. One of the statements in the syllabus reads:

“The course develops students’ English communication skills in an industrial context, both spoken and written.”

This statement shows that the course mainly focuses on language skills. Based on the coding framework, no indicators of moral (akhlaq) values were found. The sentence does not include internal value-related words such as responsibility, honesty, or self-reflection. For



example, moral elements could be more visible if the statement included expressions such as “with responsibility in communication” or “through reflective learning.”

Ethical (adab) elements were also not clearly stated. Another part of the description mentions:

“Materials include general industrial vocabulary, simple academic writing, and basic conversations in professional situations.”

This may suggest interaction in professional contexts, but it does not include clear behavioural guidance. There are no words such as respect, politeness, or appropriate communication. Ethical aspects could be more explicit if the sentence included phrases like “using polite and respectful language” or “demonstrating appropriate communication in professional settings.”

A character-related element was found in the following statement:

“Emphasis on developing confidence and accuracy in communication.”

This shows a focus on building students’ confidence, which relates to personal development. However, it remains limited to individual ability. Character education could be more clearly represented if the statement included phrases such as “developing confidence through collaboration” or “demonstrating responsibility in completing tasks.”

No humanistic elements were identified in the course description. There are no expressions related to active participation, student engagement, or reflection. A more humanistic orientation could be reflected by adding phrases such as “through interactive and student-centred activities” or “encouraging reflection and meaningful learning.”

Overall, the course description focuses on developing language skills, while value-related elements are mostly not present or only slightly implied.

Learning outcomes (CPL, CPMK, and Sub-CPMK)

At the level of graduate learning outcomes (CPL), one of the statements in the syllabus reads:

“Ability to engage in lifelong learning and access relevant knowledge from current issues.”

This shows that the syllabus encourages continuous learning and awareness of current topics. Based on the coding framework, this can be linked to character (self-development) and humanistic elements (learner autonomy). However, moral (akhlak) values are not clearly shown in this statement. The sentence focuses on learning ability but does not include inner value indicators. For example, this could be strengthened by adding phrases such as “with a strong sense of accountability” or “guided by personal integrity in learning.”

Ethical (adab) elements are also not visible. There are no references to how students should interact with others. This aspect could be clearer if the outcome included phrases like “in professional and respectful communication” or “through constructive collaboration with others.”

At the course level (CPMK), the outcomes are more technical. For example:

“Use basic English for academic communication in industrial engineering.”

“Understand simple technical texts and work instructions.”

“Construct sentences and deliver short presentations effectively.”

These statements clearly focus on language skills. No moral, ethical, or character-related elements were identified. The focus is mainly on understanding.



Character education is also not clearly shown in these outcomes. There are no phrases that connect learning with value development. This could be improved by adding expressions such as “showing commitment in completing assignments” or “participating actively in group communication tasks.”

At the Sub-CPMK level, the outcomes are even more specific and technical:

“Apply basic sentence structures.”

“Translate simple sentences.”

“Write descriptions of industrial fields in English.”

These statements focus only on grammar, translation, and writing skills. No value-related elements were found. These could be expanded by including phrases like “with attention to clarity and audience understanding” or “by engaging with peers during writing activities.”

Humanistic elements are also not visible in CPMK and Sub-CPMK. There are no words related to student engagement, participation, or reflection. These could be strengthened by adding phrases such as “through interactive classroom activities” or “encouraging students to share their ideas and experiences.”

Overall, while the CPL shows some general development (character and humanistic), these aspects are not continued in CPMK and Sub-CPMK. The learning outcomes mostly focus on technical language skills, with very limited attention to value-related elements.

Assessment

The assessment section explains how students’ performance is measured in the course. In the syllabus, it is stated that:

“Assessment consists of assignments, midterm, and final exams.”

This shows that evaluation is based on common academic components. However, based on the coding framework, no moral (akhlaq) elements were identified. The statement focuses on types of assessment but does not include any indication of personal values. This could be strengthened by adding phrases such as “demonstrating honesty in completing assignments” or “showing consistency in individual work.”

Ethical (adab) elements are also not visible. There are no references to how students should behave during assessment, especially in tasks involving interaction. This aspect could be clearer if the statement included expressions like “respecting others’ contributions during group tasks” or “maintaining fairness in collaborative work.” Another part of the syllabus mentions:

“Total assessment weight is 100%.”

This indicates that the evaluation is fully based on measurable scores. The focus is entirely on results, with no mention of learning process or behaviour.

Character education is not reflected in the assessment design. There are no elements that show how values are developed or observed during the learning process. For example, this could be improved by including phrases such as “showing responsibility in meeting deadlines” or “demonstrating active involvement in group activities.”

Humanistic elements are also not identified. There are no references to reflection, participation, or student experience in the assessment process. This could be supported by adding statements such as “including self-evaluation activities” or “encouraging students to reflect on their learning progress.”

Overall, the assessment system focuses mainly on final results and language performance. Value-related aspects are not included.



Learning materials and media

The syllabus describes the learning materials as mainly consisting of grammar, vocabulary, academic English, and idiom resources. These materials focus on language structure and academic skills, with little connection to value development. To better support the four dimensions, the materials could be expanded in a more balanced way. For moral (akhlaq), materials can include texts that highlight personal awareness, such as responsibility in communication or honesty in information use. For ethical (adab), materials can present examples of appropriate behaviour, such as polite expressions, respectful disagreement, and professional interaction. For character education, materials can be designed to involve action, such as tasks that require collaboration, decision-making, and accountability. For humanistic pedagogy, materials can include reflective and discussion-based content that allows students to express ideas and connect learning with their own experiences.

In terms of learning media, the document indicates that learning media include Grammarly and digital devices. This shows the use of technology to support learning, but mainly for technical purposes. The media are not clearly used to support interaction or value-based learning. This could be improved by incorporating platforms such as online discussion forums, shared documents (e.g. Google Docs), or learning management systems that allow student interaction and feedback, so that the media also support communication and engagement.

The syllabus also mentions no prerequisite course and passing grade is 65. These statements focus on administrative aspects and minimum achievement. There are no expectations related to student participation or engagement. This could be strengthened by adding requirements such as active participation in class activities or consistent involvement in group tasks, so that learning is not only measured by scores but also by students' engagement in the process.

Weekly teaching plan

The weekly teaching plan (Meetings 1–14) shows a consistent focus on language form and skill development, with limited and mostly implicit inclusion of value-related elements. The analysis indicates that moral (akhlaq) values are not present in any meeting, while ethical, character, and humanistic dimensions appear only in certain activities and are not systematically embedded.

At the beginning of the course, the syllabus includes activities such as:

“...communication practice, Q&A, participation...”

These activities suggest interaction among students. Ethical elements can be inferred because communication and discussion usually involve appropriate behaviour in speaking and listening. Character elements are also implied through participation. Humanistic aspects are relatively visible, as students are actively involved in the learning process. However, moral elements are not reflected. This could be strengthened by including phrases such as “demonstrating awareness of responsible communication when interacting with others” or “showing consideration in expressing ideas.”

In contrast, several meetings focus entirely on technical language skills. For example:

“...basic sentence structure, vocabulary, exercises...”

This type of content shows no indication of moral, ethical, character, or humanistic elements. The activities are fully oriented toward grammar and comprehension. To support



value integration, the description could include elements such as “using examples related to real-life communication situations” or “applying language in socially meaningful contexts.”

In many other meetings, value-related elements appear through presentation-based activities. For instance:

“...practice... presentations (through Industrial Engineering topics)...”

Here, ethical, character, and humanistic aspects are present but only implicitly. Presentations require students to communicate, participate, and engage with others, but the syllabus does not explicitly guide how this interaction should be carried out. This could be improved by adding statements such as “present ideas while acknowledging others’ perspectives” or “engage in presentations with attentive listening and constructive response.”

A similar pattern is found in meetings that involve independent tasks and e-learning, such as:

“...assignment... e-learning...”

These activities suggest student involvement and responsibility, which relate to character and humanistic dimensions. However, ethical and moral aspects are not visible. This could be enhanced by including elements like “complete tasks with awareness of academic responsibility” or “connect learning tasks to real-life communication use.”

Finally, one of the clearest instances of value-related elements appears in the last meeting:

“...discussion... review assignments...”

Discussion activities more clearly reflect ethical and humanistic dimensions, as they involve direct interaction, exchange of ideas, and student participation. Character is also implied through engagement in tasks. However, moral elements are still not present. This part could be further strengthened by including expressions such as “respond to others’ opinions with consideration” or “demonstrate openness in collaborative discussion.”

Overall, the weekly teaching plan shows that value-related elements tend to emerge from instructional activities rather than being explicitly stated in the syllabus design. Ethical, character, and humanistic dimensions are mostly implied through communication, presentation, and participation, while moral (akhlaq) values are not identified across all meetings. This indicates that value integration remains activity-based and incidental, rather than systematically planned within the course structure.

Discussion

Based on the findings presented, the discussion is structured around three key themes: linguistic competence over value dimensions; misalignment in value-oriented syllabus design; and opportunities for aligning kindness values with Outcome-Based Education principles.

Linguistic competence over value dimensions

The findings have described a clear pattern where the syllabus is predominantly oriented toward linguistic competence, while value-related dimensions remain either absent, implicit, or weakly articulated. This suggests that language learning within the course is treated more as a technical ability than as a way of developing meaningful and responsible communication. Such a tendency reflects a broader orientation in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), where functional communication skills are often prioritised over affective and value-based dimensions (Hyland, 2022).



A closer look at the findings shows that kindness-related values are not systematically embedded across the syllabus components. Instead, they appear in fragmented and situational ways, mostly emerging within classroom activities rather than being clearly stated in learning outcomes, assessment, or course structure. This supports previous research suggesting that, although value integration is increasingly recognised in language education, it is not always consistently translated into curriculum design (Huang et al., 2024; Prasetyo et al., 2023). As a result, values tend to be treated as complementary rather than as essential elements of instruction.

From a theoretical perspective, the absence of moral (akhlaq) values indicates that the syllabus does not engage with the internal dimension of learning. In Al-Ghazali's view, akhlaq is not simply about behaviour, but about inner dispositions shaped through reflection and self-awareness. The lack of such elements suggests that the syllabus does not encourage students to connect language learning with personal growth or moral reflection. This contrasts with broader educational perspectives that emphasise the importance of integrating internal values to support holistic development (Huang et al., 2024; Koshy et al., 2023).

Similarly, ethical conduct (adab) appears only implicitly. While communicative activities such as discussions and presentations require students to interact, the syllabus does not explicitly outline expectations related to respectful or appropriate communication. In other words, ethical behaviour seems to be assumed rather than intentionally taught. Previous studies have shown that when values are not clearly articulated, their implementation often depends on individual teachers and may therefore become inconsistent (Galpin et al., 2022; Nurhayya & Tamela, 2021). This raises concerns, especially in professional contexts where ethical communication plays a crucial role.

In terms of character education, the findings suggest an imbalance between cognitive and non-cognitive dimensions. While the syllabus includes elements related to self-development, such as building confidence, these remain focused on individual performance rather than interpersonal or social values. Character education theory highlights that values should be developed through a balance of knowing, feeling, and doing (Lickona, 1991). However, the dominance of cognitive outcomes in this syllabus indicates that character development is not yet fully embedded, but appears only in limited and indirect ways. This partially reflects earlier findings that character education is often acknowledged in principle but not systematically implemented in practice (Hidayat et al., 2021; Sulyati, 2020).

A similar pattern can be seen in relation to humanistic pedagogy. Interactive and student-centred activities are present, particularly in the weekly teaching plan, suggesting an effort to engage students actively in the learning process. However, these elements are not clearly reflected in learning outcomes or assessment criteria. This indicates a gap between what is practiced in the classroom and what is formally recognised in the syllabus. Humanistic approaches emphasise the importance of supporting students not only intellectually but also emotionally (Rogers, 1969). When such principles are not explicitly embedded in the curriculum, their implementation becomes dependent on individual teaching practices rather than being consistently supported.

From the perspective of positive psychology and social-emotional learning, the limited presence of kindness-related elements such as empathy, care, and relational awareness suggests that language learning is still being approached in a relatively narrow way. A growing body of research shows that positive emotional experiences and supportive classroom environments play a significant role in enhancing students' motivation and engagement (Durlak et al., 2022;



Liu, 2022; Wang et al., 2021; Zhao & Yang, 2022). In addition, approaches such as loving pedagogy highlight the importance of care and empathy in building meaningful learning relationships (Wang et al., 2022; Wu & Cai, 2025). The absence of these elements in the syllabus suggests a gap between what research recommends and what is reflected in curriculum design.

Misalignment in value-oriented syllabus design

Another important issue emerging is the lack of alignment across syllabus components. Ideally, learning outcomes, teaching activities, and assessment should work together as an integrated system. In this syllabus, however, value-related elements, particularly those associated with kindness are not consistently connected. While traces of humanistic engagement can be seen in classroom activities, they are not reinforced through learning outcomes or assessment criteria. This lack of alignment suggests that values are not yet positioned as core elements of the curriculum. As previous studies have noted, without such alignment, value integration may remain superficial and difficult to sustain (Galpin et al., 2022; Kopec et al., 2023).

In addition, the way communication competence is framed in the syllabus appears to be largely functional. Communication is mainly defined in terms of accuracy, clarity, and task completion. While these are important, they do not fully capture the ethical aspects of communication, such as empathy, respect, and responsiveness. In professional contexts, especially in engineering, communication involves not only conveying information but also collaborating effectively and interacting responsibly.

Taken together, these findings point to a broader issue in curriculum design, particularly in technical fields. While engineering education naturally emphasises technical competence, there is an increasing recognition that professional success also depends on interpersonal and ethical capabilities. In this context, English language courses have the potential to contribute not only to communication skills but also to the development of socially responsible and ethically aware individuals. However, this potential can only be realised when values such as kindness, empathy, and respect are explicitly and systematically integrated into the syllabus.

This has important implications for curriculum development. First, values need to be clearly articulated in learning outcomes so that they become intentional goals of instruction. Second, assessment practices should be expanded to include not only linguistic performance but also aspects such as collaboration, participation, and interactional responsibility. Third, stronger alignment is needed across syllabus components to ensure that values are consistently supported throughout the learning process. By doing so, English language education in engineering contexts can move beyond a purely technical focus and contribute more meaningfully to students' holistic development.

Aligning kindness values with Outcome-Based Education principles

Another important perspective is in terms of an Outcome-Based Education (OBE), which has become a dominant framework in higher education, particularly in engineering programmes. OBE emphasises the importance of clearly defined learning outcomes, alignment between outcomes, teaching activities, and assessment, and the demonstration of measurable competencies (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Spady, 1994). From this perspective, what is explicitly stated in the syllabus carries significant weight, as it determines not only what is taught but also what is valued and assessed.



Viewed through an OBE lens, the limited presence of kindness-related values in the syllabus becomes more significant. Since OBE prioritises clearly articulated outcomes, the absence of explicit references to values such as empathy, respect, and ethical awareness suggests that these dimensions are not positioned as intended learning achievements. Even when such values may emerge in classroom interaction, their lack of formal representation means that they are unlikely to be systematically developed or evaluated. This finding aligns with previous research indicating that values tend to be overlooked when they are not explicitly embedded in curriculum outcomes (Huang et al., 2024; Koshy et al., 2023). In this sense, kindness values remain outside the core structure of learning, rather than being recognised as essential competencies.

This issue is closely related to the principle of constructive alignment, which is central to OBE. Ideally, learning outcomes, instructional approaches, and assessment practices should be aligned so that they consistently support the same targeted competencies (Biggs & Tang, 2011). However, the findings of this study indicate that alignment is largely confined to linguistic skills. While certain classroom activities may encourage interaction and participation, these are not explicitly connected to outcomes or assessment criteria related to values. As a result, there is a disconnect between what students experience in the classroom and what they are formally expected to achieve. This misalignment reduces the likelihood that kindness-related competencies will be consistently fostered and sustained (Galpin et al., 2022; Kopec et al., 2023).

Furthermore, OBE in engineering education often includes broader graduate attributes, such as teamwork, communication, and ethical responsibility. These attributes suggest that students are expected to develop not only technical expertise but also interpersonal and social competencies (Koshy et al., 2023). However, the findings indicate that such expectations are not fully translated into the design of the English course syllabus. In particular, the absence of explicit ethical (adab) and moral (akhlaq) dimensions suggests that the development of responsible communication is not yet operationalised within the course. This creates a gap between institutional goals and course-level implementation, a concern also highlighted in ESP literature where communicative competence is often treated in functional rather than ethical terms (Hyland, 2022).

At the same time, the OBE framework also presents an opportunity. Because OBE is inherently outcome-driven, it provides a clear mechanism for integrating values into curriculum design. Kindness-related values can be formulated as observable learning outcomes, such as the ability to communicate respectfully in professional contexts, demonstrate empathy in interaction, or engage constructively in collaborative tasks. Once articulated in this way, these values can be supported through aligned teaching activities and assessed through appropriate criteria. In this sense, OBE does not limit value integration, it offers a structured pathway for making such integration more explicit and measurable. This perspective resonates with values-based curriculum approaches that emphasise intentional design and alignment in fostering both cognitive and affective learning outcomes (Galpin et al., 2022; Huang et al., 2024).

However, integrating values within an OBE framework also requires careful consideration. The challenge is not simply to add value-related outcomes, but to design them in ways that remain meaningful and authentic. This may involve the use of performance-based assessment, reflective tasks, or collaborative projects that allow students to demonstrate not only what they know, but also how they interact and respond to others. Such approaches align



with both OBE principles and humanistic pedagogy, which emphasises meaningful engagement and personal development in learning (Lovett et al., 2024; Rogers, 1969).

In the context of ESP for engineering, integrating kindness values within an OBE framework is particularly relevant. Engineering professionals are increasingly required to work in diverse teams, communicate across disciplines, and consider the social impact of their work. In such contexts, communication is not merely about transmitting information, but about building understanding and maintaining professional relationships. Research in positive psychology and language learning further supports this view, showing that empathy, care, and supportive environments contribute significantly to students' engagement and development (Wang et al., 2021; Wu & Cai, 2025; Zhao & Yang, 2022). By embedding kindness-related values into learning outcomes, English language courses can therefore play a key role in preparing students for these complex professional demands.

Taken together, the OBE perspective reinforces the central argument of this study: that the limited and implicit representation of kindness values in the syllabus reflects not only a gap in content, but also a gap in curricular structuring. When values are not explicitly included as outcomes, they are less likely to be systematically taught, practiced, or assessed. Therefore, strengthening the integration of kindness values requires not only pedagogical awareness, but also curricular redesign that aligns outcomes, activities, and assessment in a coherent and intentional way.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the extent to which kindness-related values are represented in an English course syllabus for Industrial Engineering students. The findings show that these values are largely absent or only implicitly represented, with the syllabus remaining predominantly focused on linguistic competence. The moral dimension was not found at all, while ethical and character-related elements appeared only implicitly and within limited contexts, particularly in communicative activities; humanistic aspects were more evident in interactive teaching practices but were not explicitly articulated in either the learning outcomes or the assessment criteria. From an Outcome-Based Education perspective, this lack of explicit value-based learning outcomes and constructive alignment limits the systematic development and assessment of competencies such as empathy, respect, and ethical communication, indicating a structural rather than merely incidental gap in how kindness values are curricularly positioned.

As this study analysed a single syllabus from one institution using purposive sampling, the findings are context-bound and should be interpreted as an in-depth illustration rather than a generalisable representation of ESP syllabi more broadly; caution is therefore needed in extending these conclusions to other institutions or programmes without further verification. Future research could address this limitation by examining multiple syllabi across institutions, incorporating stronger validation procedures such as intercoder reliability or member checking, and exploring how teachers interpret and implement value-based elements in practice. It would also be valuable to investigate practical strategies for embedding kindness values more explicitly into learning outcomes, teaching activities, and assessment, particularly within technical and professional education contexts.

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