



Analysis of Impoliteness Strategies in YouTube Comment Sections: A Case Study of Gibran Rakabuming's "Generasi Muda, Bonus Demografi, dan Masa depan Indonesia"

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ABSTRACT. This study investigates impoliteness strategies used in the YouTube comment section of Gibran Rakabuming's video entitled "Generasi Muda, Bonus Demografi, dan Masa Depan Indonesia." Using a qualitative approach and Culpeper's (2005) impoliteness framework, the researchers analyzed 50 purposively selected comments. The study identifies various strategies such as bald-on-record impoliteness, sarcasm/mock politeness, positive impoliteness, and negative impoliteness. The findings reveal that bald-on-record and sarcasm are the most frequent strategies used, often driven by political dissatisfaction and emotional expression. This study aims to determine the most dominant impoliteness strategy employed by netizens and contributes to understanding digital discourse in Indonesian political contexts, highlighting the role of anonymity and group identity in shaping online communication.

Keywords: *impoliteness, YouTube comments, digital communication, Culpeper's framework, online discourse.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, online platforms like YouTube have become major spaces for public discourse, providing users with the opportunity to share their opinions, thoughts, and reactions. However, the open and often anonymous nature of these platforms can also encourage the use of impolite language, leading to aggressive and confrontational interactions. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the comment sections of videos that discuss sensitive or polarizing topics, such as the YouTube video titled "Generasi Muda, Bonus Demografi, dan Masa Depan Indonesia" by Gibran Rakabuming.

Impoliteness, as defined by Culpeper (2005), is a communicative strategy intended to attack the face of the conversation partner, causing discomfort, offense, or conflict. Unlike politeness, which aims to maintain social harmony, impoliteness seeks to disrupt it. The strategies used to convey impoliteness can vary widely, ranging from direct insults to more subtle forms of mock politeness or sarcasm. Understanding these strategies is crucial for analyzing online discourse, where the boundaries of acceptable communication are constantly being tested.

This study aims to identify and analyze the impoliteness strategies present in the YouTube comment section of Gibran Rakabuming's video, using Jonathan Culpeper's framework as a theoretical basis. By examining the language used in this digital space, this research seeks to shed light on how users express disagreement, criticism, and frustration in a

virtual environment. It also aims to determine which impoliteness strategy is most frequently used by netizens in this context.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The digital world has revolutionized the way humans communicate, with social media becoming a major platform for interaction, discussion, and expression of opinions. YouTube, as one of the largest video-sharing platforms, not only provides entertainment and educational content, but is also an important arena for public discourse, including political topics. Comments on YouTube often reflect diverse views, but often contain elements of impoliteness that can spark debate and conflict. This phenomenon has attracted the attention of researchers to understand the dynamics of online communication and its implications for social interaction.

Li and Yan (2021) comprehensively discuss various impoliteness strategies that appear in online communication, including in social media comments. They highlight how the characteristics of online environments can facilitate the expression of impoliteness that may not occur in face-to-face interactions. Similarly, Jiang and Zheng (2022) specifically examined impoliteness in online comments related to the COVID-19 pandemic, showing how sensitive or controversial issues can trigger the use of impolite language. These studies underscore the urgency of analyzing the phenomenon of impoliteness in a digital context.

Theoretical Frameworks of Politeness and Impoliteness

To understand the phenomenon of impoliteness, it is important to first review politeness theory as a foundation. The most influential theory of politeness is that proposed by Brown and Levinson in their monumental work, *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage* (1987). They introduced the concept of “face”, which is divided into two types: positive face (an individual's desire to be appreciated and liked) and negative face (an individual's desire not to be interfered with or obstructed). According to Brown and Levinson, every communicative act has the potential to be Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs) that can threaten the face of the speaker or listener. To mitigate FTAs, speakers use various politeness strategies, such as positive politeness (affirming others' positive face wishes) or negative politeness (respecting others' negative face wishes).

As an antithesis or development of politeness theory, the study of impoliteness began to develop. Culpeper (2005), in his work *Impoliteness and Entertainment in the Television Quiz Show: The Weakest Link*, proposes a comprehensive model of impoliteness. Culpeper defines impoliteness as the use of strategies that are deliberately designed to attack the interlocutor's face. Her model includes five main impoliteness strategies:

1. **Direct Impoliteness:** Explicit violation of the interlocutor's face, without mitigation.
2. **Bald-on-record Impoliteness:** Actions that openly attack face, often with the intention of shocking or offending.
3. **Positive Impoliteness:** Attacking the positive face of the interlocutor, for example by ignoring, belittling, or disrespecting.
4. **Negative Impoliteness:** Attacking the other person's negative face, for example by threatening autonomy, demeaning, or interrupting.
5. **Sarcasm/Mock Politeness:** Using forms of politeness ironically to convey an impolite or mocking message.

Further development of impoliteness theory was also proposed by Bousfield (2008) in his book *Impoliteness in Interaction*. Bousfield expands the understanding of impoliteness as a dynamic phenomenon that involves not only speakers and listeners, but also the context of interaction, purpose, and interpretation. This theoretical framework, especially Culpeper's model, will be the main foundation in analyzing impoliteness strategies in YouTube comments.

Online Communication and Digital Discourse

The unique characteristics of online communication often affect the dynamics of interaction, including the level of politeness. One of the most prominent features is anonymity, where users can interact without revealing their true identity. Suller (2004), in his article "The Online Disinhibition Effect", explains how this anonymity can trigger an "online disinhibition effect", where individuals feel freer to express thoughts or behaviors that they might not exhibit in face-to-face interactions. This disinhibition effect can contribute to an increase in the use of ill-mannered or aggressive language.

YouTube, as a social media platform, has become an important arena for digital discourse. Kharisma (2023) examined impoliteness in news social media comments, showing how current issues often triggered impolite reactions from readers or viewers. This indicates that the topics discussed in videos, especially those of a political or social nature, can significantly affect the tone of comments. Gibran Rakabuming's video discussing "Young Generation, Demographic Bonus, and Indonesia's Future" is an example of content that has the potential to trigger diverse comments, including those that may not be polite, given the relevance of the issue and Gibran's position as a public figure.

Previous Studies on Impoliteness in Online Comments

The phenomenon of impoliteness in online comments has been a rapidly growing subject of research. Several studies have analyzed impoliteness strategies in various social media contexts. Pratiwi (2023) analyzed impoliteness strategies in YouTube comments related to

Brexit, showing how political debates can trigger the use of language that attacks the face of the interlocutor. This study is relevant as it addresses the political context and the YouTube platform.

Similarly, Arrasyd (2019) examined impoliteness in YouTube comments on the Indonesian presidential debate. This study provides an overview of how the intensity of political competition is reflected in online comments, often with the use of impoliteness strategies to attack opposing candidates or supporters. These results are highly relevant to this study, given that Gibran's video also has the potential to trigger politically charged comments.

On the other hand, Salsabila (2023) studied impoliteness in the YouTube comments of Nikocado Avocado, a content creator known for controversial mukbang content. Although the context is different from politics, this study shows that impoliteness can appear in various types of content and is often triggered by emotional reactions or disapproval of the individuals or actions shown.

More general studies on impoliteness in Indonesian on social media also provide important insights. Anwar et al.(2021) discuss how impoliteness is manifested in Indonesian interactions on various social media platforms. This research helps to understand the patterns and forms of impoliteness that are unique to the Indonesian linguistic and cultural context.

Finally, Wibowo and Kuntjara (2025) examined impoliteness in soccer comments in Indonesia. Although the topic of soccer may seem distant from politics, this study remains relevant as it shows that online communities with strong interests can trigger expressions of impoliteness, especially when there are differences in views or support. This confirms that emotions and group identity can play a large role in the emergence of impoliteness.

From this literature review, there are research gaps that can be filled. While there have been many studies on impoliteness in online comments, there are still few that specifically analyze videos of politicians in Indonesia, especially those discussing strategic issues such as the demographic bonus. This research will contribute by applying Culpeper's (2005) impoliteness model in detail to the case of Gibran Rakabuming's videos, providing a deeper understanding of impoliteness strategies specific to the Indonesian political context on YouTube.

This literature review has outlined the relevant theoretical and empirical foundations for analyzing impoliteness strategies in YouTube comments. Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory provides a basis for understanding the concept of "face" and FTAs, while Culpeper's (2005) impoliteness model offers a robust framework for identifying various impoliteness strategies. The characteristics of online communication, as described by Suller

(2004) regarding the disinhibition effect, are important factors that facilitate the emergence of impoliteness.

Previous studies, such as those conducted by Pratiwi (2023), Arrasyd (2019), Salsabila (2023), Anwar et al.(2021), and Wibowo and Kuntjara (2025), have shown the prevalence of impoliteness in various online contexts, including on YouTube and in political discourse. This confirms that impoliteness is a prevalent and multidimensional phenomenon in online interactions.

This research will complement the existing literature by specifically analyzing impoliteness in Gibran Rakabuming video comments. Suganda et al. (2022) who discussed impoliteness in Instagram comments in Indonesia, and Santoso et al. (2025) who analyzed impoliteness in Indonesian government policy comments, showed that the Indonesian context has its own dynamics in the expression of impoliteness. Thus, this research is expected to make a significant contribution to enriching the understanding of impoliteness strategies in digital political discourse in Indonesia, particularly on the YouTube platform, as well as identifying specific patterns that emerge in the context of videos that are relevant to the future of the nation.

3. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative content analysis approach to investigate the impoliteness strategies present in the YouTube comment section of Gibran Rakabuming's video entitled "*Generasi Muda, Bonus Demografi, dan Masa Depan Indonesia*". A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate due to its capacity to explore the implicit and explicit meanings within online discourse and to uncover the nuanced pragmatic strategies used by commenters in digital interactions.

The primary data consisted of user-generated comments posted under the aforementioned video. From an estimated 56,000 available comments, a purposive sampling technique was utilized to select 50 comments that exhibited clear indicators of impoliteness. Selection criteria included the presence of linguistic features such as direct insults, sarcasm, aggressive questioning, belittling expressions, or overt face-threatening acts. These indicators were identified based on initial readings and guided by the theoretical lens of impoliteness.

All selected comments were transcribed verbatim and anonymized to protect user privacy. The analysis was conducted using Culpeper's (2005) impoliteness strategy framework, which comprises five primary strategies: *bald-on-record impoliteness*, *positive impoliteness*, *negative impoliteness*, *sarcasm/mock politeness*, and *off-record impoliteness*.

Each comment was systematically coded and categorized according to the most dominant impoliteness strategy exhibited, based on its linguistic construction and pragmatic effect.

An iterative reading process was employed to ensure the reliability and consistency of the coding. Additionally, interpretive analysis was applied to understand the broader pragmatic functions of impoliteness in context, such as expressions of dissatisfaction, delegitimization, or mockery. This methodological approach enabled the researchers to gain deeper insights into how users employ impoliteness as a communicative tool in politically charged digital discourse.

4. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Impoliteness Strategy

No	Impoliteness Strategies	Total	Percentages (%)
1.	Bald-on-Record	22	44%
2.	Sarcasm/Mock Politeness	17	34%
3.	Positive Impoliteness	7	14%
4.	Positive Impoliteness	7	14%
	Total	50	100%

The Direct Impoliteness strategy was not found at all in the analyzed data.

From the analysis, a total of 50 data points were found that constituted impoliteness strategies in the form of comments. The most frequently used strategy was bald-on-record (22), followed by sarcasm/mock (17), then positive impoliteness (7), which was the same as negative impoliteness (7). Direct impoliteness was not found to be used in the news headlines.

Table 2. Bald-on-record

No.	Comment	Analysis
1.		<p>Explicitly calls the target "dungu" (stupid) and attacks their legitimacy ("tidak pantas jd wapres"). No mitigation; the insult is blatant and confrontational. The comment returned to the most confrontational Bald-on-Record strategy. The direct mention of "lo dungu" (you are stupid) accompanied by the claim of impropriety to be vice president based on the Constitutional Court's ruling, shows an open attack with no attempt at mitigation. These comments attack not only the intellectual ability but also the political legitimacy of the target.</p>

2.		<p>Direct vulgar insult ("tai" = shit) with no mitigation. Attacks the quality of the content (and by extension, the creator). The comment "konten tai" ("sh*t content") clearly demonstrates bald-on-record impoliteness. The use of the vulgar word "tai" as a metaphor for content shows a direct attack with no attempt at mitigation. This is intentionally offensive and confrontational communication aimed at openly disparaging someone's work quality. The absence of introductory phrases or politeness markers makes this one of the most frontal types of impolite comments.</p>
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Table 3. Sarcasm/Mock Politeness

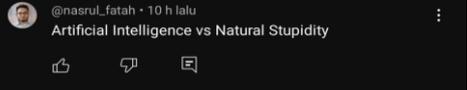
No.	Comment	Analysis
1.		<p>Contrasts "AI" (positive) with "Natural Stupidity" (negative). Pseudo-intellectual framing masks insult. The comment uses a more subtle but still piercing strategy of Sarcasm or Mock Politeness with the comment "Artificial Intelligence vs Natural Stupidity". This contrastive wordplay between artificial intelligence and natural stupidity looks like an intellectual observation, but is actually a sharp satire that equates the subject with stupidity. This form of irreverence requires a certain linguistic intelligence from the reader.</p>
2.		<p>The use of the solemn religious phrase "Innalilahi wa Inna ilaihi Raji'un," typically used for conveying condolences upon death, is applied in the context of having Gibran as vice president. This is a very sharp and sarcastic jab, indicating regret or even a "death of hope" concerning Gibran's position. The repeated exclamation marks (!!!!!!!) denote strong emotion, frustration, or anger.</p>

Table 4. Positive Impoliteness

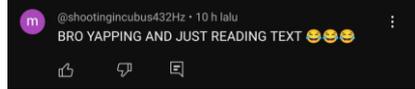
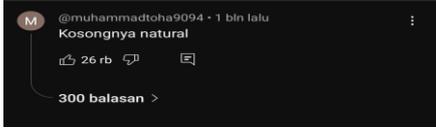
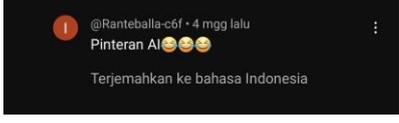
No.	Comment	Analysis
1.		<p>Specifically <i>disassociating</i> or <i>ignoring</i> (with a mocking connotation) and <i>ridicule</i>. The word "yapping" pejoratively means "to talk incessantly" or "to speak nonsense," often used to dismiss someone's speech. The use of laughing emojis (😂😂) reinforces the tone of mockery and disdain for Gibran's words. It shows a lack of appreciation for the content or effort of his speech</p>
2.		<p>Comment ("BRO YAPPING AND JUST READING TEXT") implements Positive Impoliteness through derogatory English slang. The word "yapping" which usually refers to a dog barking is used to imply that the subject's speech is worthless, while the use of all capital letters emphasizes the dismissive tone. This reflects the influence of global internet culture in communicating offensively.</p>

Table 5. Negative Impoliteness

No.	Comment	Analysis
1.		Specifically through <i>ridicule</i> or <i>belittling</i> . The comment implicitly attacks Gibran's positive face (the desire to be appreciated, intelligent, or knowledgeable) by implying that his thoughts are "empty" or superficial. What's more, it states that this emptiness is "natural," as if it's an inherent trait, thus demeaning his intellectual capacity.
2.		Specifically <i>ridicule</i> or potentially <i>sarcasm/mock politeness</i> (if read with an ironic tone). The comment directly compares Gibran to artificial intelligence and claims AI is smarter. The use of laughing emojis indicates mockery and diminishes Gibran's intellectual capacity. Although not explicitly rude, the implication is highly insulting.

1. Types of Impoliteness Strategies and Their Dominance

The analysis identified four main impoliteness strategies: Bald-on-Record Impoliteness, Sarcasm/Mock Politeness, Positive Impoliteness, and Negative Impoliteness. The findings indicate that *Bald-on-Record Impoliteness and Sarcasm/Mock Politeness were the most frequent strategies used*. This aligns with previous research suggesting that the open and often anonymous nature of online platforms can encourage direct and confrontational interactions.

- **Bald-on-Record Impoliteness:** This strategy was frequently observed, characterized by direct and unmitigated attacks on Gibran's face. Comments using this strategy often involved explicit insults, derogatory labels, and blunt dismissals of his competence or legitimacy. Examples include calling him "stupid" ("goblok," "o'on"), "empty" ("kosongnya natural," "lu kosong banget"), or "trash" ("Sampah", "VP trash"). The directness of these comments, often devoid of any softening politeness markers, reflects a strong desire to openly express contempt or disagreement without equivocation. The use of profanity like "f*ckin" further highlights this direct confrontational approach.
- **Sarcasm/Mock Politeness:** This strategy involves using seemingly polite or complimentary statements to convey sharp criticism or insult. The underlying meaning is often the opposite of the literal words used, with irony playing a crucial role. Examples include "Can't the vice president be replaced by AI 😄", "Your father is great... raising you to become someone who has no shame", "praised but undeserving", "GENIUS 🍌", "Good job 🌟", and "Artificial Intelligence vs Natural Stupidity". The use of emojis like laughing faces, clapping hands, or stars often reinforces the sarcastic

tone, signaling insincerity. This strategy allows commenters to express disagreement in a less overtly aggressive manner while still delivering a potent critical message.

- **Positive Impoliteness:** This strategy involved attacking Gibran's positive face, often by ignoring his efforts, belittling his attributes, or disassociating from him. Comments like "begonya natural" (his stupidity is natural) or "yapping mulu dah" (just yapping away) fall into this category. They aim to deny the target's desire to be appreciated, liked, or valued, by trivializing their contributions or mocking their perceived flaws.
- **Negative Impoliteness:** While less dominant than the top two, Negative Impoliteness was also present, characterized by strategies that threatened Gibran's negative face (his desire for autonomy and freedom from imposition) or demeaned him. This includes condescension, ridicule, or subtle threats to his position. Comments like "Anda tanpa Bapak Anda hanyalah Mas Mas biasa" (Without your Father, you're just an ordinary 'Mas Mas') and "Pinteran AI" (AI is smarter) exemplify this by questioning his self-worth and independence. Demands to "step down" ("mundur saja") also directly infringe on his perceived autonomy.

The overwhelming presence of **Bald-on-Record Impoliteness** and **Sarcasm/Mock Politeness** suggests that users prefer straightforward or masked criticism over more covert strategies. This trend aligns with previous findings in digital discourse, where anonymity enables users to express opinions more freely and aggressively.

2. Pragmatic functions of impoliteness

The pragmatic functions of impoliteness observed in the comments of Gibran Rakabuming's video are multifaceted, primarily serving as expressions of dissatisfaction and aggression, though humor in the form of sarcasm is also a significant component.

Functions of Each Impoliteness Strategy:

1. *Bald-on-Record Impoliteness:*

- **To Shock or Offend:** Comments like "Anak manja lagi ceramahin kita..." ("A spoiled kid is lecturing us..."), "Gibran lo dungu" ("Gibran, you're stupid"), "gibran gblok" (a Javanese slur for "stupid"), "Bacot" (a blunt, aggressive term dismissing speech as worthless), "Sampah" ("Trash"), "konten tai" ("sh*t content"), or "Wapres sampah" ("VP trash") explicitly attack the subject's character, intelligence, or legitimacy with the aim of shocking or directly offending them.

- **To Discredit Openly:** Phrases such as "Anda jangan pernah sekali kali berpikir bahwa video anda ini keren atau menginspirasi" ("You should never ever think that your video is cool or inspiring") or "BRO YAPPING AND JUST READING TEXT" overtly dismiss the value or quality of the subject or their content.
- **To Express Extreme Anger or Frustration:** The use of profanity or direct insults often represents a strong emotional outpouring driven by political dissatisfaction or personal frustration.

2. Sarcasm/Mock Politeness:

- **To Mock Intelligence or Quality:** Comments such as "Bisa gak wapres diganti AI 😏" ("Can the vice president be replaced by AI 😏"), "Bapakmu hebat dalam mendidikmu menjadi sosok yang tidak tau malu" ("Your father is great...raising you to become someone who has no shame"), "GENIUS 🤝🤝🤝", "Pinteran AI 😏😏😏" ("AI is smarter"), "Artificial Intelligence vs Natural Stupidity", or "natural banget o'on-nya" (not provided in the source) use praise or contrasting comparisons ironically to demean the subject's intelligence or qualities.
- **To Indicate Disbelief or Subtle Rejection:** Phrases like "Tapi saya ga percaya anda 😏" ("But I don't believe you 😏") or "salut sama vidionya karena bisa mendorong rasa ingin skip yg tinggi...." ("salute the video for encouraging high skip rates...") appear polite on the surface but implicitly convey strong disapproval or rejection.
- **To Attack Honor or Integrity Subtly:** "Innalilahi wa Inna ilaihi Raji'un, Indonesia punya wapres seperti itu!!!!!!" (A solemn religious phrase used ironically to express dismay about the VP) or "sungguh orang yang kuat. (kuat rasa malu nya)" (not provided in the source) utilize phrases with serious or positive connotations to mock the subject's integrity or sense of shame.
- **To Criticize with Dark Humor:** This strategy is often used to deliver sharp criticism in a more "clever" or "amusing" way for the audience, potentially making it more relatable or shareable in an online context.

3. Positive Impoliteness:

- **To Belittle Intelligence or Competence:** Comments such as "suka bgt liat mas Gibran, begonya natural" ("really like mas Gibran, his stupidity is natural"),

"BELAJAR LAGI YANG BANYAK BIAR GAK KELIATAN NGANG NGONG NGANG NGONG" ("LEARN MORE SO YOU DON'T SEEM NGANG NGONG NGANG NGONG" - mocking speech), "Aura tololnya melebihi 100% 🤡" ("Your stupidity aura exceeds 100%"), or "Yapping Mulu dah 😂😂" ("Always yapping 😂😂") directly demean the subject's intellectual abilities or manner of speaking.

- **To Mock or Embarrass:** The use of words that imply foolishness or incompetence aims to embarrass the subject in the digital public sphere.
- **To Express Dislike or Disregard:** By undermining the subject's 'positive face', the commenter indicates a lack of appreciation or even disdain for the individual.

4. *Negative Impoliteness:*

- **To Threaten Autonomy or Legitimacy:** Comments like "tolong mundur saja. anda belum layak. terlihat dipaksakan demi kerajaan politik" ("please step down. you are unqualified. looks like you are forced for a political dynasty") or "Mending mundur dari wapres" ("Better resign from VP") explicitly suggest or demand the subject's resignation, threatening their position or rights.
- **To Belittle Achievements or Capacity:** Phrases such as "Anda tanpa Bapak Anda hanyalah Mas Mas biasa" ("Without your father, you are just an ordinary guy") or "Sumpah lebih keren adekku yang masih SD presentasi" ("Swear my elementary school-aged sibling is cooler presenting") diminish the subject's accomplishments by attributing them to external factors or comparing them to traditionally perceived less capable individuals.
- **To Create Distance and Discomfort:** Comments that undermine someone's autonomy or achievements can create a sense of discomfort and distance between the commenter and the subject.

The impoliteness strategies in Gibran Rakabuming's YouTube comment section primarily function as vehicles for expressing strong political dissatisfaction and aggression, with sarcasm providing a distinct avenue for critical humor and mockery. These functions are often amplified by the anonymous nature of online communication, which can foster a sense of disinhibition among users.

5. CONCLUSION

This study examined the impoliteness strategies employed by YouTube users in the comment section of Gibran Rakabuming's video, "*Generasi Muda, Bonus Demografi, dan Masa Depan Indonesia*," using Culpeper's (2005) impoliteness framework. Through qualitative content analysis of 50 purposively selected comments, the study identified four primary strategies: bald-on-record impoliteness, sarcasm/mock politeness, positive impoliteness, and negative impoliteness. The two most dominant strategies—bald-on-record and sarcasm/mock politeness—indicate a user preference for either direct confrontation or veiled criticism through irony.

Each strategy served various pragmatic functions. Bald-on-record comments expressed overt disdain, often intended to delegitimize or provoke. Sarcasm/mock politeness allowed users to deliver criticism indirectly, often laced with humor and mockery. Positive and negative impoliteness strategies, though less frequent, played roles in undermining the target's competence or autonomy. Together, these strategies not only conveyed disapproval but also reflected broader patterns of online aggression and emotional expression in digital political discourse.

The findings affirm existing research on the disinhibition effect in online environments, where anonymity and group identity amplify confrontational behavior. This study contributes to understanding how impoliteness shapes political discourse on Indonesian social media platforms, particularly YouTube. Future research should examine the long-term consequences of impoliteness on public dialogue and civic engagement, as well as explore how such discourse manifests across different cultural and linguistic contexts.

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