

Cyber Pragmatic Analysis of Impoliteness Strategies Used by Detractors and Supporters of Presidential Candidates in Online Conflicts

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| Raidatul Hasanah^{1,*} | Sri Minda Murni² | Fauziah Khairani Lubis³ |

^{1,2,3}Universitas Negeri Medan,
Medan, Sumatera Utara,
Indonesia

*raidatulhasanah1102@gmail.com



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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the synergistic impact between school leadership and stakeholder involvement in efforts to improve the quality of education at the Al Hijrah Integrated Islamic Middle School, Deli Serdang. A descriptive quantitative approach was used as a research method, and data was collected using questionnaires from respondents, namely the school principal and all school stakeholders. The results of the research show that school leadership that is synergistic and involves school stakeholders has a great influence on the management of improving school quality. Strong leadership and active stakeholder involvement have a significant positive impact on school-based quality improvement management. Visionary and learning-oriented leadership plays a key role in formulating a shared vision and strategy to improve the quality of education. The involvement of stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and the community, provides support, input, and active participation in the implementation of quality improvement programs. The synergy between effective leadership and involving stakeholders can create a collaborative and supportive learning environment. This leads to achieving the goals of better quality education, improving the quality of learning, and holistic development of student potential.

KEYWORDS

Cyber-conflicts; impoliteness; presidential election

INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of internet technology, particularly social media like Instagram, has led to the emergence of cyber pragmatics, a new branch of pragmatics that focuses on understanding online communication. Cyberpragmatics, as Yus (2012) points out, examines online communication, focusing on the intentions behind messages and their interpretation within the virtual context, taking into account social, cultural, and situational factors. This field recognizes the essential link between social media and the study of online communication.

Social media can be characterized as web and versatile based advances which are broadly utilized for communication purposes (Hanim, 2021). Social media platforms like Instagram, accessible to a wide audience, have become tools for political campaigns, often employing strategies that trigger conflict among supporters of different candidates. This was evident in Indonesia before the 2024 presidential election, where online interactions on Instagram escalated into conflicts between supporters and detractors. Provocative language used in posts and comments fueled these disputes, sometimes resulting in verbal attacks, harassment, and bullying targeting ethnicity, groups, and

religious affiliations. Indonesia's diverse linguistic, ethnic, cultural, and religious landscape makes it susceptible to conflict, particularly when sensitive issues like political support are involved. Even minor disagreements or differing viewpoints can quickly ignite tensions, highlighting the potential for conflict in online political discourse.

The increasing use of social media for communication and information sharing has led to a rise in online conflicts, often fueled by impolite language. Studies like Zhong's (2018) research of Ibrahima's (2020) investigation on Twitter have found that impolite expressions are prevalent in online interactions. These studies show that impoliteness can stem from differences in opinions or behaviors, leading to misunderstandings and conflict. Moreover, the specific social media platform, cultural context, and even the age and gender of users can influence how impolite language is used.

Research, such as Kariithi's (2020) examination of Kenyan presidential campaigns, has found that impoliteness strategies, like insults, criticism, and dismissals, can be employed to influence political discourse. This suggests that understanding the role of impoliteness is crucial to navigating the complexities of online communication and mitigating potential conflict. Politeness serves as a tool for speakers to protect their own social standing ("face") and that of their listeners, especially in situations that could cause conflict. This is particularly relevant in the realm of online political discourse.

Kurniasih (2019), as quoted by Stieglitz, observes that political institutions are increasingly using social media to engage with the public and promote their agendas. While this can be beneficial for fostering political discussion, it can also lead to conflict when users, both supporters and detractors, resort to impolite language in their posts and comments, often with the goal of provoking their opponents. This can create a hostile online environment that undermines constructive political dialogue.

Provocative utterances are demonstrated in the comments section of the Instagram post by @suaraanies:

Examples like the comments on @suaraanies' Instagram post – “@samsulhuda6165: *Indsia ngk butuh org bnyk bacot*” (Indonesia doesn't need people who talk a lot), and “@n4billaranvie: *Lbh bacotan yg komen haha*” (Those who comment talk more)

The analysis of comments on social media reveals a pattern of insulting remarks exchanged between supporters and detractors of different presidential candidates. For example, @samsulhuda6165, identified as a detractor, made a comment about the first presidential and vice-presidential candidates, stating, “Indonesia does not need people who talk a lot.” This sarcastic remark, employing a negative verb clause, likely intended to mock supporters of the first candidate pair, creating a sense of disrespect. This comment, in turn, triggered responses from supporters of the first candidate pair, such as @n4billaranvie who defended her preferred candidate. This demonstrates the strong sense of loyalty and advocacy that defines supporters. As Chols and Hassan (2005) point out, supporters are characterized by their commitment and desire to defend what they believe in. This sentiment, rooted in feelings of love and loyalty (as noted by Soekanto, 1990), fuels the online interactions and exchanges between supporters and detractors in the context of political discourse.

This research distinguishes itself from previous studies by focusing on the unique characteristics of Instagram as a platform for political discourse, particularly in the context of the 2024 Indonesian election. Unlike other social media platforms like TikTok and Facebook, Instagram's visual nature and emphasis on personal experiences create a fertile ground for political debates to escalate into personal attacks and aggressive confrontations.

This study aims to understand the types and the realization of impoliteness used in online discourse during the 2024 Indonesian presidential election, drawing on Culpeper's

(2011) theory of impoliteness strategies and his (1996) framework for realizing impoliteness. Given the increasing potential for online hostility to escalate into real-world conflict, this research emphasizes the importance of recognizing the different forms of online impoliteness and their underlying causes to prevent such escalation. Such understanding is crucial for safeguard national unity in the lead-up to the election.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research explored how people use impolite language in online political discussions. It examined comments on a specific Instagram post about the 2024 Indonesian presidential election. The study focused on 144 comments from supporters and opponents of the candidates, all posted on January 7, 2024, on @suaraanies' account. Researchers used a qualitative approach, analyzing the comments using a method based on Bogdan and Biklen's principles (2007). The data was analyzed in stages, including summarizing, organizing, and drawing conclusions (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, 2014). The study aimed to understand the different types of impolite language used in this online political conversation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Impoliteness Tactics Used by Presidential Candidate Detractors and Supporters

Table 1. Impoliteness Tactics Used by Presidential Candidate Detractors and Supporters

No	Type of impoliteness strategies	Supporters	Detractors
		Frequencies	
1.	Bald on Record Impoliteness	3	8
2.	Positive Impoliteness	11	35
3.	Negative Impoliteness	43	27
4.	Withhold Politeness	-	-
5.	Sarcasm or Mock Impoliteness	9	8
Total		66	78

The table showed that Supporters primarily relied on Negative Impoliteness (43 instances), followed by Positive Impoliteness (11) and Sarcasm (9), while Bald on Record Impoliteness was the least frequent (3). In contrast, Haters favored Positive Impoliteness (35 instances), followed by Negative Impoliteness (27), with Bald on Record Impoliteness and Sarcasm occurring least frequently (8 each). This disparity suggests a significant difference in the approaches used by supporters and detractors. Haters exhibited a higher overall frequency of impolite expressions (78 instances) compared to supporters (66). Notably, the study found no instances of Withhold Politeness, a strategy typically associated with silence or a lack of expected polite actions in spoken conversations. This absence suggests that both supporters and detractors actively participated in the online conversation, albeit with a prevalence of negative communication.

Bald on Record Impoliteness

A strategy that involves expressing dislike in the most direct and straightforward manner possible. In a post on the @suaraanis IG account, discussing the third presidential candidate debate, a negative comment directly attacked Anis's physical appearance. This blatant, unmitigated criticism exemplifies the use of Bald on Record Impoliteness.

The online political discourse surrounding the Indonesian presidential election reveals instances of both hateful and supportive comments. For example, @jabarudin_1717, in a comment addressed to Anis, states, “*Bnyk Omonng ja luuh nis...* (You just talk a lot, nis).”

This comment, with its negative verb clause (“You just talk a lot”), is intended to attack Mr. Anis and potentially damage his reputation, classifying it as a hateful utterance.

In contrast, @helmibarawas, in a comment addressed to @kamal_zakaria13, uses a direct and blunt approach by stating, “*Luuu tau dri laah* (Be more aware of yourself).”

This exemplifies a Bald on Record Impoliteness strategy, as @helmibarawas directly asks @kamal_zakaria13 to cease their actions. This comment demonstrates support for Mr. Anis, as it challenges a potentially negative comment aimed at him.

Positive Impoliteness

It involves expressing dislike without explicitly stating it. This strategy relies on indirect or veiled language to convey negative feelings, leaving the recipient to infer their disapproval.

The comment “@paisal2803 *cocot* (a Javanese word that is classified as rude, which means just empty talk)” is directed at Mr. Anis and exemplifies Positive Impoliteness.

The word “*cocot*” carries a negative connotation, suggesting the commenter's dislike for Anis without explicitly stating it.

In contrast, @ritaherlina011, in a comment addressed to @fithrymagdalena, uses the phrase “*samsul*”.

This phrase references a previous incident where Gibran mistakenly called folic acid sulfuric acid, resulting in the nickname “*Samsul*” for the vice presidential candidate. This comment, while seemingly neutral, is an indirect criticism of the vice presidential candidate, demonstrating Positive Impoliteness. By referencing this past incident, @ritaherlina011 subtly expresses her disapproval while appearing to avoid direct offense. This comment is considered a supporter comment as it indirectly defends the presidential and vice-presidential candidates favored by the commenter.

Negative Impoliteness

Negative Impoliteness aims to damage the recipient's self-esteem or sense of security by instilling fear and threatening negative consequences. It directly intimidates or threatens the recipient, seeking to diminish their worth and agency.

The comment “@renithaerviana to @_oniii96 *Anis jd gubernur sapa yg mengusung klok bkn BPK prabowo kyak gk punya dosa ja Anis dn ktanya pemimpin kk mengolok* (@renithaerviana to @_oniii96 Anis, who will nominate him as governor, if not Mr. Prabowo? It's like Anis doesn't have any sins, and you are a leader. Why does the leader make fun?)”

It exemplifies Negative Impoliteness. It attacks Mr. Anis's character, suggesting he is not a worthy leader and implying that he will face negative consequences for his actions. This comment aims to damage Mr. Anis's reputation and potentially undermine his candidacy

In contrast, @In4billaranvie's comment “@In4billaranvie to @samsulhuda6165 *lbh bacotan yg komen haaha* (@In4billaranvie to @samsulhuda6165 A person who comments is more talkative)”

It is a response to a negative comment directed towards Mr. Anis. The commenter uses sarcasm and mockery to undermine @samsulhuda6165's criticism. This is considered a supporter comment because it defends the candidate who was the target of the negative comment. While the comment might not directly threaten @samsulhuda6165, it aims to diminish their influence and credibility within the online conversation.

Sarcasm or Mock Impoliteness

Sarcasm or Mock Impoliteness involves using sarcasm to mock or belittle the recipient. The speaker conveys a meaning opposite to their literal words, aiming to ridicule or undermine the recipient's perspective.

@ririn_fitriana12, in a comment addressed to @ratnadewi4124, writes, "*laah namanyaa jg sesi debat...klo jgn kebanyakan ngmng namanya aduu bengong.* (It's a debate, so naturally there's gonna be some talking... but if you don't have anything to say, you'll just look foolish.)".

This sarcastic remark mocks @ratnadewi4124's criticism of the debate, suggesting that she is being unreasonable and failing to understand the nature of the event. This comment is considered a supporter comment as it defends the presidential candidate who was the target of the criticism.

In contrast, @renithaerviana's comment "*Alat bkas kokk di prtnykan ini menjtuhkn yaah nis.* (Why are second-hand goods questionable? Is this a spill, nis)" employs sarcasm and mock impoliteness.

The sarcastic tone suggests that she views Anis's question about "second-hand goods" as petty and unjustified. This comment is likely considered hateful because it mocks Anis and his actions, potentially diminishing his credibility in the eyes of others.

CONCLUSION

The research revealed that supporters and detractors of presidential candidates frequently employed impolite language in their Instagram comments. Applying Culpeper's (2011) framework, the study identified four of the five impoliteness strategies – bald on record, positive, negative, and sarcasm or mock. Negative Impoliteness emerged as the most common impoliteness strategy used by supporters, occurring 43 times. Positive Impoliteness followed with 11 instances, while Bald on Record Impoliteness was the least frequent, appearing only 3 times. Among detractors, Positive Impoliteness dominated with 35 instances, followed by Negative Impoliteness (27 instances). Both Bald on Record Impoliteness and Sarcasm or Mock Impoliteness were less common among detractors, with 8 instances each. These results demonstrate a notable difference in the frequency of impoliteness strategies employed by supporters and haters. Haters utilized impoliteness strategies a total of 78 times, compared to 66 times for supporters.

Supporters frequently employ Negative Impoliteness as a defensive mechanism, seeking to shield their preferred candidate from perceived attacks. By directly confronting detractors and those expressing negative views, they aim to safeguard their candidate's reputation and deter further criticism. This approach may involve threats, intimidation, or personal attacks, ultimately seeking to silence opposing voices.

Conversely, detractors may favor Positive Impoliteness, allowing them to subtly undermine their target without engaging in direct attacks that could be readily identified as hate speech. This strategy enables them to convey negativity through indirect language and veiled criticism, avoiding direct confrontation and potentially minimizing the risk of accusations of hate speech.

In essence, supporters tend to utilize direct and confrontational language (Negative Impoliteness) to defend their candidate and discourage negativity, while detractors often employ indirect and veiled language (Positive Impoliteness) to subtly undermine their target without directly engaging in hate speech.

This research did not find any examples of "Withhold Politeness," a strategy often used in face-to-face interactions where people might choose to remain silent or avoid expected polite behaviors. The anonymity of online communication might make people less hesitant

to be impolite because they feel less accountable for their words. Additionally, the absence of visual cues, like facial expressions and body language, makes it difficult to gauge the potential impact of online communication, contributing to the perception that it is less polite than face-to-face interactions.

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