Impoliteness Strategies In The Third Indonesia Presidential Debate 2024: Pragmatics Research

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Abstract

This research examines the impoliteness strategies employed during the third Indonesian Presidential Debate of 2024 from a pragmatic perspective. Using Jonathan Culpeper's theories of impoliteness (1996) and Culpeper's (2011) as a theoretical framework, the research aims to identify and analyze the types of impoliteness strategies used by presidential candidates and determine their functions within the debate context. The research utilizes a descriptive qualitative method, with data collected from the Kompas TV YouTube channel's broadcast of the debate. The research focuses on identifying instances of bald-on-record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm/mock politeness, and withhold politeness. Additionally, it examines whether these strategies serve affective, coercive, or entertaining functions. Preliminary analysis reveals the presence of four types of impoliteness strategies: bald-on-record, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, and sarcasm. Notably, bald-on-record impoliteness emerged as the most frequently used strategy, while no instances of withhold politeness were observed. The affective function was found to be the most prevalent, suggesting that candidates often employ impoliteness to express emotions and influence audience perceptions. This research contributes to the field of pragmatics by providing insights into language use in high-stakes political contexts. It also offers a deeper understanding of how impoliteness strategies can impact public perception and the democratic process in Indonesia. The findings may serve as a valuable resource for future studies on political discourse and communication strategies in presidential debates.

Keywords: *Impoliteness strategies, Presidential debate, Pragmatics analysis*

Introduction

Every human possesses an inherent ability to use language, an essential aspect of life. Language is an effective communication tool for expressing thoughts and intentions. Hendar and Anshari (2021) suggest that effective communication occurs when both parties fully comprehend each other throughout the interaction. Although language currently functions as an efficient means of communication, how people use it can vary significantly. As stated by Ratri and Ardi (2019), it is essential to sustain positive social interactions since we exist in a diverse community with varying backgrounds such as age, gender, and cultural context. Nevertheless, language and humans are inseparable, so when humans live without language, they face difficulties building relationships with others.

In the past few months, Indonesia has been conducting an election. One of the crucial stages in the electoral process is the debate between presidential and vice-presidential candidates. During the debate, we will see how the communication style of the candidates shapes the public's perception of their 1 personality and character.

Undoubtedly, the language used by the candidates during the debate has become a public spotlight. Using impolite language, such as insults or personal attacks, can damage a candidate's positive image and influence the public's choice.

Impoliteness is not only about being rude but also involves a negative attitude that underlies the behavior. This negative attitude is related to specific behaviors such as damaging someone's identity in a specific context (Culpeper, 2011). The specific situation determines what is considered impolite, and no universal standard can be applied absolutely. This is also considered impoliteness when someone in an unpleasant situation makes their counterpart uncomfortable. Culpeper (1996) stated that five super strategies are: bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm or mock politeness, and withhold politeness.

Impoliteness can be expressed through both written and spoken forms, such as debates held during elections, which often contain elements of impoliteness. This can lead to conflicts and divisions among candidates and their respective supporters. These conflicts also trigger negative emotions, such as hate speech, anger, provocation, and insults. In January 2024, the third presidential debate became a public discussion topic due to several moments of impoliteness shown by the candidates, such as personal attacks. The public regrets this because it can damage the essence of the democratic process itself.

Based on the impoliteness observed in the third presidential debate, the researcher is interested in continuing this research by analyzing the impoliteness used by the presidential candidates. This analysis will be conducted using the impoliteness strategies theory by Culpeper (1996) and Culpeper (2011). This research is important to discuss from an academic perspective so that it can serve as a lesson for us and others to maintain proper language use when speaking, especially in the context of a presidential debate watched by many people.

Method

The research method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992:29), descriptive qualitative research is an approach that uses the researcher as the primary instrument, and data is collected directly from the source. Descriptive qualitative research defines research in the context of understanding how a theory works in various phenomena, collecting data in the form of words rather than numbers. Djajasudarma (1993) argues that the descriptive qualitative method focuses on making an accurate and objective description of the data's characteristics based on the data's natural nature. Therefore, this research is consistent with the definition of the method above to understand the phenomenon in depth and comprehensively regarding the strategies of impoliteness found in the third debate session of the 2024 Indonesian presidential candidates.

Sugiyono (2012:144) defines the research object as a scientific target for data collection with specific purposes and utility related to something objective, valid, and reliable regarding a particular variable. The object of this research is to examine impoliteness strategies based on the theories proposed by Jonathan Culpeper (1996) and (2011). This research analyzes the types of impoliteness strategies and functions used by the candidates for the Indonesian presidential election in 2024. Data used as the research object were collected from the Kompas TV YouTube platform, which broadcasts the 2024 presidential election debates. The steps for analyzing data in this research are as follows: (1) Opening a Kompas TV YouTube account with the keyword

"Debat Ketiga Capres Pilpres 2024: Tema Pertahanan, Geopolitik dan Hubungan Internasional", (2) downloading the transcript, (3) watching the entire video, (4) collecting conversations containing impoliteness, (5) classifying the data found in the video, (6) classifying the types and functions used by the candidates. The main purpose of this research is to analyze and describe (1) Types of impoliteness used in the Third Presidential Candidates Debate 2024, (2) functions used in the Third Presidential Candidates Debate 2024.

Finding

To achieve the research objectives and answer the research questions, this research conducted a thorough analysis of data from the third Indonesia Presidential Debate 2024. The analysis aimed to comprehensively understand the various types and functions of impoliteness strategies employed by the presidential candidates during the debate. The research explored how impoliteness was used in different debate contexts, its pragmatic purposes, and its broader implications for language use in political discourse. The analysis identified types of impoliteness strategies and the functions of impoliteness in the debate between the 2024 presidential candidates.

The types of impoliteness identified are Bald-On-Record, Positive Impoliteness, Negative Impoliteness, and Sarcasm. Bald-on-record emerged as the most frequently used type. The researcher did not find any instances of Withhold Politeness. The absence of Withhold Politeness can be attributed to the effectiveness of other impoliteness strategies such as negative impoliteness, positive impoliteness, sarcasm or mock politeness, and bald-on-record impoliteness in criticizing opponents and demonstrating superiority. Furthermore, the analysis identifies various functions of impoliteness used by the candidates, including affective function, coercive function, and entertaining function. Among these functions, the affective function was most frequently used, indicating that candidates in presidential debates often employ impoliteness strategies to express their emotions and feelings, such as anger, disappointment, or disagreement, to resonate with the audience and garner support.

Table 1: Types and functions used in the third Indonesian presidential election debate 2024

Data	Impoliteness Strategies	Function of Using Impoliteness Strategies		
		Affective	**Coercive**	**Entertaining**
29:33 – 29:41 Prabowo Subianto : "itu pun salah, itu pun salah."	Bald-On Record	✓		
42:34 – 42:45 Prabowo Subianto: "Jadi tidak hanya kerjanya omon saja gak bisa, tidak bisa, ingarsongtelodo."	Bald-On Record	✓		
41:50 – 42:00				

Prabowo Subianto: "Kalau kalau kalau benar masuk akal saya setuu, kalau ngomong ngomong ngomong ya kumaha."	Sarcasm/Mock Politeness		✓
31:30 – 32:31			
Prabowo Subianto: "Ya sekali lagi ya, saya berpandangan. Pak anies juga terlalu teoritis. Semuanya bagus indah tetapi yang nyata tentang masalah ai, cyber, teknologi tinggi dan sebagainya adalah sumber daya manusianya, awaknya. Tidak hanya bicara-bicara yang baik-baik saja."	Positive Impoliteness	✓	
1:40:27 - 1:40:28			
Anies Baswedan: "11 Mas dari 100"	Positive Impoliteness	✓	
59:03 -59:10			
Prabowo Subianto: "Pak Anis perlu belajar ekonomi lagi ya kan jadi kalau bilang ideal 30% dasarnya apa."	Negative Impoliteness		✓
34:02 – 34:25			
Anies Baswedan: "Persoalannya kalau tadi disebut ada yang teoritis ada yang kedua tidak dilaksanakan jadi selama 5 tahun ini apa yang dikerjakan dalam mempertahankan sistem cyber kita, justru disitu letak problemnya."	Negative Impoliteness	✓	

Discussion

To address the research questions and achieve the research's objectives, the collected data will undergo thorough analysis. This research aims to examine the impoliteness strategies employed during the third Indonesia Presidential Debate 2024

through a pragmatic lens. The analysis will focus on several key areas: The research will first identify and categorize the types of impoliteness strategies used by the presidential candidates. This categorization will be based on Culpeper's (1996) framework, which includes bald on record, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm/mock politeness, and withhold politeness. Next, the research will explore the functions of these impoliteness strategies, drawing on Culpeper's (2011) work. Each instance of impoliteness will be analyzed to determine whether it serves an affective, coercive, or entertaining purpose within the debate context. The data will then be organized according to which candidate used the impoliteness strategy and the specific context within the debate. This organization will help identify patterns in how different candidates employ impoliteness and how it relates to particular debate topics or moments.

Bald-On Record

*Prabowo Subianto: "**itu pun salah, itu pun salah**. Mas anies jangan jiplak data yang salah"*

(29:33 – 29:41)

Context: The third presidential debate of 2024 began with a question on Indonesia's defense, but Anies Baswedan, candidate number 1, unexpectedly clarified Prabowo's land ownership data discrepancy instead. Prabowo Subianto immediately interjected, seeking to address the claims made by Anies Baswedan.

Based on Data 1, Prabowo's response to Anies' clarification regarding inaccurate information exemplifies bald-on-record impoliteness. Prabowo explicitly states, *"itu pun salah, itu pun salah. Mas Anies, jangan jiplak data yang salah,"* to express his disagreement with the corrected figures regarding land ownership, initially reported as 320 hectares and then amended to 340,000 hectares. This response undermines Anies' credibility by suggesting he is copying incorrect data. By saying *"jangan jiplak data yang salah,"* Prabowo challenges the accuracy and integrity of Anies' data, indirectly accusing him of dishonesty.

The function of this statement *"itu pun salah, itu pun salah. Mas anies jangan jiplak data yang salah"* serves as affective impoliteness. The phrase *"itu pun salah"* repeated twice in response to Anies' clarification shows his negative emotions, which can affect the audience's perception of his credibility. The repetition of this phrase expresses disagreement with Anies' clarification and implies a sense of disappointment with his inability to convey accurate information. By stating this directly and firmly, Prabowo rejects the validity of the data presented by his opponents (Anies Baswedan).

*Prabowo Subianto: "Jadi **tidak hanya omononomon kerjanya omon saja gak bisa, tidak bisa,** ingarsongtelodo."*

(42:34 – 42:45)

Context: The debate moved to the topic of International Relations, specifically South-South cooperation (Kerjasama Selatan-Selatan). Anies Baswedan challenged Prabowo Subianto's argument, asserting that it did not accurately reflect Indonesia's experience with South-South cooperation issues.

Data 2 can be classified into the category of bald-on-record impoliteness. The statement, *"tidak hanya omononomon kerjanya omon saja gak bisa, tidak bisa,"* is delivered directly without ambiguity, conveying criticism without attempting to mitigate

its impact. The use of the word *"ingarsongtelodo"* reinforces the bluntness of the criticism, adding to the negative evaluation of Anies Baswedan. This remark reflects Prabowo's disregard for face-threatening consequences, as it directly challenges Anies' credibility and effectiveness within the context of South-South cooperation.

The statement in **data 2** functions as Affective Impoliteness. The statement, *"tidak hanya omononomon kerjanya omon saja gak bisa, tidak bisa,"* uttered by Prabowo can be seen as an expression of frustration or insult, in line with affective impoliteness where negative emotions are directed at an individual, implying guilt or inability. The repetition of the phrase *"kerjanya omon saja gak bisa, tidak bisa"* as well as the dismissive and rejecting tone show an outburst of negative emotions such as anger, frustration, or insult directed directly at Anies Baswedan. This not only attacks Anies' negative face but also his credibility, by implying incompetence in his argument concerning South-South cooperation.

Sarcasm

*Prabowo Subianto: "Saya kok banyak setuju dengan Pak Ganjar ya, **kalau kalau kalau benar masuk akal saya setuju, kalau ngomong ngomong ngomong ya Kumaha**."*

(41:50 – 42:00)

Context: The debate shifted to International Relations, focusing on South-South cooperation (Kerjasama Selatan-Selatan). Anies Baswedan contested Prabowo Subianto's argument, claiming it did not accurately represent Indonesia's experience within the South-South cooperation issues.

Data 3 applies the type of Sarcasm. This statement *"Saya kok banyak setuju dengan Pak Ganjar ya, kalau kalau kalau benar masuk akal saya setuju, kalau ngomong ngomong ngomong ya Kumaha."* appears polite on the surface as he claims to agree with Ganjar Pranowo. However, the repetition of the word "kalau" and the *phrase "ngomong ngomong ngomong ya Kumaha"* can be interpreted as sarcastic or mocking. The literal meaning of the statement is that Prabowo Subianto agrees with Ganjar Pranowo, but the intended meaning is likely not genuine agreement or sincerity in agreement, and in reality, the speaker is being sarcastic towards his opponents, who appears to be speaking excessively.

The function of data 3 is Entertaining Impoliteness. In this debate, Prabowo Subianto's response attempts to offend or even harm Anies Baswedan while still providing entertainment or enjoyment to the audience. He creates a situation that elicits laughter from the audience in a manner that may seem rough or mocking through the expression *"ngomong ngomong ngomong ya Kumaha"*. Although the expression is directly aimed at Ganjar Pranowo, in the context of the ongoing debate, it is clear that the true purpose of the comment is to highlight Anies Baswedan's opinion, which is deemed to be talking too much.

Positive Impoliteness

Prabowo Subianto: *"**Ya sekali lagi ya, saya berpandangan. Pak anies juga terlalu teoritis.** Semuanya bagus indah tetapi yang nyata tentang masalah ai, cyber, teknologi tinggi dan sebagainya adalah sumber daya manusianya, awaknya. Tidak hanya bicara-bicara yang baik-baik saja."*

(31:30 – 32:31)

Context: The debate continued with Anies Baswedan discussing strategies for using technology to improve national defense. Prabowo Subianto then responded to Anies' arguments.

Data 4 exemplifies Positive Impoliteness. By stating *"Pak Anies juga terlalu teoritis,"* Prabowo clearly expresses his disagreement with Anies' perspectives, aligning with the sub-strategy of disagreeing with different opinions. Furthermore, the statement *"Tidak hanya bicara-bicara yang baik-baik saja"* reflects the sub-strategy of making others uncomfortable. Prabowo's intent to unsettle his opponent is evident, as he implies that Anies' approach is impractical or lacks realism from his viewpoint.

The statement in Data 4 functions as Affective Impoliteness. Prabowo directly and clearly expresses his disagreement with Anies' views by saying, *"Pak Anies juga terlalu teoritis."* This demonstrates a negative emotion of dissatisfaction conveyed spontaneously and honestly. Additionally, the phrase *"Tidak hanya bicara-bicara yang baik-baik saja"* further indicates Prabowo's frustration or dissatisfaction with Anies' approach, which he considers unrealistic. These statements are direct expressions of negative emotions, which is a characteristic of affective impoliteness.

Anies Baswedan: ***"11 Mas dari 100"***

(1:40:26-1:40:28)

Context: Anies Baswedan asked Ganjar Pranowo about the defense ministry's performance under Prabowo Subianto. Ganjar gave a general evaluation, but Anies directly assessed the performance while laughing.

Data 5 can be classified as Positive Impoliteness. By providing a brief and sharp assessment *"11 Mas dari 100,"* Anies Baswedan indirectly undermines Prabowo Subianto's performance as the Minister of Defense. This firm and concise evaluation can be classified as the seventh sub-strategy of positive impoliteness, which is "disagreeing with different opinions." In this case, Anies Baswedan clearly expresses his contrary opinion to the positive assessment that may be expected by Prabowo Subianto or his supporters, and this action can also disrupt Prabowo Subianto's positive image and make him feel uncomfortable.

The statement *"11 Mas dari 100,"* in **data 5** serves as Affective Impoliteness. The affective function refers to information that arouses emotions or feelings. In this case, the statement "11 Mas dari 100," delivered directly, is designed to convey dissatisfaction and influence opinions. This assessment is a direct evaluation of the performance of the Ministry of Defense led by Prabowo Subianto. Anies Baswedan's statement indicates a disregard for Prabowo Subianto's reputation, likely evoking various emotional responses from listeners, including surprise, disappointment, or even anger.

Negative Impoliteness

*Prabowo Subianto: "Pak Anis, **Saya kira Pak Anis perlu belajar ekonomi lagi ya**, kan jadi kalau bilang ideal 30% dasarnya apa."*

(59:03 – 59:10)

Context: The debate shifted to foreign policy, focusing on debt and sovereignty. Anies Baswedan suggested to Prabowo Subianto setting a clear debt-to-GDP ratio for Indonesia.

Data 6 can be classified into the category of negative impoliteness. The statement "Pak Anis perlu belajar ekonomi lagi." implies that Anies Baswedan needs to learn more about economics, consistent with the sub-strategy of demeaning or even ridiculing, which can be interpreted as criticism or advice that he is lacking competence in the field of economics. The statement "Jadi kalau bilang ideal 30% pada dasarnya apa." can be seen as an attempt to belittle or mock his understanding of economics.

The statement in **data 6** serves its functions as Coercive Impoliteness. Prabowo Subianto's response to Anies Baswedan's question can be seen as an attempt to control and influence his interlocutor, by showing his disagreement with his opponent's suggestion. Prabowo Subianto's emphasis on Anies Baswedan's need to research economics again and his statements doubting Anies' economic abilities constitute a form of control and influence intended to coerce Anies into accepting his viewpoint.

*Anies Baswedan: "Persoalannya kalau tadi disebut ada yang teoritis ada yang kedua tidak dilaksanakan **jadi selama 5 tahun ini apa yang dikerjakan dalam mempertahankan sistem cyber kita, justru disitu letak problemnya**."*

(34:02 – 34:25)

Context: In the continuation of the debate, Anies Baswedan discusses strategies for utilizing technology to enhance national defense. Prabowo Subianto responds to Anies's argument by calling it too theoretical. Anies then refutes this argument.

Based on **data 7**, Anies's response to Prabowo's argument can be classified as Negative Impoliteness. The statement *"jadi selama 5 tahun ini apa yang dikerjakan dalam mempertahankan sistem cyber kita, justru disitu letak problemnya"* aligns with the sub-strategy of demeaning or ridiculing. By questioning what has been done in the last 5 years, Anies implies that there have been few or no substantial achievements, which can be considered as belittling his debate opponent (Prabowo Subianto) as the Minister of Defense. Additionally, Anies's argument explicitly associates the current administration with failure in addressing cybersecurity issues.

The statement *"jadi selama 5 tahun ini apa yang dikerjakan dalam mempertahankan sistem cyber kita, justru disitu letak problemnya"* functions as Affective Impoliteness. Anies expresses dissatisfaction and criticism towards the current government's efforts in the field of cybersecurity. This aligns with affective impoliteness as it conveys negative emotions, particularly frustration, and disappointment, implying that the target (Prabowo Subianto) as the Minister of Defense is responsible for these feelings. Anies directly expresses his disagreement and emphasizes the perceived lack of progress in cybersecurity over the past five years. The phrase *"justru disitu letak problemnya"* further reinforces his negative assessment, enhancing the affective impoliteness by explicitly assigning blame.

Conclusion

This research examined impoliteness strategies used in the third Indonesian Presidential Debate of 2024 from a pragmatic perspective, utilizing Jonathan Culpeper's theories of impoliteness (1996) and (2011) as a theoretical framework. The analysis revealed the presence of four types of impoliteness strategies: bald-on-record, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, and sarcasm. Notably, bald-on-record impoliteness emerged as the most frequently used strategy. Interestingly, no instances of withhold politeness were observed, which may be attributed to the effectiveness of other impoliteness strategies in criticizing opponents and demonstrating superiority within the debate context. Regarding the functions of impoliteness, the research identified three main categories: affective, coercive, and entertaining. Among these, the affective function was found to be the most prevalent. This suggests that candidates in presidential debates often employ impoliteness strategies to express their emotions and feelings, such as anger, disappointment, or disagreement, in an attempt to resonate with the audience and garner support. The research provides valuable insights into language

use in high-stakes political contexts, offering a deeper understanding of how impoliteness strategies can impact public perception and the democratic process in Indonesia.

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