

Academy of Language Studies
UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang

e-Lingua

APRIL 2026

1/2026

*Connecting Cultures
One Word at a Time*

你好

Apa Khabar?

Bonjour

Hello

مرحبًا

Hallo

こんにちは



Honouring themes, honouring hosts

CHE NOORYOHANA ZULKIFLI
ACADEMY OF LANGUAGE STUDIES, UITM CAWANGAN PULAU PINANG

The idea of having a theme when organising a party or celebration can be pretty divisive. Some people shy away from themed events, seeing them as inconvenient or demanding. But personally, I've always been relatively positive about them. I believe that many hosts choose not to set a theme because they worry it may burden their guests. And perhaps that concern is valid to an extent. After all, no one wants their celebration to feel like an assignment.

From a guest's point of view, though, honouring a theme is one of the ways I express gratitude and respect for the host and the event itself. This idea mirrors what was highlighted in the article entitled, Don't hate them! Why Dress Codes Matter by Jo Bryant (<https://theenglishmanner.com/insights/why-do-dress-codes-matter/>), where dressing according to the request of the host or venue is described as a mark of respect, not merely a set of arbitrary rules. In fact, the article emphasises that these guidelines are often there to elevate the event and honour the people behind it. This is something I deeply resonate with.

Of course, I can't deny that some themes feel exhausting. We've all had moments where the instructions seem over the top or the expectations too elaborate. But with AI tools now at our fingertips, getting outfit inspiration has never been easier. A simple prompt about what to wear using the clothes you already own can save so much time and mental energy. And honestly, participating in a theme doesn't mean you must be extravagant. It simply means you're willing to meet the host halfway.

Reflecting further on the article, I appreciate how it explains that dress codes (and, by extension, event themes) contribute to a sense of occasion, bringing everyone onto the same page. Hence, the atmosphere feels cohesive and intentional. When I think about past events I've attended, the ones that felt the most meaningful were those where guests made an effort, not for show but out of mutual appreciation and shared respect.

Honouring an event is more than just showing up. It's reflected in those who brave heavy traffic, take special leave, bring thoughtful gifts, and invest time and resources into preparing themselves, not because anyone forces them to, but as a sincere expression of respect. These small sacrifices, including following a theme, signal to the hosts, "Your effort matters to me, too."

Kudos to those who have consistently shown this level of respect when attending other people's events! To me, this reflects strong principles and integrity. The same values are highlighted in the idea that respecting a dress code also respects the people, spaces, and traditions surrounding the event.

This is something I hope my children will emulate as they grow. Respect is not something we demand; it's something we practice, show, and share. And when it is mutual, it grows beautifully.



Image Source: Personal archives (AI-stylised): It felt like stepping straight out of a storybook at our 'Fairy Tale' party! The night was pure magic, featuring appearances by Cinderella, Belle, Princess Elsa, and even Lady Bridgerton. Meanwhile, my husband and I decided to stir up a little trouble as the Huntsman and the Evil Queen from Snow White!

The Team



**Prof. Ir. Dr. Hj. Ahmad
Rashidy Razali**
Rector



Dr. Norhaslinda Hassan
Head of Center / Adviser



Wan Noorli Razali
Chief Editor



**Aini Syahira Binti
Jamaluddin**



**Muhammad Aiman
Abdul Halim**



**Ummu Habibah Binti
Mohd Sakri @ Shukri**



**Nur Fatin Nabila
Abdul Rahman**



**Nur Fatin Shahmina
Mohd Fauzey**



**Fasyin Diyana
Mohamad Fadzil**



Nur Aalia Arifin



**Nurul Farzanah
Mohd Rosli**



Noraziah Mohd Amin



Seng Hui Zanne



Lim Teck Heng