

Impoliteness Strategies In Joe Biden's Instagram Comment Section

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Abstract

This study investigates linguistic impoliteness found in Joe Biden's Instagram comment section through the analysis of impoliteness strategies proposed by Jonathan Culpeper. The present study aims at examining the types of impoliteness strategies used by commenters in Joe Biden Instagram comment section. The study uses descriptive qualitative method. The data gathered by using documentary technique, in which only the data that support research question are taken. Findings showed that there are four out five types of impoliteness strategies that used by commenters in Joe Biden's Instagram comment section. Furthermore, there were some functions of impoliteness that the researcher found; coercive impoliteness, affective impoliteness, and entertaining impoliteness. The result showed that the commenter demonstrated the expression of wrath and dissatisfaction. The advantages of using online communication and ability to exercise their power even though they were in a lower social status also contributed to the emergence of impolite act. But, the lack of feedback from the target regarding the impolite comment on his Instagram post make this study less detailed. In short, it is recommended to investigate more comprehensively the impoliteness strategies in a case where the target showed clear response toward the impoliteness act.

Keywords: Impoliteness Strategies, Instagram, Comment section

1. Introduction

People nowadays communicate with one another via social media. Individuals and groups who link to the internet world to seek information about their relatives, friends and the broader public are affected by social media information (Mageto, 2019). One of the world's most popular social media platforms that has a great popularity among people who want to communicate with others is Instagram. This application mostly used by public figure such as politician to share their daily activity by posted a photo and video on their pages so that politician will keep their connected with their supporters and get easily to promote their up and coming event or campaign. Due to the "social" nature of social media platforms, followers might prefer more intimate content from politicians and expect them to communicate and share aspects of their daily lives more like an everyday person than like a politician (Bene, 2017). Despite the positive effect of Instagram that have greatly helped politician in many ways, it cannot be denied that there is also a negative effects of this platform which often affect politicians' fame.

Because of there are not any filters or rules to control how people express their thought in this platform, people can freely use their language in their comment and they can decide which language that they want to use either polite or impolite. Normally, people will choose their words wisely and use polite language when they communicated to one another especially with famous figures and they are not directly say what is on their mind to avoid disapproval or punishment. Being polite is an important thing to do because it allows us to form positive social relationships with others, which can lead to career opportunities and friendships. As a result, Politeness phenomena has gotten a lot of

attention in social interactions. However, Impoliteness, the polar opposite of politeness, has gotten as much attention as politeness and it has become more common in today's social interaction (Laitinen, 2010).

2. Literature Review

Impoliteness has been studied in a number of situations and media including television shows and social activities. Impoliteness type of behavior can be found not only in real life but also in social media refer to Yulifar (2020) which he conducted study of the type of impoliteness strategies that found dominantly and the conventional form of impoliteness in Dailymail's comments. From the previous study, there is no study yet about impoliteness strategies in Joe Biden's Instagram comment section and what are the function of impoliteness used by commenters in Joe Biden's Instagram post. The researcher chooses Joe Biden as the subject of the study. He is the current president of United States, in office since January 21, 2021. Biden has been criticized for making disparaging remarks about women's physical appearance on the campaign trail and for hesitating to express regret for his actions. Many of Biden's campaign promises have yet to be fulfilled, including police reform, immigration, voting rights, a federal minimum wage increase, and the elimination of the filibuster. He did manage to get out of Afghanistan, but in a manner that most Americans regarded as inept and humiliating. To make matters worse, the economy appears to be stagnating and inflation is threatening to spiral out of control.

Considering the negative comments in politicians' Instagram causes the emergence of impoliteness act. Bousfield (2008) state that impoliteness is an act which consciously planned and aimed to attack somebody's identity or rights. In addition, Culpeper (2011) propose impoliteness as negative attitude towards specific behaviours occurring in specific contexts and this behaviour always have emotional consequences or presumed to cause offence.

This study aims to investigate the types of impoliteness strategies used by commenters on Joe Biden's Instagram. The researcher used the theory proposed by Culpeper (2005) namely Bald on record impoliteness, Positive impoliteness, Negative impoliteness, Off-record impoliteness, and Withhold impoliteness.

Based on the explanation above, this impoliteness study is noteworthy to be conducted concerning the various events that occurred lately due to the news of impoliteness causing problems in community especially when Indonesian citizen ranks below the level of media courtesy particularly social media in East Asia based on result of Digital Civility Index survey which released by Microsoft at the beginning of 2021. As we can see that language impoliteness occur in many aspect of life, one of the example is in social networking site like Instagram. Thus, It is important to student to increase their awareness of this social phenomenon so that they can be careful when to say something unless they will cause a problem and they also know how to overcome this situation when its occur in order to achieve or maintain good relationship.

3. Method

The design will be utilized by using descriptive approach. This kind of approach is appropriate with the purpose of the study itself, which is analysing the impoliteness strategies used by commenters in President Joe Biden's Instagram post. In accordance to Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun (2015) qualitative research is the research procedure that focusing on exploring a problem and developing detailed understanding of a central phenomenon.

The data of this study were taken from Joe Biden's Instagram comment section. So, the data would be comments made by Instagram users which contain impoliteness in the form of words, phrases, and sentences. The researcher selected the latest 500 comments from Joe Biden's Instagram post which has the most comment beside other posts. Moreover, the data were gathered by using documentary technique, in which only the data that support research question are taken.

After collecting the data, the writer will be analyzed the data based on interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) with three concurrent flows of activity: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The result of data analysis will interpreted as the data source. In this study, the researcher applied investigator triangulation to establish the validity and reliability of findings greatly in order to reduce bias in data collection, reporting, and analysis.

4. Results

The Types of Impoliteness Strategies

To analyze the types of impoliteness strategies in Joe Biden's Instagram comment section the theory of Culpeper (2005) was used. According to the theory, there are 5 types of impoliteness strategies such as bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, off-record impoliteness, and withhold impoliteness.

Based on the findings, there are only 4 types of impoliteness strategies that found in Joe Biden's Instagram comment section which are Bald on Record impoliteness, Positive Impoliteness, Negative Impoliteness, and Off-Record impoliteness. Meanwhile, Withhold impoliteness was not found in Joe Biden's Instagram comment section.

A. Bald on Record Impoliteness

This type of impoliteness is the most straightforward in addressing impoliteness to the face of hearer. As Culpeper (2005) states that Bald on Record impoliteness is done when speaker performed face threatening acts (FTAs) to speech partner directly, clearly, unambiguously, and concisely intend to ruin hearer's face in contexts where face is relevant and maximised.

It was found that Bald on Record Impoliteness occurred in Joe Biden's Instagram comment section as can be seen in the following :

- Datum 1
041/CIG41 : You are the biggest joke in American history (Appendix 1)
The data above presented that commenters straightly attack the face of the addressee which considered as a Bald on Record Impoliteness. The utterance "You are the biggest joke in American history" intelligibly directed that Joe Biden does not deserve the president position which the commenter even assume that he is the biggest joke in american history. If you say that someone is joke, it means that you wanted to show how ridiculous that person is and they are not worth to be respected. Therefore, this comment can be regarded as impolite behavior as involved in Bald on Record Impoliteness.
- Datum 2
024/CIG24 : Hey Mr. Biden, you've made this country very sad with your vior. I hope you get IMPEACHED by next year.
From the data above we can see that the commenter was delivered in a clear, unambiguous and direct way to damage the face of Joe Biden. This comment is consider as Bald on Record impoliteness because the commenter insult the addressee which is Joe Biden by saying that he has stupid and idiotic behavior. The commenter used the word "stupid" and "idiot" to indicates the lack of good

judgment or intelligence, inability to perceive, and learn which done by Biden in taking a decision or action for the country. So that, it makes the commenter get upset and hoping that he will get impeached the next year.

- Datum 3
033/CIG33 : Shut up honestly
From the data above, it is clear that this comment belongs to Bald on Record Impoliteness. Where the commenter directly insult Joe Biden by asking him to be silent but in inappropriate way. Therefore, the commenter do not try to save Joe Biden's face and refuse to maintain a good relation with him.

B. Positive Impoliteness

This strategy is designed to damage the hearer's positive face, the desire to be appreciated or approved by other people (Culpeper, 2005). There are many substrategies within this strategies, such as ignore the other, exclude the other from an activity, be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic, use inappropriate identity markers, use obscure or secretive language, seek disagreement, use taboo words, and use derogatory remarks.

Some of the following expressions this strategy found in the Joe Biden's Instagram comment section will be discussed below:

- Datum 1
052/CIG52 : It's called a dictatorship you baboon.
Based on the data above, it can be seen that this comment is one form of Positive Impoliteness. The utterance "you baboon" used by commenter is the example of used inappropriate identity marker to mention Joe Biden which is considered rude to say those words to politician. As we know that people have an identification labels as human which has logic and great intellectual brain that distinguish human and animal. So that, when the commenter use the word "baboon" to express that Biden has done something stupid and behaves in a way that makes others think he is as fool as an animal like baboon clearly showed that it might ruined Biden identity's marker as human and politician.
- Datum 2
041/CIG41 : We want Trump!
As seen in the data above, this comment can be categorized as Positive Impoliteness. The utterance "We want Trump!" explicitly showed that the commenter is attacking the face of Joe Biden by snub and ignore his presence as a new president of the United State of America where the commenter prefer Trump than him. Moreover, the commenter expressing his/her disagreement by mentioning the name of Trump who is rival of Biden in the election. It is consider as impolite since that comment indicates a negative expression toward the result of the election. However, mentioning someone's name is not always impolite but it is depend on the context of communication.
- Datum 3
046/CIG46 : What A BAD DAY FOR THE USA..
From the data above, it can be seen that this comment is considered as Positive Impoliteness. The utterance "What A BAD DAY FOR THE USA.."showed that the commenter expressed the disagreement to the caption which written by Joe Biden on his post where he declared that his appointment day was a new day of America. But, in the opposite the commenter said that it was a bad day for the

USA. In this case, seeking disagreement is one form of Positive Impoliteness strategy.

C. Negative Impoliteness

This strategy is designed to damaged the addressee negative face wants. According to Culpeper (2005), negative impoliteness has substrategies such as frighten, condescend, scorn or ridicule, be contemptuous, do not treat others seriously, underestimated the other, invade the hearer's space either literally or metaphorically and interconnect other with a negative aspect in explicitly way.

Some examples of negative impoliteness that were found in Joe Biden' instagram section is shown below:

- Datum 1
027/CIG27 : You actually post this. What a disgrace. America was not even allowed to participate. You put up razor wire & armed troops to keep us out. You & Your nasty Facist Party are the worst thing to happen to The World in The 21st Century
Based on the data above, it can be seen that this comment considered as Negative Impoliteness because the commenter expressed his/her dissapointment toward Joe Biden's action by saying "What a disgrace" which this remark is insulted and condescends the addressee who is Joe Biden in explicit way. The commenter assumed that Biden should not post something about his inauguration day because it is like a shame of America so it is not supposed to be celebrate.
- Datum 2
034/CIG34 : Where are the people? 80 million votes but 1,000- 2,000 people show up. Lol
Based on the data above, it was found that the commenter applied Negative Impoliteness. This utterance "Where are the people? 80 million votes but 1,000-2,000 people show up. Lol" was intentionally written to make fun of Joe Biden's inauguration, it might be caused by his inauguration which have least supporter show up than it should be. Moreover, the commenter used an abbreviation "Lol" or Laughing out loud which is an expression of laughing and also used to mock someone.
- Datum 3
084/CIG84 : Joe is a joke and not well, Really people? How can anyone support this guy and his sidekick?
Based on the data above, we can see that this comment is one example of Negative Impoliteness. In this case, the commenter wanted to damage Joe Biden's face by asking his ability and why many people support him and his administrator. However, both candidates of the election must have great qualification to become a president so it is not appropriate to say that someone is a joke or unable to lead a country. Furthermore, the commenter belittled Joe Biden which this statement remarks as Impoliteness behavior.

D. Off-Record Impoliteness

This strategy is performed by the use of remarks which candidly mean the opposite of what they say, and which are made in order to hurt someone's feelings or to criticize

something in either serious or humorous way. The examples of Off-Record Impoliteness will be discussed below:

- Datum 1

081/CIG81 : Hey Joe, your village called and they want you to come home!!

The data above showed that the commenter expressed Off-Record Impoliteness. It can be seen that the commenter annoyingly joking by saying “Hey Joe, your village called and they want you to come home!!” where this utterance does not directly state the real meaning, but the commenter tried to shown that Joe Biden should retire from his position and go back home.

- Datum 2

029/CIG29 : New day for massive fuel price increases. Thanks, Sloppy Joe.

The data above presented that the commenter’s purposes is to damage Joe Biden’s face using Off-record Impoliteness. We can see that the commenter complaining about the massive increase of fuel price and the commenter be grateful for that by saying “Thanks, Sloppy Joe.” but mean insult Joe Biden.

- Datum 3

002/CIG2 : ur so funny

The data above showed that the commenter used Off-record Impoliteness to attack the face of Joe Biden. The utterance “ur so funny” does not directly state the real meaning. However, the commenter insincerely gives praise to Joe Biden but indirectly make fun of him.

E. Withhold Politeness

This strategy occur when there is no politeness work from the speaker in a situation it must be shown. In this findings, this strategy was not found in Joe Biden’s Instagram comment section. It might be caused this strategy can only be used in face-to-face interaction. Since the data are comments from Instagram, so Withhold Politeness could not be performed.

The function of Impoliteness Used by The Commenter in Joe Biden’s Instagram comment section

To analyze the function of impoliteness used by commenters in Joe Biden’s Instagram comment section the theory of Culpeper (2011) was used. Culpeper argues in his up-to-date book, *Impoliteness: Using language to cause offence* (2011), that Affective Impoliteness, Coercive Impoliteness, Entertaining Impoliteness are three distinct functional forms of impoliteness events.

Based on the findings, there were 40 comments that used coercive impoliteness which people are exercising their power to risk target’s retaliation for future cost by utilize the freedom of action. The second function is affective impoliteness by 37 comments which people are delivering their emotion of anger by cursing and throwing severed comment in context where they are not supposed to say. And the last function which is entertaining impoliteness was found by 15 comments in Joe Biden’s Instagram comment section which people are just trying to amuse other people by commenting in a sarcasm way.

A. Affection Impoliteness

Affective Impoliteness, according to Culpeper (2011), is the function of impoliteness that causes elevated emotions such as rage, with the inference that the target is to fault for the poor emotional state. The example is demonstrated below:

- Datum024/CIG24 : Hey Mr. Biden, you've made this country very sad with your stupid and idiotic behavior. I hope you get IMPEACHED by next year.

The utterance showed that the commenter expressed his/her anger toward Joe Biden by blaming his behavior which make the country distressed and the commenter also expect that Joe Biden will get fired soon. Furthermore, this comment conventionalizes impoliteness insults and this leads to create a negative value which clearly showed that this utterance visualize affective impoliteness.

B. Coercive Impoliteness

Coercive Impoliteness is form of impoliteness which more prevalent in situations where the speaker is more capable and has a greater social position than the hearer, and thus the speaker gets a profile at the expense of the hearer's face needs Culpeper (2011). This function entails coercion, which is defined as an activity that attempts to damage others by imposing a will or agreement. The example of this function of impoliteness is shown below:

- Datum013/CIG13: We want Trump!

The utterance above implied that the commenter want Trump to be chosen as the president instead of Joe Biden. Furthermore, this action can be considered as coercive impoliteness because the commenter is imposes his/her will as a citizen of America.

C. Entertaining Impoliteness

This type of function involves exploiting targets and causing others to be entertained, as well as any other impoliteness a victim or potential victim is always required (Culpeper, 2011). Although immodesty tends to offend or enrage people, it can also be amusing. In addition, impoliteness can equitably distributed for a target audience that is extremely attentive and can entertain the audience. The example of this function is shown as the following below:

- Datum043/CIG43: Grandpa has dementia, please go to hospital

The purpose of the utterance above clearly was to insult Joe Biden by poking fun of his condition where the commenter said that Joe Biden should go to hospital because he is already old so that he has a dementia.

5. Discussion

The Suitability Between Strategies and Function of Impoliteness on Joe Biden's Instagram Comment Section. Most people who comment on Biden's post wanted to be approved by other people in this case is Biden through display disagreement when expressing their disagreements, when it is not suitable for their feelings and also including addressing him with incorrect identity markers, disparaging his capacity, and mocking his age. As Culpeper (2005) expresses that neglecting or snubbing others, excluding someone from an activity for no reason, being disinterested, using inappropriate identity markers, causing disagreement, making use of taboo words, and call the other names are the examples of positive impoliteness strategy. It is the opposite of what research done by Mahrani (2017) who showed that mostly people express negative impoliteness by condescend, scorn or ridicule, invade the hearer's space either literally or metaphorically and interconnect other with a negative aspect in explicitly way.

Furthermore, all impoliteness has general function of reinforcing or opposing specific identities, interpersonal relationships, social norms and /or ideologies. Based on the findings, four strategies that found in Biden's Instagram comment section strategy has

associated with all of the function of impoliteness which are affective, coercive and entertaining impoliteness in context of insulting others. For example, coercive impoliteness which aimed to damage others by imposing a will or agreement in order to get a tangible benefits from the target's compliance where this act is pretty harmless in a short term but more in the future, where it is similar with positive impoliteness strategy that has the same purpose. In addition, both strategies and functions have the same characteristics which people are most likely swearing a lot on their comment.

Power Within Impoliteness Comment on Joe Biden Instagram Comment Section. To complete the analysis, this study also elaborates the power within impoliteness comment which performed by commenters on Joe Biden's Instagram comment section. A person, organization, or country with power has control over others, usually due to their wealth, status or great military strength. However, in this case the commenters which are the citizen of America exercising their power over Biden by utilizing the freedom of action as an social media users through commenting on his post in Instagram so that their opinion could be seen and being responded. According to Culpeper, Power is very dynamic, fluid, and negotiable, rather than being static. As many examples have proved, even interactants with a lower hierarchical standing might and do exercise power through impoliteness. Joe Biden as the president of United State of America which country that embracing democracy can be deposed by people or civil society because they bear the biggest responsibility in democratic system. As Lincoln stated that democracy is the rule of people by people for the people. People with higher status may choose not to exercise power over people with lower status on several occasions, whilst people with lower status may choose to wield power over people with higher status (Locher, 2004). Because of society's ideas, the exercise of power implies a latent conflict and clash of interest. In this case, people expressed their dissatisfaction or something that is not like what they want through social media like Instagram because of several benefits that offer by this application like anonymity, ease to access, and so on.

This feature of online communication has enabled netizens to write aggressively online comments, which are frequently filled with emotive and uncivil remarks (Anderson 2012; Neurauter-Kessels 2011; Santana 2014). As a result, people utilize this opportunity to complain about a policy in order to force their will or agreement but in an impolite way and they are also insulting someone's face because by using insult the dominant group might have social objects upon which to project their unacceptable feelings and desires.

Moreover, the commenters used their power to convey a various kind of impolite comment and also criticize every Biden's action either in economy or military sectors. They even do cursing to emphasize their opinion which this unrestrained expression of emotion is not supposed to be delivered in this context. Even though cursing is most strongly associated with the feeling of anger, but it should be noted that anger is a continuum that ranges from reflexive and automatic responses to purposeful and controlled expressions (Jay, 2008). The emergence of impoliteness within comment section of Joe Biden's post contain many emotional states, these states go through a cognitive appraisal process, in which the person analyzes what happened, why it happened, how angry he or she is, what actions are feasible, and so on. In short, people would likely to be impolite once they got disturbed by other people no matter who they were especially when he or she has a power.

From the discussion above, this research has elaborations that are comparable to the previous study on how impoliteness in written language might be investigated by numerous persons through online conversation such as in Instagram. Furthermore, it

emphasizes that the study of impoliteness has the potential to open up new insights on identity development, language style, and other communication-related issues.

6. Conclusions

The conclusions of this study are as follows: There were five type of impoliteness strategies proposed by Culpeper (2005), it was found four impoliteness strategies used by commenters on Joe Biden's Instagram comment section, namely which are Positive Impoliteness, Bald on Record Impoliteness, Negative Impoliteness, and Off-record Impoliteness. However, withhold impoliteness could not be performed because this type of impoliteness commonly found in spoken communication. Moreover, after analyzing the data the writer found that there is suitability between strategies and functions of impoliteness in context of insulting others. The result showed that there are various functions of impoliteness that performed by people on Biden's Instagram comment section which are coercive impoliteness where they were conveyed their opinion to exercise their power as the majority group purposefully to make Joe Biden's image fall down, affective impoliteness where they were expressing their emotion especially anger because of disagreement, and entertaining impoliteness where they wanted to both amuse others and mocking Biden by throwing a joke or sarcasm comment.

7. Suggestion

The suggestions of this study are as follows: English teachers or lecturers can used this study as an authentic material for teaching linguistics especially about pragmatics. The lecturer should also explain about another social phenomenon that has similar terms as impoliteness such as rudeness, verbal aggression, and verbal abuse; in order to get fully understand about this communicative behavior. can be used as a reference in studying linguistics, particularly pragmatics and, more specifically, varieties of impoliteness utilized by Instagram commenters. The researcher realizes several weaknesses in this study, apart from the limited time and facilities, researchers also do not realized that the the choosen subject did not really qualified for the research based on the theory that being applied so this study is less detailed than other study and also the researcher was not give enough explanation about the reason of choosing this topic. So, it is recommended for the next researcher to choose the subject of the study more accurate where the subject is someone relevant to the research or someone that will taking serious action of the impoliteness phenomenon and clearly describe why the study is worth to conduct.

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