

## ANALYSIS OF POLITENESS IN JOKO WIDODO'S INSTAGRAM COMMENT COLUMN

**Nisa Angelina Silitonga**  
Universitas Negeri Medan

**Selly Febian Sitompul**  
Universitas Negeri Medan

**Sonya Pasaribu \*1**  
Universitas Negeri Medan  
[sonyapasaribu2020@gmail.com](mailto:sonyapasaribu2020@gmail.com)

**Sonya Steffy Silitonga**  
Universitas Negeri Medan

**Muhammad Natsir**  
Universitas Negeri Medan

### **Abstract**

*This research analysis politeness strategies in Joko Widodo's Instagram comment column using Brown and Levinson's theory. In the era of social media such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, virtual communication exhibits both transactional and interactional functions of language, where the absence of face-to-face communication directly influences participants' language behaviour. This research aims to describe the use of language politeness strategies in virtual interactions. The research method used is qualitative with data collection techniques through observation and recording comments on Joko Widodo's Instagram account. The findings reveal the use of various politeness strategies, including positive politeness, negative politeness, bald-on record, and bald-off record strategies. Specifically, the analysis of 1,631 comments showed that 6,2% of the comments used positive politeness strategies, 7,7% used negative politeness strategies, 60% used bald-on-record strategies, and 26,1% used off-record strategies. Social factors influencing the choice of these strategies were also identified, underscoring the critical role of politeness in maintaining social harmony and respecting interpersonal relationships in online communication.*

**Keywords:** *Politeness, Interpersonal, Virtual.*

### **Introduction**

Nowadays, the presence of social networking media, such as: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Whatsapp, and others, is a reflection of people's need to be able to obtain various types of information quickly and accurately and establish long-distance or virtual communication. The two characteristics above show the

---

<sup>1</sup> Correspondence author

transactional and interactional functions of language. The characteristics of virtual communication that prevent speech participants from meeting face to face directly impact how speech is produced and interpreted. This will influence the speaker's language behaviour, such as the language politeness of the speech participant.

This virtual communication process will also have a special conversational style. In contrast to the face-to-face conversation style, this media provides more freedom to express ideas, opinions and feelings of speech participants. Like face-to-face communication, virtual communication also involves verbal media (such as jokes, empathy, suggestions, etc.) and visual media (such as smiles) (Yus, 2014). The absence of face-to-face media can reduce the speaker's efforts to pay attention to the face of each interlocutor. In other words, the principles of language politeness in virtual communication are very important.

This article was written to analyze how the principles of politeness apply in Instagram social media in certain groups of society. The research in this article focuses on the interactions that occur between Instagram managers and users. So, the aim of the research is to be able to describe the use of language politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987) in virtual communication media.

As a result, the following issues might be discussed in the context of language learning research:

- 1) What language strategy dominates online interaction on social media platforms?
- 2) What is the language strategy used in online interactions on social media platforms?

## **Methodology**

This research is research using qualitative methods. Qualitative data is in the form of a collection of written or spoken words from language users, where in the context of this research, oral interactions are intertwined in written form in social media interactions. In the qualitative data research procedure, this research also uses descriptive methods in the form of analytical explanations of groups of words used in certain contexts or discourses. According to John W. Creswell (2013) *Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, Creswell defines qualitative data as data collected in the form of words (interviews), images (photographs), or artifacts (objects) that are used to understand complex phenomena. According to Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (2011) they describe qualitative data as detailed, thick descriptions of participants' perspectives and experiences, emphasizing the meanings and interpretations that individuals ascribe to their social world. According to Michael Quinn Patton (2002), Patton describes qualitative data as information that is rich in context, often gathered through open-ended interviews, direct observation, and written documents, which helps to understand the depth and complexity of social phenomena. And According to Robert K. Yin (2014) Yin highlights that qualitative data

includes detailed descriptions of cases, interviews, documents, and observations, aiming to explore and understand the context and meaning of real-life events.

Data collection techniques used include: listening techniques and note-taking methods. The listening technique is used in data collection which is carried out by listening or observing the use of language politeness. Meanwhile, the note-taking technique is a data collection technique by grouping and recording data. Thus, the note-taking technique functions as a complement to data collection techniques so that adequate data is found for further analysis based on language politeness theory.

## Findings and Discussion



Data collection is based on written interactions in the form of comments between President Joko Widodo's Instagram and other Instagram users. The choice of data boundaries in the form of interactions is based on the speaker's consideration of the speaker's and interlocutor's face-saving efforts. Based on the considerations above, this research uses the universal theory of language politeness and social variables proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). In the data analysis stage, data grouping will be presented based on types of language politeness strategies. This is based on

differences in the level of language politeness that can be used by speakers and interlocutors.

### Findings

This section presents a descriptive part of data collection obtained from comments on President Jokowi's Instagram. Comments are divided into 4 parts according to Brown and Levinson's politeness theory.

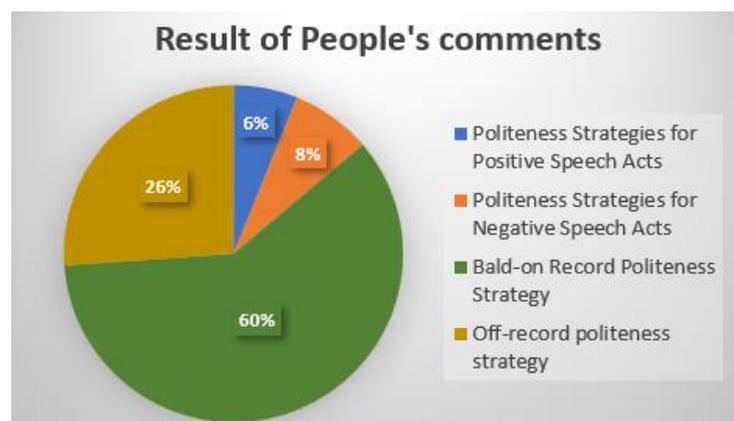
The data was analyzed qualitatively with analytical techniques using Brown and Levinson's politeness theory which consists of 4 parts, namely: politeness strategies for positive speech acts, politeness strategies for negative speech acts, bald-on record strategy, off-record politeness strategy. All data obtained from 1,631 comments has been calculated and presented below:

**Table 1. Result of Student's Comments**

No.	Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategy	Number of Comments	Percentage
1.	Politeness Strategies for Positive Speech Acts	100	6,2%
2.	Politeness Strategies for Negative Speech Acts	125	7,7%
3.	Bald-on Record Politeness Strategy	980	60%
4.	Off-record politeness strategy	426	26,1%

From the table above you can see the results from the comments column. The number of statements above was calculated from all comments from people on President Jokowi's Instagram. From this post, the number of comments is 1631, there are 100 comments showing politeness strategies for positive speech acts, 125 comments showing politeness strategies for negative speech acts, 980 comments showing bald-on record politeness strategy, and 426 comments showing off-record politeness strategy. Below is a graph of the total accumulation of people's comments as in the table above:

**Figure 2. The Result of People's Comments in Percentages**



## Discussion

Through data analysis, various negative and positive speech act strategies were found in the form of directives uttered by the research object. The following is a description of the data analysis.

### 1) Politeness Strategies for Positive Speech Acts

This strategy focuses on people's need to feel valued and accepted. Users of this strategy seek to strengthen relationships and show solidarity and support.

## Data



**renopradana's comment** "The best president lights up Mr. @jokowi"

**via\_lovliee's comment** "The best president"

## Analysis

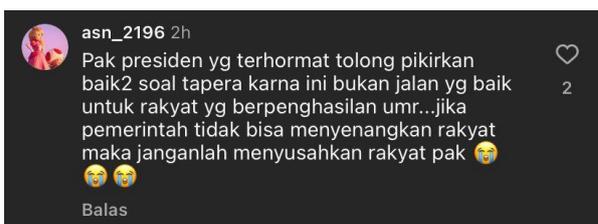
In the data above, the speaker intends to give praise and appreciation to the President. The speaker conveyed a short but strong comment, "the best president," which contained high appreciation for the President's leadership.

This data speech event suggests a positive speech act politeness strategy because it is in accordance with positive speech acts according to Brown and Levinson, namely that the speaker tries to strengthen social relations by giving praise and showing solidarity and warmth to the person he is speaking to.

### 2. Politeness Strategies for Negative Speech Acts

This strategy is used to avoid imposing will on others and to respect their freedom and autonomy. Users of this strategy try not to disturb or burden the person they are talking to.

## Data



**asn\_2196'comment** "Mr. honorable president please think well about tapera because this is not a good way for people who earn umr ... if the government cannot please the people then do not trouble the people sir"

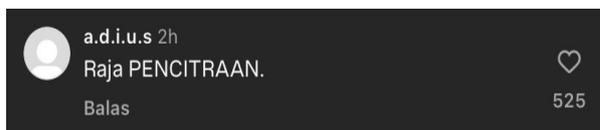
### Analysis

In the data above, the speaker intends to convey criticism and requests to the President regarding the Tapera (Public Housing Savings) policy. The speaker tries to convey that this policy is not beneficial for people who earn UMR (Regional Minimum Wage). This comment suggests a politeness strategy of negative speech acts because the speaker tries to reduce pressure and pay respect to the President. This is in accordance with negative speech acts according to Brown and Levinson, where speakers use more subtle and polite language to show appreciation and reduce tension.

### 3. Bald-on Record Strategy

This strategy is used to convey requests or orders directly and clearly, usually in situations where hierarchical relationships are clear or there is an urgent need.

#### Data



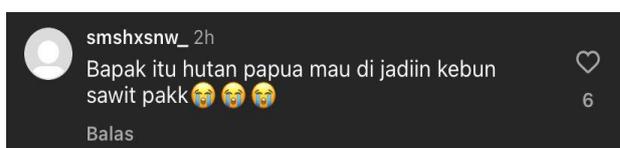
### Analysis

In the data above, the speaker intends to convey direct criticism to the individual who is referred to as the "image king". The speaker uses this term to allege that the individual is more focused on public image than real or substantial actions. This is in accordance with the bald-on-record speech act according to Brown and Levinson, where the speaker does not try to protect the interlocutor's face and wants to convey the message firmly and clearly.

### 4. Bald-Off Record politeness strategy

This strategy is used to convey requests or suggestions indirectly, so that listeners can draw their own conclusions about the speaker's intentions.

#### Data



**Smshxsnw\_ comment** "Sir, the forest in Papua wants to be turned into a palm oil plantation, Sir "

## **Analysis**

In the data above, the speaker intends to convey concerns or criticism indirectly to the individual referred to as "father". The speaker uses this statement to show his disagreement or concern with the plan to convert Papuan forests into oil palm plantations. This comment indicates an off-record strategy because the speaker conveys concern or criticism indirectly and covertly. This is in accordance with off-record speech acts according to Brown and Levinson, where speakers use indirect language to avoid direct confrontation and protect the face of the interlocutor.

From the data analysis carried out, it was found that various politeness speech act strategies were used in comments on President Joko Widodo's Instagram account. Positive politeness strategies aim to strengthen social relations by giving praise and showing solidarity, such as comments praising the President's leadership. Negative politeness strategies are used to avoid coercion and respect other people's freedom, such as criticism of Tapera policies conveyed in smooth and polite language. The bald-on record strategy is used to convey criticism directly and forcefully, such as accusations that individuals are more focused on public image than actual actions. Meanwhile, the off-record strategy is used to convey criticism indirectly, such as concerns about plans to convert Papuan forests into oil palm plantations. In conclusion, in online communication, polite language strategies are very important to maintain social harmony and respect interpersonal relationships, with the choice of strategy influenced by social factors and the context of interaction.

The strategy that dominates is the bald-on record strategy. As in the example above, there are lots of malicious comments that are made openly. This bald-on-the-record strategy is often used by individuals who may not consider the impact or consequences of their words before posting them. These comments tend to be direct and to the point, with no attempt to soften their statements. In the context of social media, especially on President Joko Widodo's Instagram account, many malicious comments are expressed openly without any filter or effort to maintain politeness. This phenomenon shows how social media platforms can facilitate more direct communication, which sometimes bypasses the norms of politeness that are usually maintained in face-to-face interactions.

## **Conclusion**

The article "Analysis of Politeness in Joko Widodo's Instagram Comment Column According to Brown and Levinson's Theory" explores the application of politeness strategies in Instagram comments on President Joko Widodo's posts. Utilizing Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, the study categorizes interactions based on the type of politeness strategy employed: positive politeness, negative politeness, bald-on record, and off-record. The findings reveal how different social factors influence language use in virtual communication, highlighting the unique conversational style of

social media. The study emphasizes the importance of politeness in maintaining social harmony and respecting interpersonal relationships in online interactions.

## REFERENCES

- Adelia, D. & Mayong. (2022). Krisis Kesantunan Berbahasa dalam Kolom Komentar Media Sosial Tiktok. *Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajaran*. 1 (1), 1-9.
- Cahyani, I., Wayan, I. (2021). Kesantunan pada Kolom Komentar Warganet di Instagram. *Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya*. 6 (1), 1-15.
- Dwihanna, A. & Assidik, G. (2024). Fenomena Pelanggaran Kesantunan Berbahasa pada Komentar Akun Twitter @kikysaputri. *Jurnal Onoma: Pendidikan, Bahasa dan Sastra*. 10 (1), 1-13.
- Fallianda. (2018). Kesantunan Berbahasa Pengguna Media Sosial Instagram: Kajian Sosiopragmatik. *Etnolingual*. 2 (1), 1-20.
- Kusumaswarih & Ken Kartika. 2018. Strategi kesantunan berbahasa dalam pembelajaran bahasa Indonesia. *Jurnal Belajar Bahasa*. 3 (2), 141-149.
- Mawaddah, Nur Anisa & Fitriani, Nurul. 2021. strategi kesantunan tindak tutur positif dan negatif oleh karakter di film “Let It Snow” (2019). *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*. 4 (1), 1-4.
- Mulyana, N. (2021). Politeness Strategies on Instagram: A Cyber Pragmatics Perspective. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Linguistik dan Sastra*. 1-7.
- Salsabil, R. D., Ningsih, R. (2023). Kesantunan Berbahasa Warganet dalam Kolom Komentar Instagram @Jokowi. *Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya*. 10 (1), 1-11.
- Seda, K. A., Gunawan, W. & Muniroh, R. (2023). Realisasi Strategi Kesantunan Positif dan Kesantunan Negatif pada Podcast Youtube. *Jurnal Ilmiah Wahana Pendidikan*. 9 (15), 259-267.
- Sudaryat, Y., Widyastuti, T., Hernawan. (2020). *Politeness on the Social Media*. Atlantis Press. 509, 1-7.
- Wiranty, W., Ramaniyar, E. (2023). Strategi Kesantunan Brown and Levinson pada Tidak Tutur Bahasa Melayu Pontianak Kajian Pragmatik. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa*. 12 (1), 1-14.