

Impoliteness Strategies In The “Bocor Alus” Podcast On Tempo Youtube Channel

Lulu Laelatul Fadilah¹

Diki Rijki²

Cecep Agus³

¹²³ Institut Prima Bangsa

Corresponding Author

Lulu Laelatul Fadilah

lululaelatulfdlhh@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examines the use of impoliteness strategies in political discourse as manifested in the *Bocor Alus Politik* podcast episode discussing government responses to floods and landslides in Sumatra. Grounded in pragmatic theory, particularly Culpeper's impoliteness framework, the research aims to identify dominant impoliteness strategies and explain their communicative functions. Using qualitative descriptive analysis, thirty utterances were selected and categorized based on Culpeper's typology, including positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, bald on record impoliteness, and sarcasm or mock politeness. The findings reveal that positive impoliteness is the most frequently employed strategy, primarily used to criticize government performance, credibility, and policy priorities. These impoliteness strategies function as tools for accountability, ideological positioning, and public persuasion. This study highlights how impoliteness operates as a strategic resource in political media discourse to challenge authority and shape public opinion.

Keywords: *impoliteness; political discourse; pragmatics; podcast; Culpeper*

Introduction

Political discourse often involves language that exceeds conventional politeness norms, particularly when speakers address issues of power, responsibility, and public accountability. In media-based political discussions, impoliteness is frequently employed as a strategic linguistic resource to criticize authorities, expose institutional failures, and challenge dominant narratives. Rather than functioning as mere emotional outbursts, impoliteness in political contexts serves deliberate pragmatic purposes related to persuasion, resistance, and moral positioning. Within pragmatics, impoliteness is theorized as communicative behavior intended to attack the hearer's face (Culpeper, 1996). In political communication, such face-threatening acts often target governments, officials, and corporations as representatives of institutional power. However, while impoliteness has been widely examined across various discourse domains, its role in Indonesian political podcast discourse, particularly in discussions of environmental disasters, and it remains underexplored.

Previous research on impoliteness has extensively applied Culpeper's framework across diverse contexts. (Afriana et al., 2024) examined negative impoliteness in a pro-life event, demonstrating how confrontational language functions to reinforce ideological conflict. Similarly, (Saad et al., 2020) analyzed impoliteness strategies in Donald Trump's tweets, highlighting how impoliteness is used strategically in political communication to assert dominance and provoke audiences. Several studies have focused on impoliteness in educational and instructional settings. (Erlinda, 2022) and (Triyono et al., 2025)

explored teachers' and students' impoliteness strategies in classroom and technology-assisted learning contexts, revealing how impoliteness may function as corrective, authoritative, or relational behavior. (Rahmawati et al., 2021) further investigated impoliteness in directive speech acts within online Indonesian language learning, emphasizing pragmatic intention rather than emotional expression. Impoliteness has also been examined in fictional and media narratives. (Theresia & Nisa, 2024), (Simanjuntak & Ambalegin, 2022), and analyzed impoliteness strategies in movies, focusing on characterization, gender differences, and narrative conflict. Additionally, (Junaidi et al., 2024) investigated impoliteness in Instagram information accounts, illustrating how impoliteness is utilized in digital media to attract engagement and assert authority.

Although previous studies have successfully demonstrated the versatility of impoliteness strategies across political events, classrooms, films, social media, and instructional discourse, several limitations remain. First, most political impoliteness studies focus on formal political actors or scripted platforms such as speeches, tweets, or public events, while spontaneous political discussions in podcast formats receive little scholarly attention. Second, Indonesian political podcasts particularly those addressing environmental disasters, they are rarely examined despite their growing influence on public opinion. Moreover, existing studies tend to analyze impoliteness either as a linguistic phenomenon or as a narrative device, without sufficiently linking impoliteness strategies to accountability discourse and environmental responsibility. As a result, the pragmatic function of impoliteness in reframing disaster narratives from "natural" to "human-caused" remains insufficiently explored.

Based on the identified gap, this study investigates impoliteness strategies used in the Bocor Alus Politik podcast episode discussing floods and landslides in Sumatra. The research is guided by the following questions: (1) What types of impoliteness strategies are employed in the podcast? and (2) How do these strategies function pragmatically in criticizing government performance and shaping audience perception? Accordingly, this study aims to identify dominant impoliteness strategies and explain their communicative functions within Indonesian political podcast discourse. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on Indonesian political podcasts as a site of impoliteness performance, particularly in the context of environmental disaster discourse. Unlike previous studies, this research links impoliteness strategies to accountability construction and the rejection of natural-disaster narratives, demonstrating how impoliteness operates as a deliberate rhetorical tool to challenge institutional power and influence public interpretation.

Method

This study was designed using a qualitative descriptive approach by Cress Well, which is suitable for addressing research questions concerning the identification and pragmatic function of impoliteness strategies in political discourse. According to Creswell, qualitative research emphasizes the exploration and interpretation of meaning derived from participants' expressions within their natural contexts (Creswell W John, 2014). This design allows the researcher to examine how impoliteness is intentionally constructed and employed in spoken political media. Because the study focuses on meaning, intention, and contextual interpretation rather than numerical measurement, the qualitative approach adequately supports the objectives of analyzing the types and functions of impoliteness strategies.

The subject of this research consists of verbal utterances produced by speakers in the *Bocor Alus Politik* podcast episode titled *Kegagapan Pemerintah dan Penyebab Banjir dan*

Longsor di Sumatera. The data comprise thirty selected utterances that contain face-threatening acts directed toward political actors, including the government, state officials, corporations, and policymakers. The sampling was purposive, as the utterances were chosen based on their relevance to impoliteness phenomena rather than frequency alone. This sampling technique ensures that the data are appropriate for answering the research questions. Data were collected through a documentation technique by listening to the podcast episode and transcribing relevant utterances. The instrument of this study was the researcher, supported by a data sheet adapted from Culpeper's impoliteness framework, which functioned as an analytical guide. The data sheet included categories for impoliteness strategy type, speaker, target, and pragmatic function. This instrument enabled systematic data recording and ensured consistency during data classification.

The data analysis was conducted in three ordered stages: identification, classification, and interpretation. First, the researcher identified utterances that potentially contained impoliteness strategies based on face-threatening criteria. Second, the selected utterances were classified according to Culpeper's categories of positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, bald on record impoliteness, and sarcasm or mock politeness (Culpeper, 1996; 2011). Finally, the utterances were interpreted by relating linguistic forms to their social and political meanings within the discourse context. This systematic procedure allows the study to be replicated and supports the reliability of the findings.

Results and Discussion

The analysis of the podcast *Bocor Alus Politik* reveals that impoliteness is systematically employed as a communicative strategy to criticize political actors and challenge dominant disaster narratives. Drawing on Culpeper's (1996) impoliteness framework, the following discussion provides a detailed description of each data by explaining the linguistic form, the type of impoliteness strategy, the face being threatened, and the broader pragmatic function within political discourse.

Table of Data 1

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat1
1	Positive Impoliteness	"Pemerintah tidak memiliki sistem atau prosedur yang jelas untuk menindaklanjuti early warning."	Bang Ari / Government	Competence critique. Attacks positive face by portraying the government as unprepared and incapable.

The utterance "*Pemerintah tidak memiliki sistem atau prosedur yang jelas untuk menindaklanjuti early warning*" constitutes positive impoliteness because it directly attacks the government's positive face, namely its desire to be perceived as competent and well-prepared. By explicitly stating the absence of a system or procedure, the speaker constructs an image of institutional incompetence and negligence. According to Culpeper, positive impoliteness operates by damaging the target's self-image and social identity, which in this case is the government's legitimacy as a capable disaster-management

authority. The pragmatic function of this utterance is not merely descriptive but accusatory, encouraging the audience to question the government's professionalism and preparedness.

Table of Data 2

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat ¹
2	Bald on Record	<i>"Ini tidak bisa disebut bencana alam. Tinggal cari siapa manusia yang paling banyak merusak, itulah yang harus bertanggung jawab."</i>	Bang Ari / The person that cause the destruction	Direct accusation and demand for accountability. Strong negative-face threat (no mitigation).

The statement *"Ini tidak bisa disebut bencana alam... itulah yang harus bertanggung jawab"* exemplifies bald on record impoliteness because the speaker delivers a direct accusation without mitigation or politeness markers. The utterance forcefully rejects alternative interpretations and assigns responsibility to specific human actors. Culpeper (1996) explains that bald on record impoliteness is used when speakers intentionally disregard face concerns to achieve clarity, urgency, or moral authority. In this context, the speaker's bluntness functions to impose accountability and eliminate ambiguity, thereby restricting the target's negative face, or freedom to avoid blame.

Table of Data 3

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat ¹
3	Sarcasm / Mock of Politeness	<i>"Apakah deforestasi justru makin ugal-ugalan setelah adanya Undang-Undang Cipta Kerja?"</i>	Kang Goverment /	Rhetorical question implying policy failure. Sarcastic evaluation threatening positive face.

The rhetorical question *"Apakah deforestasi justru makin ugal-ugalan setelah adanya Undang-Undang Cipta Kerja?"* represents sarcasm or mock politeness. While grammatically framed as a question, the utterance implicitly criticizes government policy by suggesting that the law has worsened deforestation. Culpeper (1996) notes that mock politeness exploits superficially polite forms to perform impoliteness, making the face

attack more subtle yet equally damaging. The pragmatic effect here is to ridicule policy effectiveness while maintaining an appearance of inquiry, thereby undermining the government's positive face as a responsible policymaker.

Table of Data 4

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat ¹
4	Positive Impoliteness	"Pemerintahan Jokowi dua periode justru melihat banyak undang-undang yang menghambat investasi."	Kang / Jokowi's Government Era	Priority critique: implies misaligned governance priorities. Positive-face threat.

The critique of the Jokowi administration's prioritization of investment over environmental protection functions as positive impoliteness. By implying that governance priorities are morally and ethically flawed, the speaker attacks the government's identity as a protector of public welfare. Culpeper identifies such evaluations as classic positive-face threats because they deny approval and respect. This utterance also contributes to ideological positioning by framing economic growth as incompatible with environmental responsibility.

Table of Data 5

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat ¹
5	Positive Impoliteness	"Pemerintah terlihat tergagap-gagap."	Sen / Government	Performance ridicule. Attacks image of competence (positive face).

The expression "*Pemerintah terlihat tergagap-gagap*" exemplifies positive impoliteness through ridicule and derogatory evaluation. The informal and dismissive wording intensifies the face attack by portraying the government as chaotic and incapable. According to Culpeper (2011), ridicule is a powerful impoliteness strategy because it lowers the target's social standing while inviting audience alignment with the speaker. The pragmatic function here is to delegitimize authority through mockery rather than argumentation.

Table of Data 6

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat1
6	Positive Impoliteness	<i>"Prabowo mendapat laporan bahwa bencananya tidak terlalu besar dan hanya mencekam di media sosial."</i>	Sen / Head of BNPB	Credibility critique: implies misleading or minimizing information. Positive-face threat.

The claim that disaster reports were minimized by officials attacks informational credibility and constitutes positive impoliteness. By suggesting misinformation or downplaying, the speaker undermines trust in institutional communication. Culpeper emphasizes that attacks on credibility are attacks on positive face because they challenge the target's reliability and honesty. This utterance positions the speaker as more truthful than official sources, strengthening oppositional discourse.

Table of Data 7

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat1
7	Positive Impoliteness	<i>"Di hari-hari itu pemerintah terlihat gelagapan."</i>	Sen / Government	Reinforces incompetence narrative. Positive-face threat.

The repetition of incompetence narratives through *"pemerintah terlihat gelagapan"* reinforces the impoliteness effect by sustaining a consistent negative identity construction. Culpeper (2011) argues that repeated face attacks intensify impoliteness by normalizing negative evaluations. Pragmatically, this repetition functions to solidify audience perception that government failure is systemic rather than incidental.

Table of Data 8

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat1
8	Positive Impoliteness	<i>"Para pejabat istana dan menteri terlihat gelagapan dan tergopoh-gopoh."</i>	Sen / Government & Minister	Ridicule of coordination failure. Positive-face threat.

The ridicule of ministers and palace officials as *"gelagapan dan tergopoh-gopoh"* targets collective institutional identity and exemplifies positive impoliteness. Rather than criticizing individual actions, the speaker attacks group competence, which amplifies the face threat. Culpeper notes that group-directed impoliteness strengthens ideological critique by framing failure as structural.

Table of Data 9

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat1
9	Positive Impoliteness	<i>"Bahkan menteri-menteri itu kelabakan mencari penerbangan ke daerah bencana."</i>	Sen / Minister	Mocking professionalism; competence attack which construct positive impoliteness.

Mocking ministers' difficulty in arranging transportation to disaster areas constitutes positive impoliteness because it diminishes their professionalism. The utterance implies disorganization and lack of preparedness, attacking positive face. Humor and exaggeration intensify the impoliteness effect, consistent with Culpeper's observation that humorous framing often sharpens ridicule rather than softening it.

Table of Data 10

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat1
10	Positive Impoliteness	<i>"Mirip demonstrasi Agustus, pemerintah"</i>	Sen / Government	Implies neglect and irresponsibility.

		<i>seperti vakum dan tidak hadir."</i>		Positive- face threat.
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Comparing the government's response to a political vacuum functions as positive impoliteness by implying neglect and irresponsibility. This utterance attacks moral legitimacy rather than technical competence alone. Culpeper's framework recognizes moral judgment as a strong form of positive-face threat, as it challenges the target's social worth.

Table of Data 11

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat ¹
11	Positive Impoliteness	<i>"Prabowo dikelilingi bubble informasi sehingga informasi utuh datang terlambat."</i>	Sen / Prabowo	Inner-circle critique; attacks judgment and leadership credibility.

The critique of the president being surrounded by an information "bubble" attacks leadership judgment and decision-making capacity. This utterance exemplifies positive impoliteness by questioning the president's ability to access accurate information. According to Culpeper, such attacks weaken authority by undermining trust in leadership competence.

Table of Data 12

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat ¹
12	Negative Impoliteness	<i>"Ada pihak yang mencoba membelokkan ini menjadi bencana alam."</i>	Bang Ari / Narrator	Talking down & delegitimizing opposing narrative. Negative-face threat.

The statement *"Ada pihak yang mencoba membelokkan ini menjadi bencana alam"* constitutes negative impoliteness because it talks down to and delegitimizes opposing actors. Culpeper (1996) defines negative impoliteness as strategies that restrict the

target's autonomy or right to act. Pragmatically, the utterance silences alternative narratives and frames them as deceptive.

Table of Data 13

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat1
13	Bald on Record Impoliteness	<i>"Ini bukan bencana alam, ini ulah manusia dan harus ada yang bertanggung jawab."</i>	Bang Ari / Human actions are the cause	Direct denial + blame without mitigation. Strong negative-face threat.

The categorical denial of the natural disaster narrative combined with blame is a clear example of bald on record impoliteness. The speaker eliminates any possibility of negotiation or alternative interpretation. This directness serves to assert moral certainty and enforce accountability.

Table of Data 14

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat1
14	Positive Impoliteness	<i>"Narasi yang berkembang menyebut ini bencana alam, bukan ulah manusia."</i>	Kang / Narrator	Public narrative attack; undermines credibility (positive face).

Publicly criticizing disaster narratives represents positive impoliteness by undermining the credibility of those promoting them. The utterance damages social reputation and positions the speaker as morally superior within the discourse.

Table of Data 15

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat1
15	Positive Impoliteness	<i>"Pemerintah tidak memberikan"</i>	Kang / Government	Evaluation below

		<i>respons yang proper terhadap informasi yang ada."</i>		expected standard; positive-face threat.
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Evaluating the government's response as "not proper" attacks institutional standards and professionalism, exemplifying positive impoliteness. Culpeper notes that downgrading evaluations are effective face attacks because they deny expected approval.

Table of Data 16

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat1
16	Positive Impoliteness	<i>"Tidak ada kayu yang hanyut, ini menunjukkan pembalakan besar-besaran."</i>	Sen / Government & The Authority	Accusatory comparison; implies enforcement failure. Positive-face threat.

The comparison between physical evidence and deforestation accusations functions as positive impoliteness by implying enforcement failure. This utterance constructs the government as ineffective and complicit, intensifying the face threat.

Table of Data 17

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat1
17	Positive Impoliteness	<i>"Peringatan diabaikan dan dampak bencana ini tidak diperkirakan separah ini."</i>	Sen / Government	Negligence critique; attacks professionalism (positive face).

Accusing officials of ignoring early warnings constitutes positive impoliteness, as it attacks both competence and responsibility. Pragmatically, the utterance attributes causality to negligence rather than misfortune.

Table of Data 18

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat1
18	Bald on Record Impoliteness	<i>"Perusahaan-perusahaan itu menikmati impunitas."</i>	Kang / Corporations & Law Enforcement	Direct accusation of legal failure. Negative-face threat.

The statement *"Perusahaan-perusahaan itu menikmati impunitas"* exemplifies bald on record impoliteness through direct accusation. Culpeper explains that such strategies are often used when speakers aim to expose injustice without regard for face.

Table of Data 19

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat1
19	Bald on Record Impoliteness	<i>"Deforestasi dipicu oleh izin-izin konsesi yang diberikan pemerintah."</i>	Bang Ari / Government	Explicit causal blame. Strong negative-face threat.

Blaming government-issued permits as the root cause of deforestation is another instance of bald on record impoliteness, explicitly assigning responsibility and limiting denial.

Table of Data 20

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat1
20	Positive Impoliteness	<i>"Kebijakan dijalankan tanpa etika lingkungan; AMDAL hanya formalitas."</i>	Bang Ari / Policy Maker	Ethical critique; attacks integrity and competence (positive face).

Criticizing AMDAL as a mere formality constitutes positive impoliteness by attacking ethical integrity. This utterance frames policy implementation as superficial and dishonest.

Table of Data 21

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat ¹
21	Positive Impoliteness	<i>"Undang-undang diprioritaskan untuk investasi, bukan perlindungan lingkungan."</i>	Bang Ari / Jokowi's Government Era	Priority condemnation; positive-face threat.

Condemning investment-oriented legislation exemplifies positive impoliteness, as it delegitimizes policy priorities and moral judgment.

Table of Data 22

No	Impoliteness Strategy (Culpeper's Framework)	Utterance	Speaker/Target	Pragmatic Effect & Face Threat ¹
22	Negative Impoliteness	<i>"Di sana sudah carut-marut dengan backing-backing tertentu."</i>	Bang Ari / Influential Figures	Covert mockery & delegitimization. Negative-face threat.

The reference to hidden "backing" uses covert mockery and represents negative impoliteness, degrading actors while restricting their legitimacy within the discourse.

Conclusion

This study examined the use of impoliteness strategies in the *Bocor Alus Politik* podcast episode discussing government responses to floods and landslides in Sumatra by applying Culpeper's impoliteness framework. The findings demonstrate that impoliteness is systematically and intentionally employed as a pragmatic strategy to criticize political actors, challenge dominant disaster narratives, and construct public accountability. Among the identified strategies, positive impoliteness emerged as the most dominant, primarily functioning to attack the competence, credibility, and moral responsibility of the government and related institutions. Bald on record impoliteness was used in moments where speakers demanded accountability and rejected alternative interpretations, particularly the framing of the disaster as purely natural. Meanwhile, negative impoliteness and sarcasm or mock politeness served to delegitimize opposing narratives and undermine the authority of policymakers through ridicule and rhetorical questioning. These findings confirm Culpeper's assertion that impoliteness is not merely

a breakdown of politeness norms but a deliberate communicative resource shaped by power relations and ideological positioning.

This research contributes to the body of pragmatic studies by demonstrating how impoliteness operates within Indonesian political podcast discourse, particularly in environmental disaster discussions. Unlike previous studies that focus on scripted political texts, classroom interactions, or fictional media, this study highlights impoliteness as a strategic tool in spontaneous political commentary that actively shapes audience perception and public discourse. However, the findings should not be generalized beyond the specific podcast episode analyzed, as the data are limited to a single media source and sociopolitical context.

Research Limitations and Recommendations for Future Studies

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the data were drawn from only one episode of a political podcast, which limits the scope of generalization across different media platforms or political contexts. Second, the analysis focused solely on verbal impoliteness strategies and did not consider paralinguistic features such as intonation, laughter, or gesture, which may further intensify impoliteness effects. Third, audience reception was inferred pragmatically rather than examined empirically.

Future research is recommended to expand the corpus by including multiple podcast episodes, different political programs, or comparative media platforms such as television debates and social media livestreams. Further studies may also integrate multimodal analysis to examine how vocal and visual cues interact with impoliteness strategies. Additionally, audience-centered research could explore how listeners interpret and respond to impoliteness in political discourse. Such investigations would deepen understanding of impoliteness as a persuasive and ideological tool in contemporary political communication.

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