

Politeness Strategies in Online Political Communication: Shaping Public Opinion during Indonesia's 2024 Presidential Election

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the realization, functions, and persuasive effects of politeness strategies in online political communication during Indonesia's 2024 presidential election. Employing a qualitative critical discourse approach, the research analyzes political interactions collected from Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Ticktock throughout the official campaign period. Data were purposively selected and analyzed using Brown and Levinson's politeness theory integrated with digital political communication and public opinion frameworks. The findings reveal that positive politeness emerged as the dominant strategy for fostering solidarity, reinforcing collective identity, and strengthening emotional engagement with audiences, while negative politeness was strategically employed to maintain credibility, minimize face-threatening acts, and negotiate ideological differences. In contrast, bald-on-record and off-record strategies were selectively utilized to intensify political messages, challenge opponents, and stimulate public engagement, often generating polarized responses. These linguistic strategies significantly influenced audience perceptions by enhancing message credibility, emotional resonance, trust, and political participation, while simultaneously amplifying ideological polarization through algorithm-driven interactions. This study extends classical politeness theory by demonstrating that politeness in digital political communication functions as a dynamic persuasive resource that interacts with platform affordances, algorithmic visibility, and participatory culture. The findings contribute to the advancement of digital pragmatics and political communication studies while offering practical insights for developing ethical political communication strategies that promote constructive democratic deliberation in contemporary digital societies.

Keywords: Politeness Strategies; Online Political Communication; Digital Pragmatics; Public Opinion; Presidential Election

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. The unprecedented growth of digital communication technologies has fundamentally transformed the landscape of political communication worldwide (Daud, 2021); (Sofyan et al., 2022); (Hakim et al., 2024); (Hakim & Nurabwani, 2025); & (Hermawan, 2025). Social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Ticktock, YouTube, and Facebook have evolved beyond information-sharing tools into influential public spheres where political actors, journalists, influencers, and ordinary citizens actively negotiate political meanings, construct identities, and shape public opinion (Bossetta, 2018); (Chadwick, 2017); (Jahidin and Muksin, 2024); & (Al-Afnan, 2025). Unlike conventional political communication, digital

interactions are characterized by immediacy, interactivity, algorithmic amplification, and participatory engagement, allowing political messages to spread rapidly across diverse audiences while simultaneously encouraging direct public responses (Muta'allim et al., 2022); (Yudistira et al., 2022); (Haryono et al., 2023); (Mahardani et al., 2023); (Yudistira and Muta'allim, 2023); (Muta'allim, 2025). Consequently, online political communication has become one of the most influential determinants of democratic participation, electoral behavior, and political legitimacy in contemporary societies (Jungherr, 2016; Cruz et al., 2026). Within this digital ecosystem, language functions not merely as a medium for transmitting political information but also as a strategic instrument for persuasion, identity construction, and ideological negotiation (Salikin et al., 2021); (Muta'allim et al., 2022); (Badrudin et al., 2023); (Yudistira et al., 2024); (Abalaka et al., 2025); & (Sofyan et al., 2026). Political actors carefully select linguistic expressions to cultivate credibility, establish solidarity with supporters, mitigate criticism, and persuade undecided voters (Hakim & Nurabwani, 2025).

Among these linguistic resources, politeness strategies occupy a central position because they regulate interpersonal relationships while simultaneously influencing audience perceptions and emotional responses. Drawing upon (Brown and Levinson's, 1987) theory, politeness encompasses positive politeness, negative politeness, bald-on-record, and off-record strategies, each serving different communicative purposes in maintaining or threatening interlocutors' face. In digital political environments, however, these strategies frequently extend beyond interpersonal politeness to become rhetorical devices for mobilizing supporters, reinforcing political identities, and directing public attention toward specific political narratives (Culpeper, 2016); (Herring, 2018); (Muta'allim et al., 2023); & (Hakim et al., 2024). The Indonesian 2024 Presidential Election represents an especially significant context for examining this phenomenon. As one of the world's largest democratic elections, the presidential campaign unfolded extensively across digital platforms, where candidates, political parties, volunteers, influencers, and citizens continuously exchanged opinions, debated public policies, and contested competing political narratives (Anom et al., 2024); (Jahidin & Muksin, 2024); (Hasibuan et al., 2024); (Al-Afnan, 2025); (Khoirunnisa et al., 2025); & (Hermawan, 2025).

Digital campaigning was no longer limited to disseminating policy agendas but increasingly relied on emotional engagement, symbolic representation, personalization, and interactive communication to attract public support. Social media consequently emerged as the primary arena in which political legitimacy was negotiated and public opinion was continuously constructed through linguistic interactions. Recent studies further indicate that algorithm-driven platforms have intensified political engagement while simultaneously increasing the risks of polarization and affective political discourse. Although online political communication offers greater opportunities for democratic participation, it also presents substantial pragmatic challenges. The absence of face-to-face interaction, anonymity, reduced social accountability, and engagement-oriented platform algorithms frequently encourage direct criticism, verbal aggression, ideological polarization, and emotionally charged discourse (Culpeper, 2016); (Prasetyo et al., 2019); (Edgerly & Thorson, 2020); (Arrianie et al., 2024); (Edel, et al., 2025); & (Reveilhac et al., 2025). Political conversations therefore oscillate between polite persuasion and confrontational communication, making politeness strategies increasingly dynamic rather than static interpersonal norms. In this context, politeness is no longer merely an ethical principle governing conversation but becomes a strategic communicative resource for attracting attention, maintaining public trust, enhancing political visibility, and influencing citizens' attitudes toward political actors (Bossetta, 2018); (Dewi et al., 2023); & (Yogantara et al., 2024).

Despite the growing body of literature on digital political communication during Indonesia's 2024 Presidential Election, existing studies have predominantly focused on political communication strategies, media framing, political metaphors, campaign branding, political memes, and the influence of social media on public opinion. For instance, (Anom et al., 2024); (Dawam et al., 2024); (Jahidin and Muksin, 2024), and (Hermawan, 2025) primarily examine political communication strategies employed by presidential candidates across digital platforms. Meanwhile, studies by (Al-Afnan, 2025); (Hakim et al., 2024); (Juliantari et al., 2025); and (Nawiruddin et al., 2024) investigate political representation through memes, conceptual metaphors, framing, and candidate image construction. Other scholars, including (Daud, 2021); (Hasibuan et al., 2024); (Latif et al., 2024); (Fata et al., 2025); and (Khoirunnisa et al., 2025), emphasize the role of social media, digital algorithms, and mass media in shaping public opinion. Although these studies provide valuable insights into the dynamics of political communication in the digital era, they largely approach public opinion formation from communication and media perspectives, paying limited attention to the linguistic and pragmatic mechanisms through which political messages influence public perceptions.

Similarly, research on politeness strategies in the context of Indonesia's 2024 Presidential Election remains relatively limited in scope. Most studies have concentrated on formal political discourse, particularly presidential debates and campaign speeches. (Sukardi et al., 2024); (Mintowati et al., 2025); (Mulyono et al., 2025); (Firdaus et al., 2025); (Lioni and Pujiati, 2025); and (Yanti et al., 2025) analyze politeness strategies

in presidential debates based on Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory, while (Setiawati and Salamah, 2024) and (Simanjuntak and Simatupang, 2024) focus primarily on impoliteness strategies. Furthermore, (Marisa et al., 2025) examine politeness strategies in Ganjar Pranowo's Instagram interactions, restricting their analysis to a single political figure and a single social media platform. Consequently, previous studies have yet to capture the broader dynamics of online political communication, where candidates, political parties, influencers, journalists, supporters, and ordinary citizens interact simultaneously across multiple digital platforms with different communicative affordances, algorithmic structures, and audience engagement patterns. These limitations reveal a significant research gap. Existing studies have rarely integrated Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory with political communication and public opinion theories to explain how linguistic politeness functions as a strategic mechanism for influencing public opinion in digital political communication. Most previous research has either identified types of politeness strategies or evaluated the effectiveness of political communication without examining how politeness strategies contribute to the construction of political legitimacy, ideological positioning, interpersonal relationships, audience engagement, and opinion formation within the broader digital communication ecosystem. Moreover, cross-platform analyses remain scarce, despite the fact that political communication during contemporary elections occurs simultaneously across multiple social media platforms with distinct technological affordances and interactional cultures.

Addressing these gaps, the present study offers several conceptual, theoretical, methodological, and empirical contributions. Conceptually, it integrates Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory with political communication and public opinion frameworks, proposing that politeness strategies function not only as interpersonal communication devices but also as rhetorical resources for constructing political legitimacy, ideological identity, and persuasive political narratives. Empirically, this study investigates political communication across multiple social media platforms—including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter), WhatsApp, and LinkedIn—thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of how politeness strategies vary according to platform affordances, audience characteristics, and communication contexts. Methodologically, this research adopts a cyberpragmatic approach to examine the interaction between politeness strategies, digital platform affordances, user engagement, and public opinion formation. Unlike previous studies that primarily describe linguistic forms of politeness, this research explains the pragmatic mechanisms through which politeness strategies shape audience perceptions, political legitimacy, ideological positioning, and public opinion during Indonesia's 2024 Presidential Election. Accordingly, this study extends politeness research beyond formal political discourse and contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of language use within the contemporary ecology of digital political communication.

Previous studies have examined various dimensions of digital political discourse during Indonesia's 2024 presidential election. Existing research has investigated impoliteness strategies among social media users, the prevalence of bald-on-record communication in cyber political discourse, and patterns of politeness within individual platforms such as X and Instagram. These studies demonstrate that linguistic choices significantly influence political engagement and online interaction. Nevertheless, the existing literature remains fragmented in at least three important respects. First, most studies focus on identifying linguistic forms of politeness or impoliteness without examining how these strategies collectively contribute to the formation of public opinion. Second, previous investigations generally analyze isolated platforms or specific political actors, overlooking the interconnected nature of cross-platform political communication. Third, limited attention has been devoted to explaining how politeness strategies interact with digital affordances, algorithmic visibility, audience engagement, and participatory political culture to influence democratic discourse.

These limitations indicate the need for a more comprehensive investigation integrating pragmatics with digital political communication and public opinion theories. Rather than conceptualizing politeness solely as a mechanism for maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships, contemporary digital communication requires understanding politeness as a persuasive, ideological, and strategic resource that shapes political interpretation within algorithm-driven environments. Such an interdisciplinary perspective is essential because digital platforms increasingly determine not only how political messages are communicated but also how they are interpreted, redistributed, and legitimized by online communities. Accordingly, this study investigates the realization of politeness strategies in online political communication during Indonesia's 2024 presidential election and examines how these strategies contribute to shaping public opinion across digital platforms. Specifically, the study analyzes the linguistic realization of positive politeness, negative politeness, bald-on-record, and off-record strategies employed by political actors and online participants, explores their communicative functions in constructing political legitimacy and audience engagement, and explains their influence on public opinion formation within Indonesia's contemporary digital democracy. The novelty of this research lies in three principal contributions. First, it develops an integrated analytical

framework combining Brown and Levinson's politeness theory with digital political communication and public opinion perspectives. Second, it conceptualizes politeness strategies not merely as interpersonal communication practices but as dynamic persuasive mechanisms operating within algorithmic and participatory digital environments. Third, by examining cross-platform political discourse during Indonesia's 2024 Presidential Election, this study advances the emerging field of digital pragmatics while providing theoretical and practical insights for developing ethical, persuasive, and democratically responsible political communication in contemporary digital societies.

Based on the research background and the identified gaps in previous studies, this study seeks to answer four interrelated research questions. First, how are politeness strategies realized in online political communication during Indonesia's 2024 Presidential Election across different social media platforms?. Second, how do these politeness strategies function to construct political legitimacy, ideological positioning, and interpersonal relationships between political actors and online audiences?. Third, how do politeness strategies influence public opinion formation, audience engagement, and political participation within Indonesia's contemporary digital political ecosystem?. Finally, how do the communicative affordances of social media platforms and algorithm-driven interactions shape the effectiveness of politeness strategies in influencing public opinion?. Addressing these questions enables a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between linguistic politeness, digital political communication, and the dynamics of public opinion in the context of Indonesia's digital democracy. To answer these research questions, this study adopts an interdisciplinary analytical framework integrating pragmatics, digital discourse studies, and political communication. The primary analytical lens is Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory, which provides a systematic framework for identifying and interpreting four major politeness strategies: bald-on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record. This theory is employed to examine how political actors strategically utilize linguistic politeness not only to maintain interpersonal relationships but also to persuade audiences, construct credibility, negotiate ideological differences, and strengthen political legitimacy in digitally mediated interactions (Sukarno, 2015); (Sukarno, 2018); (Haryono, 2018); (Muta'allim et al., 2020); (Derakhshan & Shakki, 2021); (Muta'allim et al., 2021); (Sofyan et al., 2022); & (Sudi et al., 2025).

Recognizing that political discourse is increasingly produced and disseminated through social media, this study further incorporates Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis (CMDA) proposed by Herring (2004, 2013). CMDA enables the analysis of online interactions by considering the distinctive characteristics of digital communication, including interactivity, multimodality, asynchronous communication, audience participation, hashtags, emojis, comments, and platform-specific discourse practices. This perspective extends conventional pragmatic analysis by demonstrating how the technological affordances of digital platforms shape linguistic choices and communicative behavior. To explain the broader political context in which politeness strategies operate, this research also draws upon Chadwick's (2017) Hybrid Media System theory. This perspective argues that contemporary political communication is produced through the interaction of traditional media, digital platforms, algorithmic distribution, and networked publics. Consequently, the persuasive impact of politeness strategies cannot be understood solely through linguistic analysis but must also consider platform algorithms, information circulation, audience engagement, and digital participation that collectively determine the visibility and influence of political messages. Finally, this study employs Public Opinion Theory, particularly the concept of the Spiral of Silence proposed by Noelle-Neumann (1974), to explain how repeated exposure to particular forms of political communication contributes to the formation of public opinion.

The theory suggests that individuals tend to align their publicly expressed opinions with those perceived as socially dominant, while minority viewpoints are often suppressed. Within social media environments, algorithmic amplification, engagement metrics, and networked interactions may reinforce this process by increasing the visibility of dominant political narratives while marginalizing alternative perspectives. Integrating this theoretical perspective allows the study to examine how politeness strategies influence not only interpersonal communication but also the broader construction of political legitimacy, public trust, and democratic participation. The integration of these four theoretical perspectives constitutes the principal novelty of this study. Rather than examining politeness merely as an interpersonal communicative norm, this research conceptualizes politeness strategies as dynamic persuasive resources operating within algorithm-driven digital environments. By combining Politeness Theory, Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis, the Hybrid Media System, and Public Opinion Theory, this study develops a comprehensive analytical framework capable of explaining the linguistic realization, communicative functions, digital dissemination, and socio-political impacts of politeness strategies in online political communication during Indonesia's 2024 Presidential Election. This interdisciplinary approach is expected to contribute to the advancement of digital pragmatics, political discourse analysis, and online political

communication while providing practical insights for promoting ethical and constructive democratic communication in the digital era.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis (CMDA) integrated with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to investigate politeness strategies in online political communication during Indonesia's 2024 Presidential Election. A qualitative design was selected because the study sought to explore the meanings, communicative functions, and persuasive roles of politeness strategies embedded in naturally occurring political interactions across digital platforms rather than to measure their frequency statistically. The integration of CMDA (Herring, 2004, 2013) and CDA (Fairclough, 1995, 2013) enabled the analysis of linguistic forms alongside their sociopolitical and technological contexts, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of how politeness strategies contributed to shaping public opinion within Indonesia's digital political ecosystem. The research data consisted of textual and multimodal political communication published on X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube during the official campaign period of Indonesia's 2024 Presidential Election, from 28 November 2023 to 10 February 2024, as stipulated by the General Election Commission (KPU). The unit of analysis included candidates' posts, campaign speeches uploaded to social media, official campaign accounts, comments, replies, quoted posts, and public interactions related to the three presidential candidate pairs. These platforms were selected because they represented the most active digital spaces for political discussion, public engagement, and opinion formation during the election campaign.

Data were collected through purposive sampling using four predefined inclusion criteria. First, the selected content had to explicitly address issues related to the 2024 Indonesian presidential election. Second, the communication had to involve interactions between political actors and citizens or among citizens themselves. Third, the discourse had to contain identifiable politeness or impoliteness strategies that could be systematically examined within the analytical framework. Fourth, the selected posts had to demonstrate observable public engagement through comments, replies, reposts, shares, quote tweets, or discussion threads. These criteria were established to ensure that the dataset was directly relevant to the research objectives while providing sufficient contextual and interactional richness for pragmatic analysis. Following the identification and screening process, 13 primary data items were selected for the final analysis, comprising seven instances of politeness strategies and six instances of impoliteness strategies. The data were drawn from six social media platforms—Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, X, TikTok, and LinkedIn—to capture variation in digitally mediated political communication and platform-specific affordances. The selected materials represented different political actors, communicative contexts, content formats, and forms of audience engagement. Audience responses were documented through observable engagement indicators, including likes, reposts or shares, replies or comments, and quote tweets. These engagement metrics were employed descriptively to contextualize audience responses rather than to claim statistical representativeness of the broader population. Each data item was systematically coded according to the political actor or candidate, social media platform, content type, politeness or impoliteness strategy, communicative or pragmatic function, and form of audience engagement. Of the 13 selected items, seven were categorized as politeness strategies and six as impoliteness strategies. This distribution enabled the study to examine both face-enhancing and face-threatening communicative practices within the same political communication environment. The analysis therefore focused not merely on the frequency of particular strategies but also on how these strategies were linguistically realized, what pragmatic functions they performed, and how their realization interacted with the affordances of different social media platforms.

Before the final dataset was established, potentially relevant materials were screened against the inclusion criteria. Items were excluded if they were duplicates, unrelated to the 2024 presidential election, lacked sufficient contextual information for pragmatic interpretation, or did not contain an identifiable politeness or impoliteness strategy. After this screening process, 13 analytically relevant items were retained. The purposive sampling procedure was consequently intended to identify information-rich cases rather than achieve numerical representativeness, allowing the study to examine the relationship between politeness and impoliteness strategies, political communication, audience engagement, and platform affordances in greater analytical depth. To enhance data richness and achieve analytical saturation, data collection continued until additional materials no longer generated substantially new categories of politeness or impoliteness strategies, pragmatic functions, or platform-related patterns relevant to the research questions. Publicly accessible materials were documented through screenshots and archived URLs, while audiovisual materials were transcribed when necessary to preserve their linguistic and interactional features. The coding process was conducted by six researchers using a predefined coding framework aligned with the research objectives and

analytical categories. The coding framework covered the political actor, platform, content type, politeness or impoliteness strategy, pragmatic function, and audience engagement. Differences in interpretation were discussed among the researchers and resolved through reference to the operational definitions and analytical criteria established prior to coding. This collaborative coding procedure was employed to strengthen interpretive consistency, analytical transparency, and the credibility of the findings while reducing the potential influence of individual researcher bias.

Data analysis followed an interactive analytical procedure consisting of five stages. First, all collected data were transcribed, translated into English when necessary, and organized according to communication platform, speaker, interaction type, and political context. Second, the researchers conducted open coding to identify linguistic expressions corresponding to Brown and Levinson's (1987) four politeness strategies, namely bald-on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record. Third, each identified strategy was analyzed pragmatically to determine its communicative function, including persuasion, solidarity building, face management, ideological positioning, credibility enhancement, conflict mitigation, or political criticism. Fourth, the discourse was examined through the lens of Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis by considering digital-specific communicative features such as hashtags, mentions, emojis, hyperlinks, multimodal elements, audience interaction, reposting practices, and platform affordances. Finally, Critical Discourse Analysis was employed to interpret how these politeness strategies reflected broader power relations, political identities, ideological contestation, and public opinion formation within Indonesia's digital democracy.

To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, several validation procedures were implemented. Data triangulation was achieved by comparing discourse across multiple social media platforms and different political actors. Theory triangulation involved integrating Politeness Theory, Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis, Hybrid Media System Theory, and Public Opinion Theory to provide complementary analytical perspectives. In addition, investigator triangulation was conducted through collaborative coding and peer discussion among the researchers to minimize interpretative bias. Coding consistency was continuously evaluated through iterative comparison and refinement until conceptual agreement was achieved. The researchers also maintained an audit trail documenting data selection, coding decisions, and analytical interpretations to enhance transparency and methodological rigor. Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the research process. Only publicly available social media content was analyzed, and no attempt was made to access private communications or restricted accounts. Usernames and personal identifiers of non-public figures were anonymized to protect individual privacy. The study complied with established ethical principles for internet-mediated research by respecting users' confidentiality, minimizing potential harm, and using digital data exclusively for scholarly purposes. Because the research relied solely on publicly accessible political communication without direct human participation or intervention, formal informed consent was not required in accordance with prevailing ethical guidelines for publicly available online data. By integrating qualitative discourse analysis with digital communication perspectives, this methodological framework provides a robust foundation for examining how politeness strategies function as persuasive linguistic resources that shape public opinion, political legitimacy, and democratic participation in the contemporary digital communication environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings reveal that positive politeness emerged as the dominant strategy for fostering solidarity, reinforcing collective identity, and strengthening emotional engagement with audiences, while negative politeness was strategically employed to maintain credibility, minimize face-threatening acts, and negotiate ideological differences. In contrast, bald-on-record and off-record strategies were selectively utilized to intensify political messages, challenge opponents, and stimulate public engagement, often generating polarized responses. These linguistic strategies significantly influenced audience perceptions by enhancing message credibility, emotional resonance, trust, and political participation, while simultaneously amplifying ideological polarization through algorithm-driven interactions. This study extends classical politeness theory by demonstrating that politeness in digital political communication functions as a dynamic persuasive resource that interacts with platform affordances, algorithmic visibility, and participatory culture. The findings contribute to the advancement of digital pragmatics and political communication studies while offering practical insights for developing ethical political communication strategies that promote constructive democratic deliberation in contemporary digital societies.

These findings are consistent with Brown and Levinson (1987), Culpeper (1996), Dynel (2014), Graham (2018), Kádár and Ran (2015), and Sifianou (2019), who emphasize the relational, strategic, and context-dependent nature of politeness and impoliteness. Such convergence reflects the relational goals of political communication, particularly affiliation, credibility, identity construction, and ideological differentiation. However, the present study extends previous research by demonstrating how platform-mediated environments enable political messages to be rapidly responded to, reposted, quoted, and reinterpreted by heterogeneous audiences. Consequently, the pragmatic meaning of politeness may vary across interactional contexts and platform affordances. The principal contribution of this study is a contextualized account of digital political politeness that connects linguistic strategies, pragmatic functions, audience engagement, and platform affordances. The findings reaffirm the analytical relevance of Brown and Levinson's framework while demonstrating the need to incorporate technological and participatory conditions into digital pragmatic analysis. Importantly, the study does not claim a direct causal relationship between politeness and public opinion or political polarization; rather, it demonstrates how these strategies participate in constructing and negotiating political meanings, affiliations, and ideological positions online. The findings contribute to digital pragmatics and political communication while offering practical implications for promoting context-sensitive, respectful, and critically informed political discourse. Future research should employ larger datasets and longitudinal or computational methods to examine these relationships more systematically.

Realization of Politeness Strategies in Online Political Communication

In this study, the dataset comprised 13 data items, consisting of 6 instances of positive-politeness strategies and 7 instances of negative-politeness strategies. All utterances presented in Data 1–13 were extracted from authentic spoken discourse contained in publicly accessible social media videos. To enable systematic pragmatic analysis, the researchers selectively reduced the original utterances by removing redundant, repetitive, and contextually irrelevant segments while retaining their essential linguistic features, communicative intentions, and contextual meanings. This data-reduction process was conducted without altering the substantive meaning or pragmatic function of the original utterances. Therefore, the excerpts presented in this study represent researcher-reduced segments of authentic social-media discourse, rather than fabricated, reconstructed, or researcher-generated examples. This procedure ensures that the analyzed data remain grounded in naturally occurring digital discourse while allowing the relevant linguistic and pragmatic features to be examined systematically.

nPositive Politeness Strategies (PPS)

PPS01 : Sympathy

"Bapak/Ibu, kasihan sama pak Prabowo. Beliau sudah susah payah berjuang. Kalau beliau sakit siapa yang akan bertanggung jawab. Biarkan dah beliau sebagai pejabat biasa saja, agar dapat menjaga kesehatannya"

The utterance, *"Bapak/Ibu, kasihan sama Pak Prabowo. Beliau sudah susah payah berjuang. Kalau beliau sakit siapa yang akan bertanggung jawab. Biarkan dah beliau sebagai pejabat biasa saja, agar dapat menjaga kesehatannya,"* exemplifies the realization of positive politeness strategies as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). These strategies are manifested through expressions of empathy, appreciation, and concern for the well-being of the political figure under discussion. The expressions *"kasihan sama Pak Prabowo"* and *"beliau sudah susah payah berjuang"* construct a favorable public image by portraying Prabowo as a dedicated leader who has made considerable sacrifices and therefore deserves recognition and respect. Likewise, the statements *"kalau beliau sakit siapa yang akan bertanggung jawab"* and *"agar dapat menjaga kesehatannya"* serve as justificatory devices that reinforce the speaker's argument. Rather than directly criticizing or rejecting Prabowo's presidential candidacy, the speaker mitigates the face-threatening act by framing it as an expression of compassion and personal concern, thereby presenting the message as socially appropriate and polite. From a pragmatic perspective, the communicative meaning of the utterance extends well beyond its literal interpretation. On the surface, the speaker expresses sympathy for Prabowo's physical condition and concern for his health. However, through conversational implicature, the audience is guided toward a different interpretation. The statement *"Biarkan dia tetap menjadi pejabat publik biasa"* functions not merely as a recommendation that Prabowo preserve his health but as an indirect rejection of his potential presidency. By deliberately

avoiding explicit statements such as *"jangan memilih Prabowo"* or *"Prabowo tidak layak menjadi presiden,"* the speaker conceals a political evaluation within a discourse of personal care. This indirect formulation enables the speaker to communicate political opposition while minimizing the threat to Prabowo's positive face, thereby preserving the appearance of civility and respect.

These findings demonstrate that politeness strategies in digital political communication extend beyond their conventional interpersonal function and operate as sophisticated rhetorical resources for implicit political persuasion. The speaker first constructs a positive identity for the political figure through expressions of admiration and empathy before gradually leading the audience to conclude that Prabowo should not assume greater political responsibility because of concerns about his health. This argumentative pattern illustrates how empathy serves as a mitigation strategy, allowing politically sensitive evaluations to be expressed without creating the impression of direct confrontation or personal attack. Consequently, politeness functions not only as a linguistic mechanism for maintaining harmonious social interaction but also as a discursive strategy for shaping political perceptions and influencing audience preferences. From the perspective of Brown and Levinson (1987), these findings suggest that positive politeness strategies perform a dual communicative function. On the one hand, they preserve the favorable public image of the political figure; on the other, they implicitly communicate an evaluative political stance through conversational implicature. This discursive construction demonstrates that persuasion in online political communication is not always achieved through explicit endorsement or rejection. Instead, political messages are frequently embedded within narratives of empathy and concern, making them more subtle, socially acceptable, and rhetorically persuasive. Ultimately, these findings underscore that the realization of politeness strategies constitutes a fundamental component of digital political communication, in which pragmatic resources are strategically employed to communicate political preferences indirectly. The persuasive force of such discourse therefore depends largely on the audience's ability to recognize and interpret the implicit meanings embedded within the speaker's utterances.

PPS02 : Concern

"Teman-teman, mari kita saling menjaga Pak Prabowo. Biarkan beliau menjaga kesehatannya, jangan ditambah dengan beban yang berat. Untuk itu, jangan pilih beliau agar tidak menanggung beban yang berat."

The utterance, *"Teman-teman, mari kita saling menjaga Pak Prabowo. Biarkan beliau menjaga kesehatannya, jangan ditambah dengan beban yang berat. Untuk itu, jangan pilih beliau agar tidak menanggung beban yang berat."* exemplifies the realization of positive politeness strategies as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). This strategy is manifested through the use of the collective address *teman-teman* and the inclusive invitation *mari kita*, both of which foster a sense of solidarity between the speaker and the audience. These linguistic choices position the speaker and the audience as members of the same moral community, sharing a collective responsibility to safeguard the well-being of the political figure under discussion. Furthermore, the expressions *biarkan beliau menjaga kesehatannya* and *jangan ditambah dengan beban yang berat* convey concern, empathy, and respect for Prabowo's personal well-being, thereby preserving his positive face. Pragmatically, these expressions of concern function as mitigation strategies that soften the political message. Rather than questioning Prabowo's competence, leadership capacity, or political record, the speaker constructs the argument around concern for his health. As a result, opposition to his presidential candidacy is framed as an act of personal care rather than political hostility. This discursive pattern demonstrates how positive politeness mitigates potential face-threatening acts while simultaneously increasing audience receptiveness to the intended message.

Unlike indirect persuasion that primarily relies on conversational implicature, however, this utterance demonstrates a shift toward explicit political persuasion. This transition is evident in the statement, *"Untuk itu, jangan pilih beliau agar tidak menanggung beban yang berat."* Here, the speaker directly instructs the audience not to vote for Prabowo. Nevertheless, the directive remains embedded within a discourse of empathy, as the justification is based not on the candidate's incompetence or unsuitability but on the desire to protect his health and relieve him of excessive responsibility. In this way, expressions of personal concern are strategically employed as a form of moral justification to legitimize an explicit political appeal. These findings suggest that, in social

media political communication, positive politeness strategies extend beyond their conventional interpersonal function and operate as powerful rhetorical resources for political persuasion. By constructing the discourse around sympathy, solidarity, and appreciation before presenting an explicit electoral recommendation, the speaker creates the impression that the political appeal is motivated by genuine concern for the candidate's well-being rather than partisan antagonism. Consequently, politeness functions not merely as a linguistic mechanism for maintaining harmonious interaction but also as a discursive strategy that frames political persuasion as ethical, compassionate, and socially legitimate. Although the discourse appears to prioritize the candidate's personal welfare, its ultimate communicative goal is to explicitly persuade the audience not to vote for Prabowo in the presidential election.

PPS03 : Praise

"Saya yakin Pak Prabowo sudah memberikan kontribusi terbaik bagi bangsa ini. Sekarang mungkin saatnya beliau beristirahat dan memberikan kesempatan kepada generasi berikutnya untuk melanjutkan perjuangan."

The utterance, *"Saya yakin Pak Prabowo sudah memberikan kontribusi terbaik bagi bangsa ini. Sekarang mungkin saatnya beliau beristirahat dan memberikan kesempatan kepada generasi berikutnya untuk melanjutkan perjuangan"*, exemplifies the realization of positive politeness strategies as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). This strategy is manifested through explicit appreciation for the political figure's contributions and public service. The statement *"Pak Prabowo sudah memberikan kontribusi terbaik bagi bangsa ini"* reinforces Prabowo's positive face by acknowledging his dedication, experience, and significant contributions to the nation. Such recognition establishes a positive interpersonal foundation, making the subsequent message appear respectful rather than confrontational. Furthermore, the modal expression *"mungkin saatnya"* and the euphemistic phrase *"beristirahat"* function as mitigation devices that reduce the potential threat to the political figure's public image. Instead of explicitly questioning Prabowo's competence or suitability for leadership, the speaker employs respectful and euphemistic language that preserves his dignity. From Brown and Levinson's (1987) perspective, this discourse not only reflects positive politeness but also incorporates off-record strategies, as the speaker conveys the intended message indirectly through conversational implicature, thereby allowing room for audience interpretation. From a pragmatic perspective, the communicative meaning of the utterance extends beyond its literal interpretation. Explicitly, the speaker expresses appreciation for Prabowo's contributions while suggesting that he take a period of rest. Implicitly, however, the utterance encourages the audience to infer that Prabowo's political leadership should come to an end and that leadership should be transferred to the next generation. Rather than employing explicit political directives such as *"jangan memilih Prabowo"* or *"pilih kandidat lain,"* the speaker frames this position within a discourse of leadership regeneration and respect for past achievements. Consequently, the persuasive force of the utterance depends on the audience's ability to recognize the conversational implicature embedded in the expression *"memberikan kesempatan kepada generasi berikutnya"*.

In the context of digital political communication, this discourse illustrates how political persuasion can be achieved through the strategic combination of appreciation and indirectness. The speaker first establishes moral legitimacy by recognizing the political figure's contributions before gradually guiding the audience toward the idea that leadership renewal is both appropriate and desirable. By presenting political succession as a respectful acknowledgment of previous service rather than as an explicit rejection of the incumbent, the speaker effectively communicates a political preference while preserving the target's positive face. This rhetorical pattern minimizes the potential for interpersonal conflict and audience resistance, thereby enhancing the social acceptability of the persuasive message. These findings reinforce Brown and Levinson's (1987) argument that politeness strategies extend beyond maintaining interpersonal harmony and function as effective pragmatic resources for political persuasion. In this case, expressions of appreciation and respect are strategically employed to legitimize an implicit political evaluation, enabling the speaker to advocate leadership transition without directly challenging the political figure's competence or legitimacy. Accordingly, persuasion is accomplished not through explicit political appeals but through conversational implicature embedded within narratives of gratitude, respect, and generational renewal. This finding highlights the increasingly sophisticated role of politeness strategies in digital political discourse, where indirectness and positive face management become powerful rhetorical mechanisms for shaping audience interpretation and influencing political attitudes.

PPS04 : Sympathy

"Mari kita doakan agar Pak Prabowo selalu diberikan kesehatan. Tugas beliau selama ini sudah sangat berat, sehingga tidak perlu lagi dibebani amanah yang lebih besar."

The utterance, *"Mari kita doakan agar Pak Prabowo selalu diberikan kesehatan. Tugas beliau selama ini sudah sangat berat, sehingga tidak perlu lagi dibebani amanah yang lebih besar."* exemplifies the strategic integration of positive politeness and off-record strategies as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). The opening appeal, *"Mari kita doakan,"* constructs solidarity by positioning both speaker and audience within a shared moral community concerned with the political figure's well-being. Framing the message as a collective prayer transforms the discourse from a political statement into an ostensibly humanitarian act, thereby enhancing the speaker's moral credibility while reducing potential audience resistance. This solidarity is reinforced through the acknowledgment, *"Tugas beliau selama ini sudah sangat berat,"* which explicitly recognizes Prabowo's dedication, sacrifice, and public service, strengthening his positive face before any political evaluation is introduced. The persuasive force of the utterance, however, resides in its indirect pragmatic design rather than its literal content. The expression *"tidak perlu lagi dibebani amanah yang lebih besar"* constitutes a prototypical off-record strategy because it deliberately avoids explicit reference to the presidency or direct electoral rejection. Instead, the political message is conveyed through conversational implicature, inviting audiences to infer that Prabowo should neither pursue nor be entrusted with higher political office. This indirectness is not merely a politeness device but a rhetorical strategy that transforms compassion into political evaluation. By embedding opposition within a discourse of empathy, the speaker minimizes accountability for the evaluative stance while simultaneously preserving the political figure's public image.

From a pragmatic perspective, persuasion emerges through a carefully staged rhetorical sequence. The discourse first establishes moral legitimacy by emphasizing Prabowo's past contributions and personal sacrifices, thereby constructing an ethical foundation that discourages perceptions of hostility. Only after this positive evaluation is secured does the speaker introduce the implicit argument that assigning greater political responsibility would be undesirable because of concerns for his health and well-being. This sequential organization reframes political rejection as an act of care rather than ideological opposition, effectively mitigating the face-threatening act while increasing the persuasive acceptability of the message. More critically, this finding demonstrates that politeness in digital political communication functions far beyond maintaining interpersonal harmony. Rather than simply protecting face, the combination of positive politeness and off-record strategies operates as a mechanism of discursive legitimization, through which political preferences are naturalized as expressions of morality, compassion, and responsibility. The invocation of prayer and concern for health does not merely soften disagreement; it redefines political exclusion as an ethical obligation. Consequently, the persuasive burden shifts from explicit argumentation to audience inference, making interpretation itself a central component of political persuasion. These findings extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory by demonstrating that positive politeness and off-record strategies function synergistically as complementary persuasive resources in digital political discourse. Positive politeness establishes moral credibility and safeguards the target's public image, whereas off-recordness enables politically sensitive evaluations to be communicated without overt confrontation. This interaction illustrates that online political persuasion is achieved less through explicit criticism than through the strategic orchestration of empathy, indirectness, and conversational implicature. Accordingly, politeness should be understood not merely as a mechanism of face management, but as a sophisticated discursive resource that legitimizes ideological positions, frames political reality, and subtly shapes public opinion in contemporary digital communication.

PPS05 : Praise

"Mari kita hormati seluruh jasa Pak Prabowo selama ini. Beliau telah bekerja keras untuk negeri, sehingga tidak ada salahnya jika sekarang diberi kesempatan menikmati masa yang lebih tenang."

The utterance, *"Mari kita hormati seluruh jasa Pak Prabowo selama ini. Beliau telah bekerja keras untuk negeri, sehingga tidak ada salahnya jika sekarang diberi kesempatan menikmati masa yang lebih tenang."* exemplifies the strategic integration of positive politeness and off-record strategies as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). The discourse opens with the inclusive appeal *"Mari kita hormati,"* which constructs solidarity between the speaker and the audience by framing respect for Prabowo as a shared moral commitment. This is reinforced by the statement *"Beliau telah bekerja keras untuk negeri,"* which acknowledges his dedication and public service, thereby enhancing his positive face and establishing moral legitimacy before introducing a politically sensitive evaluation. At the same time, the utterance realizes an off-record strategy because its central political message is conveyed through

conversational implicature rather than explicit assertion. The euphemistic expression “*diberi kesempatan menikmati masa yang lebih tenang*” avoids directly urging audiences not to support Prabowo or questioning his political competence. Instead, it implicitly suggests that his public service has reached its appropriate conclusion and that leadership transition is a more suitable course of action. By embedding this preference within a discourse of respect and appreciation, the speaker transforms political persuasion into an apparently ethical expression of gratitude.

Pragmatically, the persuasive force of the discourse derives from the interaction between face enhancement and indirectness. Recognition of Prabowo's achievements first establishes a favorable evaluative frame, making the subsequent suggestion appear as an act of appreciation rather than political rejection. Consequently, leadership transition is constructed as a morally appropriate response to long-standing service, minimizing the face-threatening potential of the message while increasing its persuasive acceptability. This finding demonstrates that, in digital political communication, politeness functions not merely to preserve interpersonal harmony but also as a rhetorical resource for legitimizing political preferences. Positive politeness provides moral credibility by strengthening the target's public image, whereas off-recordness enables politically sensitive evaluations to be communicated through euphemism and implicature. The combination of these strategies allows speakers to promote leadership succession without explicit confrontation, illustrating that online political persuasion often relies on indirectness, audience inference, and moral framing rather than overt political advocacy. Such findings extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework by showing that politeness strategies simultaneously manage face, legitimize ideological positions, and shape public interpretation in contemporary digital political discourse.

PPS06 : Praise

"Bapak memang sosok yang luar biasa. Justru karena rasa hormat itulah, saya berharap Bapak tidak perlu lagi memikul tanggung jawab yang begitu berat."

The utterance, “*Bapak memang sosok yang luar biasa. Justru karena rasa hormat itulah, saya berharap Bapak tidak perlu lagi memikul tanggung jawab yang begitu berat.*” exemplifies the strategic interplay of positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record strategies as conceptualized by Brown and Levinson (1987). The opening compliment, “*Bapak memang sosok yang luar biasa,*” realizes positive politeness by acknowledging the political figure's character, dedication, and contributions, thereby enhancing his positive face and establishing moral legitimacy. This is reinforced by “*Justru karena rasa hormat itulah,*” which frames the subsequent evaluation as an expression of respect rather than political opposition. The utterance also incorporates negative politeness through the hedge “*saya berharap,*” which presents the proposition as a personal expectation instead of a directive. By reducing the illocutionary force of the message, this expression respects the autonomy of both the political figure and the audience while mitigating the face-threatening potential of the evaluation. Simultaneously, the discourse realizes an off-record strategy because its central political message is conveyed through conversational implicature.

The expression “*tidak perlu lagi memikul tanggung jawab yang begitu berat*” neither specifies a political office nor explicitly urges the audience to reject the political figure. Instead, it implicitly suggests that he should no longer assume a higher leadership position. By avoiding direct electoral appeals or negative evaluations of competence, the speaker embeds political preference within a discourse of respect and concern, leaving the audience to infer the intended meaning. Pragmatically, the discourse derives its persuasive force from the sequential interaction of praise, mitigation, and indirectness. Praise establishes a favorable public image, hedging reduces interpersonal imposition, and implicature communicates a politically consequential evaluation without direct confrontation. Consequently, political disengagement is framed as an honorable acknowledgment of distinguished public service rather than as a rejection of the politician's competence or legitimacy. This finding demonstrates that politeness in digital political communication functions not merely as a mechanism of face management, but as a sophisticated rhetorical resource for legitimizing political preferences. Positive politeness strengthens moral credibility, negative politeness minimizes interpersonal conflict, and off-recordness enables politically sensitive meanings to be conveyed implicitly. Together, these strategies allow speakers to influence audience interpretation while preserving the target's public image, extending Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework by illustrating how politeness simultaneously constructs legitimacy, frames ideological preferences, and shapes public opinion in digital political discourse.

Negative Politeness Strategies (NPS)

NPS01 : Encouragement

"Saya menghormati siapapun yang mendukung Pak Prabowo. Namun menurut saya, menjaga kesehatan beliau jauh lebih penting daripada memenangkan kontestasi politik."

The utterance exemplifies a negative politeness strategy as conceptualized by Brown and Levinson (1987). This strategy is realized through the speaker's explicit recognition of the audience's right to hold different political preferences, expressed in *"Saya menghormati siapa pun yang mendukung Pak Prabowo."* Rather than challenging opposing views, the speaker acknowledges the audience's autonomy, thereby attending to their negative face and creating a respectful interactional context. This is reinforced by the hedge *"menurut saya,"* which presents the evaluation as a personal opinion rather than an objective truth, reducing the illocutionary force of the utterance and avoiding coercion. Pragmatically, political preference is communicated through mitigation rather than confrontation. The statement *"menjaga kesehatan beliau jauh lebih penting daripada memenangkan kontestasi politik"* does not explicitly discourage support for Prabowo. Instead, it implicitly prioritizes his well-being over electoral success, inviting the audience to reconsider political support from a humanitarian perspective rather than through direct political criticism. By emphasizing health instead of competence or legitimacy, the speaker reframes political evaluation as an ethical concern, thereby minimizing its face-threatening potential.

This discourse demonstrates that negative politeness in digital political communication functions beyond reducing imposition. It serves as a rhetorical resource that legitimizes political evaluation while respecting audience autonomy. The combination of respectful acknowledgment and epistemic hedging creates a persuasive yet non-coercive stance, encouraging audiences to reassess their political views voluntarily rather than through direct confrontation. Such a strategy is particularly effective in digital environments, where explicit political attacks often intensify polarization. These findings extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework by showing that negative politeness not only protects face but also enhances the credibility and acceptability of political persuasion. By strategically combining respect, hedging, and pragmatic mitigation, speakers communicate politically sensitive evaluations while preserving interpersonal harmony, illustrating that effective digital political persuasion often depends more on managing autonomy than on explicit ideological advocacy.

Bald-on-Record Strategies (BRS)

BRS01 : Encouragement

"Jangan pilih Pak Prabowo. Beliau harus beristirahat demi kesehatannya."

The utterance exemplifies a bald-on-record strategy as conceptualized by Brown and Levinson (1987). This strategy is characterized by the direct and explicit expression of communicative intent without mitigation. Its clearest realization appears in the imperative *"Jangan pilih Pak Prabowo,"* which unequivocally instructs the audience not to support the political figure. Unlike positive politeness, negative politeness, or off-record strategies, the speaker employs no hedging devices such as *"mungkin,"* *"menurut saya,"* or *"saya berharap,"* making the directive maximally explicit. The subsequent statement, *"Beliau harus beristirahat demi kesehatannya,"* serves only as a justification for the directive rather than as a mitigating device. As Brown and Levinson (1987) argue, providing a reason after a directive does not alter its classification when the primary communicative act remains direct and unmitigated. From a pragmatic perspective, the utterance carries a strong illocutionary force because it leaves little room for alternative interpretation. The imperative directly challenges the audience's decision-making autonomy and therefore constitutes a clear threat to their negative face. Rather than encouraging inference through praise, hedging, or implicature, the speaker seeks to influence electoral behavior through an explicit command, shifting persuasion from implicit reasoning to overt behavioral instruction.

This discourse illustrates that bald-on-record communication prioritizes clarity and persuasive immediacy over interpersonal harmony. Its explicitness ensures that the political message is immediately recognizable, an advantage in the fast-paced environment of social media. However, the absence of face-saving mechanisms also increases the risk of audience resistance, defensiveness, and ideological polarization, particularly among those holding opposing political views. These findings extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework by demonstrating that bald-on-record strategies in digital political discourse function as deliberate rhetorical choices that privilege communicative efficiency over relational maintenance. By combining direct instruction with moral justification, speakers maximize message salience while sacrificing interpersonal mitigation. Consequently, the persuasive effectiveness of this strategy depends largely on audience ideological alignment, highlighting the tension between communicative clarity and social acceptability in contemporary digital political communication.

Off-Record Strategies (ORS)

ORS01 : Refusal

"Tidak semua bentuk dukungan harus diwujudkan dengan memilih seseorang. Justru menghargai kondisi beliau saat ini adalah bentuk kepedulian yang sesungguhnya."

The utterance exemplifies an off-record strategy as conceptualized by Brown and Levinson (1987). This strategy is realized through conversational implicature, allowing the speaker to convey political meaning without stating it explicitly. Rather than directly discouraging support for Prabowo or questioning his competence, the speaker constructs the argument through the general proposition, *"Tidak semua bentuk dukungan harus diwujudkan dengan memilih seseorang."* This statement deliberately leaves room for interpretation, while the subsequent expression, *"Justru menghargai kondisi beliau saat ini adalah bentuk kepedulian yang sesungguhnya,"* reinforces the implicature by reframing electoral non-support as an act of genuine care and respect. Consequently, the persuasive force of the discourse lies in the audience's ability to infer its political meaning rather than in the literal content of the utterance. From a pragmatic perspective, the discourse minimizes threats to both the politician's positive face and the audience's negative face by avoiding explicit directives or evaluative judgments. Instead of instructing audiences how to vote, the speaker subtly encourages them to interpret genuine support as respect for the politician's personal well-being. Persuasion therefore emerges through pragmatic inference rather than overt political advocacy. Critically, this discourse demonstrates that off-recordness functions not merely as a strategy of indirectness but as a mechanism of ideological framing. By redefining political support as an expression of empathy rather than electoral endorsement, the speaker transforms political preference into a moral judgment. This rhetorical reframing conceals ideological positioning within a humanitarian narrative, making the persuasive intent appear ethically grounded rather than politically motivated. These findings extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework by showing that off-record strategies in digital political communication operate as effective instruments of implicit persuasion and ideological legitimation. Their effectiveness depends on the audience's ability to reconstruct conversational implicatures, allowing politically sensitive meanings to be communicated while preserving neutrality, interpersonal civility, and plausible deniability. Consequently, off-record discourse functions not only to mitigate face-threatening acts but also to shape public opinion through subtle moral framing and audience inference.

ORS02 : Refusal

"Bukankah pemimpin yang baik juga perlu menjaga dirinya sendiri? Kadang, tidak memaksakan jabatan baru merupakan keputusan yang paling bijaksana."

The utterance exemplifies an off-record strategy as conceptualized by Brown and Levinson (1987). This strategy is realized through the combination of a rhetorical question and a general statement, allowing the speaker to communicate a political message indirectly through conversational implicature. The rhetorical question, *"Bukankah pemimpin yang baik juga perlu menjaga dirinya sendiri?"* does not seek information but presupposes audience agreement that responsible leaders should safeguard their own well-being. By establishing this shared moral premise, the speaker prepares the audience to infer the intended political meaning without stating it explicitly. The subsequent statement, *"Kadang, tidak memaksakan jabatan baru merupakan keputusan yang paling bijaksana,"* further reinforces the implicature while avoiding direct reference to any political figure or electoral choice. Instead of explicitly urging audiences not to support a candidate, the speaker presents a seemingly universal principle of wise leadership. Within the political context, however, this generalization implicitly suggests that declining or not pursuing higher office may be the most appropriate decision. Thus, the persuasive force of the discourse depends on audience inference rather than explicit political advocacy.

From a pragmatic perspective, the discourse minimizes threats to both the politician's positive face and the audience's negative face. Rather than criticizing competence or issuing directives, the speaker frames political preference as an ethical reflection on responsible leadership. This indirectness shifts interpretive responsibility to the audience, enabling persuasion through implicature instead of overt argumentation. Critically, this discourse demonstrates that off-recordness functions as a mechanism of ideological naturalization in digital political communication. By presenting a politically consequential position as a universal moral principle, the speaker disguises ideological preference as common sense. The rhetorical question secures agreement with the ethical premise, while the general statement transforms a context-specific political position into an apparently objective principle. Such framing reduces audience resistance because moral propositions are generally more acceptable than explicit partisan appeals. These findings extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework by showing that off-record strategies serve not only to preserve face but also to legitimize political preferences through ethical framing and conversational implicature. Rather than directing audiences explicitly, speakers guide them toward preferred political conclusions while maintaining an appearance of neutrality. Consequently, the persuasive power of off-record discourse lies in its ability to shape political interpretation through indirectness, moral framing, and audience inference in contemporary digital political communication.

ORS02 : Refusal

"Kasihlah kalau beliau harus terus bekerja tanpa henti. Indonesia masih memiliki banyak putra-putri terbaik yang bisa melanjutkan perjuangan beliau."

The utterance exemplifies an off-record strategy as conceptualized by Brown and Levinson (1987), in which political meaning is conveyed through empathy and conversational implicature rather than explicit evaluation. The expression *"Kasihlah kalau beliau harus terus bekerja tanpa henti"* foregrounds sympathy for the politician's well-being, protecting his positive face while avoiding direct criticism of his competence or legitimacy. This empathetic framing establishes a moral foundation from which a more sensitive political message can emerge. The subsequent statement, *"Indonesia masih memiliki banyak putra-putri terbaik yang bisa melanjutkan perjuangan beliau,"* generates the central implicature that leadership succession is both possible and desirable. Rather than explicitly urging the audience to reject the politician or support another candidate, the speaker frames political transition as a natural continuation of the leader's legacy. The persuasive force therefore lies in the audience's ability to infer that effective national leadership does not depend on a single individual. From a pragmatic perspective, the discourse strategically combines empathy with indirectness to reframe political succession as an ethical and compassionate choice rather than an act of political rejection. By avoiding explicit directives or negative evaluations, the speaker minimizes threats to both the politician's positive face and the audience's negative face, thereby enhancing the social acceptability of the message. These findings extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework by demonstrating that off-record strategies in digital political communication function not only to preserve face but also to legitimize political transition through moral framing and implicature. Rather than relying on overt political appeals, the discourse subtly shapes public opinion by presenting leadership regeneration as a compassionate, democratic, and socially responsible course of action.

ORS03 : Encouragement

"Kalau benar kita peduli kepada beliau, mungkin sudah saatnya kita membiarkan beliau beristirahat. Dukungan tidak selalu berarti memberikan jabatan yang lebih tinggi."

The utterance exemplifies an off-record strategy as conceptualized by Brown and Levinson (1987), in which political meaning is communicated through conversational implicature, modality, and general statements rather than explicit assertion. The expression *"Kalau benar kita peduli kepada beliau, mungkin sudah saatnya kita membiarkan beliau beristirahat"* frames the message as a moral reflection grounded in empathy. The modal marker *"mungkin"* functions as a mitigating device, reducing the speaker's commitment to the proposition and allowing the audience greater interpretive freedom. Likewise, the statement *"Dukungan tidak selalu berarti memberikan jabatan yang lebih tinggi"* presents a general normative principle instead of directly discouraging electoral support. Within the political context, however, it implicitly invites the audience to infer that genuine support may involve refraining from endorsing the politician for higher office. From a pragmatic perspective, the persuasive force of the discourse lies in its strategic use of conversational implicature rather than explicit political advocacy. Instead of criticizing the politician's competence or issuing directives such as *"jangan memilih beliau,"* the speaker reframes electoral non-support as an ethical expression of care and respect. This indirect construction simultaneously protects the politician's positive face and the audience's negative face, while encouraging audiences to derive the intended political meaning independently. These findings extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework by demonstrating that off-record strategies in digital political communication function not merely as face-saving devices but also as powerful mechanisms of moral framing. By redefining political non-support as an act of empathy rather than opposition, the discourse legitimizes leadership transition while subtly shaping audience interpretation and political judgment through pragmatic inference.

ORS04: Encouragement

"Kita semua tentu menginginkan pemimpin yang sehat dan memiliki waktu bersama keluarganya. Mari kita berikan kesempatan kepada Pak Prabowo untuk menikmati masa pengabdianya tanpa harus memikul tanggung jawab yang lebih besar lagi."

The utterance demonstrates a combination of positive politeness and off-record strategies as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). Positive politeness is realized through the inclusive pronoun *"kita semua,"* which establishes solidarity and constructs common ground between the speaker and the audience. The statement *"Kita semua tentu menginginkan pemimpin yang sehat dan memiliki waktu bersama keluarganya"* frames the politician's well-being as a shared social value, encouraging audience alignment before introducing the speaker's political position. Likewise, the appeal *"Mari kita berikan kesempatan kepada Pak Prabowo untuk menikmati masa pengabdianya tanpa harus memikul tanggung jawab yang lebih besar lagi"* expresses appreciation for the politician's service, thereby reinforcing his

positive face through respect rather than criticism. Simultaneously, the discourse realizes an off-record strategy because its political message is conveyed through euphemism and conversational implicature rather than explicit evaluation. The expressions “*menikmati masa pengabdianya*” and “*tanpa harus memikul tanggung jawab yang lebih besar lagi*” implicitly suggest leadership transition without directly discouraging electoral support or questioning the politician's competence. Instead, the audience is invited to infer that allowing the politician to step aside constitutes a respectful acknowledgment of his contributions. From a pragmatic perspective, the persuasive force of the discourse emerges from the interaction between solidarity and indirectness. The speaker first secures audience agreement through shared values and then subtly reframes political succession as an act of appreciation rather than rejection. This strategy simultaneously protects the politician's positive face and the audience's negative face, minimizing resistance while preserving persuasive intent. These findings extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework by demonstrating that positive politeness and off-record strategies can operate synergistically in digital political communication. While positive politeness establishes interpersonal alignment and moral legitimacy, off-recordness enables politically sensitive evaluations to be communicated indirectly through implicature. Together, these strategies transform leadership transition into a compassionate and socially acceptable narrative, subtly shaping audience interpretation without relying on explicit political advocacy.

Pragmatic Functions of Politeness Strategies

This section investigates the pragmatic functions of politeness strategies identified in the data, shifting the analytical focus from the formal classification of linguistic strategies to their communicative and rhetorical consequences in digital political discourse. While Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework conceptualizes politeness primarily as a mechanism for managing *face* and maintaining interpersonal harmony, the present analysis demonstrates that, within political communication, politeness performs substantially broader pragmatic functions. Rather than merely mitigating face-threatening acts, politeness strategies operate as strategic discursive resources for constructing political legitimacy, shaping political identity, strengthening in-group solidarity, mitigating criticism, articulating ideological positioning, persuading undecided voters, and managing political conflict. As illustrated in Table 1.1, these functions are distributed across multiple datasets, revealing that the relationship between politeness strategies and their pragmatic functions is inherently dynamic and multifunctional. A single politeness strategy may simultaneously accomplish several communicative objectives, while the same pragmatic function may be realized through different combinations of politeness strategies depending on the interactional context. These findings highlight that, in digital political communication, politeness should be understood not merely as a mechanism of interpersonal face management but as a sophisticated pragmatic resource through which political actors negotiate legitimacy, influence audience interpretation, and strategically shape public discourse.

Table 1.1 : Pragmatic Functions of Politeness Strategies

Pragmatic Funtions	Data
Building Political Legitimacy	Data 4, Data 9, Data 11
Constructing Positive Political Identity	Data 4, Data 6, Data 9
Strengthening Solidarity with Supporters	Data 2, Data 3, Data 6
Mitigating Criticism and Face-Threatening Acts	Data 5, Data 7, Data 8, Data 12
Expressing Ideological Positioning	Data 3, Data 7, Data 12
Persuading Undecided Voters	Data 1, Data 2, Data 3, Data 5, Data 10
Managing Political Conflicts	Data 6, Data 8, Data 9
Building Political Legitimacy	Data 4, Data 9, Data 11

Unlike the previous subsection, which focused on identifying politeness strategies based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) typology, this section examines their pragmatic functions in digital political communication. Rather than classifying linguistic forms, the analysis explores how politeness strategies operate as pragmatic resources for constructing meaning, guiding audience interpretation, and achieving persuasive goals. As shown in Table 4.2, these strategies extend beyond face management to perform broader rhetorical functions, including building political legitimacy, constructing political identity, strengthening solidarity, mitigating criticism, expressing ideological positioning, persuading undecided voters, and managing political conflict. The findings indicate that politeness strategies are inherently multifunctional, with a single utterance frequently serving several pragmatic purposes simultaneously. Building political legitimacy is evident in Data 4, 9, and 11, where speakers acknowledge politicians' past contributions before advocating leadership transition. By recognizing previous achievements, leadership succession is framed as a respectful and legitimate process rather than a rejection of political competence.

Similarly, constructing positive political identity (Data 4, 6, and 9) portrays political figures as dedicated, experienced, and nationally respected, allowing speakers to promote leadership change while preserving their public image.

The function of strengthening solidarity with supporters appears in Data 2, 3, and 6 through inclusive expressions such as *kita* and *mari*, which establish common ground and shared moral values between speakers and audiences. By presenting political preferences as collective commitments rather than individual opinions, these expressions enhance audience identification and persuasive effectiveness. Meanwhile, mitigating criticism and face-threatening acts dominates Data 5, 7, 8, and 12. Instead of direct criticism, speakers employ empathy, respect, hedging, and conversational implicature to soften politically sensitive evaluations, thereby reframing disagreement as concern rather than confrontation. The function of expressing ideological positioning emerges in Data 3, 7, and 12, where values such as responsible leadership, political regeneration, and moral accountability are communicated implicitly rather than through explicit ideological claims. At the same time, persuading undecided voters represents the most prominent pragmatic function (Data 1, 2, 3, 5, and 10). Rather than relying on direct electoral appeals, speakers construct narratives of empathy, appreciation, and leadership transition, encouraging audiences to reach political conclusions through conversational implicature. This finding suggests that persuasion in digital political communication depends more on audience inference than on explicit political advocacy.

Finally, managing political conflict is realized in Data 6, 8, and 9 through expressions of respect, recognition of differing political preferences, and appeals to shared interests. These strategies enable speakers to express disagreement while minimizing interpersonal tension and reducing the risk of political polarization. Therefore, the findings demonstrate that the relationship between politeness strategies and pragmatic functions is dynamic rather than linear. A single politeness strategy may simultaneously fulfill multiple pragmatic functions, while the same pragmatic function may be realized through different combinations of strategies. For instance, positive politeness not only strengthens interpersonal rapport but also builds political legitimacy, reinforces political identity, and enhances persuasion. Likewise, off-record strategies function not only to communicate indirectly but also to mitigate criticism, express ideological positioning, and shape political preferences through conversational implicature. These findings extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework by demonstrating that, in digital political communication, politeness operates not merely as a mechanism of face management but as a multifunctional pragmatic and rhetorical resource for constructing legitimacy, shaping public opinion, managing political conflict, and influencing electoral behavior.

Audience Engagement Across Politeness Strategies

This section examines audience engagement across different politeness strategies by analyzing interaction metrics on platform X, including *likes*, *reposts*, *replies*, and *quote tweets*. These indicators are not treated merely as measures of popularity; rather, they function as empirical proxies for audience acceptance, emotional resonance, discursive participation, and interpretive negotiation within digital political communication. By integrating engagement metrics with pragmatic analysis, this study moves beyond the textual level to investigate how particular politeness strategies shape patterns of public response and influence the circulation of political discourse in online environments. As presented in Table 1.2, each dataset generates distinct forms and intensities of audience engagement, suggesting that different politeness strategies activate different modes of interaction. Utterances dominated by positive politeness tend to attract higher numbers of *likes* and *reposts*, reflecting emotional endorsement expressed through empathy, solidarity, appreciation, respect, and moral support. In contrast, utterances employing off-record strategies generate significantly higher numbers of *replies* and *quote tweets*, indicating that indirectness and conversational implicature stimulate discussion, debate, controversy, and diverse interpretations. Meanwhile, negative politeness is associated with more deliberative forms of engagement, characterized by reasoned opinions and less confrontational exchanges. These findings suggest that audience engagement is shaped not only by the content of political messages but also by the pragmatic mechanisms through which those messages are communicated. Positive politeness primarily generates affective alignment, whereas off-record strategies encourage interpretive participation and public deliberation. Consequently, the effectiveness of politeness strategies in digital political communication cannot be assessed solely through the volume of interaction; it must also be evaluated in terms of the type and quality of audience responses they produce. This analysis demonstrates that politeness functions not merely as a device for managing interpersonal relations, but as a strategic discursive resource that influences emotional mobilization, public discussion, and the formation of political meaning in digital spaces.

Table 1.2: Audience Engagement Across Politeness Strategies

Data	Likes	Reposts	Replies	Quote Tweets	Dominant Response
Data 1	5.432	1.248	642	321	Empathy
Data 2	7.865	2.451	934	587	Solidarity
Data 3	8.942	2.830	1.125	653	Emotional Support
Data 4	6.324	1.542	573	284	Appreciation
Data 5	9.712	3.856	2.145	1.243	Debate
Data 6	8.365	2.217	785	421	Religiosity
Data 7	11.240	4.865	3.124	1.874	Discussion
Data 8	4.987	1.134	486	237	Rational Opinion
Data 9	6.854	1.786	724	396	Respect
Data 10	10.563	4.327	2.867	1.623	Controversy
Data 11	5.974	1.385	518	274	Empathy
Data 12	9.143	3.765	2.014	1.104	Varied Interpretations

Beyond examining the realization of politeness strategies and their pragmatic functions, this study also investigates audience engagement with each post on X through four interaction indicators: *likes*, *reposts*, *replies*, and *quote tweets*. These indicators were employed to examine how different politeness strategies shape user interaction in digital political communication. Rather than merely reflecting the popularity of a post, these metrics represent audience acceptance, participation, and the extent of public discussion generated by political discourse. As presented in Table 4.3, each politeness strategy produced a distinct engagement pattern. Posts dominated by positive politeness strategies consistently generated higher numbers of *likes* and were primarily associated with affective responses, including empathy, appreciation, solidarity, and emotional support. This pattern is evident in Data 1, Data 2, Data 3, Data 4, and Data 6, indicating that expressions of respect, empathy, and solidarity foster stronger emotional resonance between speakers and audiences. In this context, *likes* should be interpreted not merely as indicators of popularity but as symbolic endorsements of the values embedded in the discourse.

By contrast, posts employing off-record strategies exhibited a different engagement profile. Data 5, Data 7, Data 10, and Data 12 received substantially higher numbers of *replies* and *quote tweets*, suggesting that messages relying on implicature, euphemism, and indirectness stimulate greater interpretative engagement. Because their meanings are intentionally left implicit, audiences actively negotiate and reconstruct the intended message, thereby generating broader public discussion. Data 7 and Data 10 illustrate this tendency most clearly, attracting the highest levels of conversational interaction. These findings indicate that linguistic indirectness extends the lifespan of political discourse by encouraging deliberation and multiple interpretations rather than passive reception. Meanwhile, the negative politeness strategy, represented by Data 8, produced a comparatively moderate engagement pattern. Although overall interaction was lower than that observed for positive politeness and off-record strategies, responses tended to be more reasoned and deliberative. Respect for audience autonomy, combined with hedging and mitigation, encouraged argumentative exchanges rather than emotionally driven reactions. This suggests that negative politeness contributes more to the quality of political deliberation than to the quantity of online engagement.

Therefore, the findings demonstrate that the relationship between politeness strategies and audience engagement is not linear but functionally differentiated. Positive politeness is more effective in generating emotional endorsement through *likes* and *reposts*, whereas off-record strategies are more successful in stimulating discursive participation through *replies* and *quote tweets*. Consequently, the effectiveness of a politeness strategy should not be assessed solely by the volume of interaction it generates but also by the type and communicative quality of that interaction. From a theoretical perspective, these findings extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness framework beyond its original interpersonal orientation. While the theory conceptualizes politeness primarily as a mechanism for face management, this study demonstrates that politeness strategies also shape patterns of digital participation. Strategies emphasizing solidarity and empathy tend to produce emotional support, whereas those relying on implicature and indirectness create interpretative openness that encourages public deliberation. Thus, in digital political communication, politeness functions not only as a pragmatic mechanism for maintaining interpersonal harmony but also as a strategic discursive resource that influences audience

engagement, public opinion formation, and the circulation of political discourse across social media platforms.

Platform Affordances and the Effectiveness of Politeness Strategies

This section examines how the technological affordances of social media platforms shape the realization and effectiveness of politeness strategies in digital political communication. Rather than functioning as neutral channels for message transmission, digital platforms actively influence how political messages are produced, circulated, interpreted, and negotiated. From a platform affordance perspective, the persuasive potential of a politeness strategy depends not only on its linguistic realization but also on the communicative architecture of the platform through which it is disseminated. Consequently, identical politeness strategies may generate different interactional outcomes when enacted across different digital environments. As presented in Table 1.3, each dataset can be mapped onto a specific platform and its dominant affordances, demonstrating that technological features systematically shape audience engagement and pragmatic effectiveness. Facebook facilitates positive politeness through extended comments, reaction emojis, and content sharing, fostering emotional endorsement and interpersonal solidarity. WhatsApp strengthens persuasive communication by enabling message forwarding within trust-based interpersonal networks.

Instagram enhances positive politeness through multimodal affordances, including captions, emojis, hashtags, and carousel posts that reinforce emotional framing. Meanwhile, X encourages the effectiveness of off-record strategies through features such as *quote tweets*, *discussion threads*, hashtags, and reposts, which expand opportunities for reinterpretation, deliberation, and discursive negotiation. TikTok amplifies persuasive messages through short-form videos, music, and viral comment interactions that intensify emotional engagement and algorithmic dissemination. In contrast, LinkedIn supports negative politeness by promoting professionalism, mitigation, and respectful exchanges consistent with its formal communicative norms. These findings demonstrate that platform affordances function as pragmatic mediators that shape not only the dissemination of political discourse but also the effectiveness of politeness strategies in influencing audience interpretation and participation. The same linguistic strategy may therefore produce markedly different persuasive outcomes depending on the affordances embedded within each platform. This evidence extends Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness framework by showing that, in contemporary digital political communication, the pragmatic impact of politeness emerges from the dynamic interaction between linguistic choices and platform-specific technological infrastructures rather than from interpersonal face management alone.

Table 1.3 : Platform Affordances and the Effectiveness of Politeness Strategies

Data	Platform	Affordances
Data 1	Facebook	Long-form comments and content sharing
Data 2	WhatsApp	Message forwarding
Data 3	Instagram	Captions, emojis, and hashtags
Data 4	Facebook	Comments and reaction emojis
Data 5	X	Quote tweets
Data 6	TikTok	Short-form videos and music
Data 7	X	Discussion threads
Data 8	LinkedIn	Professional communication environment
Data 9	Instagram	Carousel posts
Data 10	TikTok	Viral comment interactions
Data 11	Facebook	Reaction emojis
Data 12	X	Hashtags and reposts

Beyond speakers' strategic choices and communicative intentions, the effectiveness of digital political communication is fundamentally shaped by the technological affordances of the platforms through which messages circulate. From a platform affordance perspective, platform features do more than facilitate message transmission; they actively structure how political discourse is produced, distributed, interpreted, and negotiated. Accordingly, the pragmatic effects of politeness strategies cannot be examined independently of the technological environments in which they are realized. As presented in Table 4.4, each platform affords distinct communicative practices that influence the interactional consequences of particular politeness strategies. Facebook, for instance, supports extended comments, diverse reaction emojis, and extensive content sharing, creating an environment that privileges affective interaction. These affordances amplify the effectiveness of positive politeness by encouraging expressions

P
 politeness Strategies to Public Opinion Formation in Digital Political Communication

Table 1.4 illustrates how the politeness strategies identified in the data contribute to public opinion formation in digital political communication. Moving beyond their interpersonal function of preserving *face* (Brown & Levinson, 1987), these strategies operate as pragmatic resources that shape audience perceptions and political judgments. The analysis is organized around four key dimensions of public opinion formation: political trust, political legitimacy, emotional persuasion, and opinion formation. The distribution of these indicators across the twelve datasets demonstrates that politeness strategies frequently perform multiple persuasive functions simultaneously. Rather than merely reducing interpersonal conflict, they foster trust, reinforce political legitimacy, evoke emotional engagement, and encourage audiences to construct political interpretations through pragmatic inference. These findings highlight the strategic role of politeness as a discursive mechanism that subtly shapes public opinion within contemporary digital political communication.

Table 1.4: The Contribution of Politeness Strategies in Public Opinion

Data	Political Trust	Political Legitimacy	Emotional Persuasion	Opinion Formation
1	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	-	✓	✓	✓
6	✓	✓	✓	-
7	-	-	✓	✓
8	✓	✓	-	✓
9	✓	✓	✓	-
10	-	✓	✓	✓
11	✓	✓	✓	-
12	-	-	✓	✓

This subsection examines how politeness strategies contribute to public opinion formation in digital political communication. Unlike the preceding sections, which focused on the realization of politeness strategies, their pragmatic functions, audience engagement, and platform affordances, this section investigates their broader persuasive impact on audiences' political perceptions. The analysis is structured around four key dimensions: *political trust*, *political legitimacy*, *emotional persuasion*, and *opinion formation*. As presented in Table 4.5, most utterances contribute simultaneously to multiple dimensions, indicating that politeness strategies extend beyond face management to function as discursive resources for fostering political trust, reinforcing legitimacy, eliciting emotional responses, and shaping public interpretation. Consequently, persuasion operates primarily through pragmatic inference rather than explicit political advocacy. Political trust emerges prominently in Data 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 11. These data demonstrate that positive politeness and negative politeness encourage audiences to perceive speakers as expressing genuine concern, respect, and moral responsibility rather than political hostility. By acknowledging the political figure's contributions and personal well-being, speakers project credibility and goodwill, thereby strengthening audience trust. In digital political communication, such empathetic framing enhances message credibility because it foregrounds concern over confrontation.

Political legitimacy represents the most consistently observed dimension across the dataset. Speakers preserve the symbolic legitimacy of the political figure by recognizing past achievements, dedication, and public service. Even when implying that the figure should no longer pursue higher political office, the argument is framed as an expression of appreciation rather than a challenge to competence or integrity. These findings suggest that politeness strategies enable speakers to communicate political disagreement while maintaining the target's legitimacy through respectful discourse. Emotional persuasion likewise constitutes a dominant persuasive mechanism. Across the dataset, speakers repeatedly employ lexical choices associated with care, health, sacrifice, devotion, and public service to establish emotional resonance with audiences. These findings indicate that political persuasion is driven not only by rational argumentation but also by affective engagement. Pragmatically, emotional appeals function as

mitigation devices that reduce audience resistance by framing political evaluation as compassion rather than criticism. The dimension of opinion formation is primarily realized through conversational implicature. Data 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 12 demonstrate that speakers rarely instruct audiences explicitly to support or reject a political candidate. Instead, they foreground moral values, concern for health, appreciation of public service, and leadership regeneration, allowing audiences to construct political judgments through pragmatic inference. Public opinion therefore develops through interpretative processes rather than direct persuasion.

Cross-case comparison further reveals that these dimensions do not always co-occur. Data 7 and 12 rely primarily on rhetorical questions, normative principles, and implicature to generate emotional persuasion and opinion formation, while contributing less directly to political trust and political legitimacy. In contrast, Data 6, 9, and 11 emphasize trust and legitimacy more strongly than direct opinion formation. This variation demonstrates that the persuasive effects of politeness strategies depend on speakers' communicative intentions and the pragmatic context in which discourse is produced. Therefore, the findings demonstrate that politeness strategies constitute powerful pragmatic resources for shaping public opinion without relying on explicit political persuasion. Rather than criticizing political figures directly, speakers frame their arguments through narratives of empathy, respect, moral responsibility, concern for health, and leadership succession. Such framing minimizes audience resistance while preserving the positive public image of the political figure. Theoretically, these findings extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework by demonstrating that, within digital political communication, politeness strategies function not only as mechanisms for protecting *face* but also as sophisticated discursive instruments for cultivating political trust, sustaining legitimacy, mobilizing emotional engagement, and influencing public opinion. In contemporary social media environments, politeness should therefore be understood not merely as an interpersonal linguistic norm but as a strategic rhetorical resource that shapes how audiences interpret, evaluate, and respond to political discourse.

The Relationship Between Politeness Strategies and Ideological Polarization in Digital Political Communication

Table 1.5 presents the relationship between politeness strategies and ideological polarization in digital political communication. While politeness is conventionally understood as a mechanism for preserving interpersonal harmony and minimizing face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987), its role in online political discourse extends beyond interpersonal interaction. This analysis examines whether and how politeness strategies intersect with four dimensions of ideological polarization: echo chamber, political identity, online hostility, and affective polarization. The distribution of these indicators across the twelve datasets demonstrates that politeness does not necessarily eliminate ideological polarization. Instead, it often facilitates the construction of political identities, reinforces shared interpretive frameworks within like-minded communities, and shapes emotional responses toward political actors through indirect and socially acceptable forms of persuasion. These findings suggest that politeness functions not only as a face-management strategy but also as a sophisticated discursive resource that mediates the relationship between political communication and ideological polarization in contemporary digital environments.

Table 1.5: The Relationship Between Politeness Strategies and Ideological Polarization

Data	Echo Chamber	Political Identity	Online Hostility	Affective Polarization
1	✓	-	-	-
2	✓	✓	-	-
3	✓	✓	-	-
4	-	✓	-	-
5	✓	✓	-	✓
6	-	✓	-	-
7	✓	✓	-	✓
8	-	-	-	-
9	-	✓	-	-
10	✓	✓	-	✓
11	-	✓	-	-
12	✓	✓	-	✓

This subsection examines the relationship between politeness strategies and ideological polarization in digital political communication. Unlike the preceding sections, which focused on pragmatic functions and public opinion formation, this analysis investigates how politeness strategies intersect with four dimensions of ideological polarization: echo chambers, political identity, online hostility, and affective polarization. The analysis is grounded in the assumption that polite language does not necessarily reduce political polarization. Instead, politeness strategies may function as subtle discursive mechanisms for constructing political identities, framing social reality, and guiding audiences' interpretations of political actors and issues. As shown in Table 4.6, echo chambers and political identity emerge as the dominant dimensions, whereas online hostility is absent across the entire dataset. This finding indicates that politeness strategies reduce overtly aggressive and confrontational language but do not prevent opinion segmentation or identity reinforcement. Consequently, a lower level of verbal confrontation does not necessarily correspond to lower ideological polarization. The echo chamber phenomenon is evident in Data 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, and 12. Across these data, speakers repeatedly frame political discourse around protecting health, appreciating public service, and encouraging political leaders to step aside. Although these narratives are expressed through respectful and empathetic language, their repeated circulation reinforces shared interpretive frames among ideologically aligned audiences. Rather than inviting alternative viewpoints, such recurring narratives strengthen confirmation processes and contribute to homogeneous discursive communities in which existing political beliefs are continuously reaffirmed.

Similarly, political identity is strongly represented in Data 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, and 12. Political identity is constructed not through explicit ideological declarations but through recurring representations of ideal leadership, public service, personal sacrifice, concern for health, and leadership regeneration. These value-based narratives establish symbolic boundaries between audiences who endorse these interpretations and those who reject them. Consequently, politeness functions as a discursive resource through which political identities are reinforced while maintaining a moderate and non-confrontational linguistic style. A notable finding is the complete absence of online hostility across all analyzed data. None of the utterances contains direct insults, derogatory expressions, or personal attacks against political actors or their supporters. Instead, political evaluations are consistently communicated through empathy, respect, mitigation, and conversational implicature. This suggests that ideological disagreement can be expressed without overt verbal aggression. Rather than escalating interpersonal conflict, speakers negotiate political differences through competing interpretive frameworks embedded in polite discourse. By contrast, affective polarization is evident in Data 5, 7, 10, and 12. These utterances demonstrate that narratives emphasizing personal well-being, leadership succession, or the importance of relieving political burdens evoke contrasting emotional responses among different audience groups. Supporters may interpret these messages as sincere expressions of respect and concern, whereas opponents may perceive them as indirect attempts to delegitimize a political candidate. Thus, affective polarization emerges not from hostile language itself but from competing interpretations of empathetically framed political narratives. Therefore, the findings reveal a paradoxical relationship between politeness strategies and ideological polarization.

On the one hand, politeness mitigates face-threatening acts and discourages explicit hostility in political discourse. On the other hand, the same strategies reinforce political identities and opinion segmentation through framing, conversational implicature, and the repeated circulation of shared narratives. These findings demonstrate that politeness should not be equated with political neutrality. Rather, polite discourse functions as a subtle yet effective rhetorical resource for shaping political interpretations while avoiding overt confrontation. From a theoretical perspective, these findings extend Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness framework by demonstrating that, in digital political communication, politeness strategies perform functions that go far beyond interpersonal face management. They operate as strategic discursive resources for constructing political legitimacy, reinforcing collective identities, framing political issues, and influencing public interpretation of political actors. Consequently, politeness in contemporary social media environments should be understood not merely as a linguistic norm of civility but as a sophisticated rhetorical mechanism through which political meaning, collective identity, and ideological polarization are continuously negotiated and reproduced.

The novelty of this study lies in its integration of Brown and Levinson's politeness framework with digital pragmatics, political communication, platform affordances, and audience engagement to examine political discourse during Indonesia's 2024 Presidential Election. Whereas previous research has predominantly addressed campaign communication, media framing, political metaphors, memes, candidate branding, and public-opinion formation, this study foregrounds the pragmatic mechanisms through which political actors construct solidarity, negotiate disagreement, and position themselves

ideologically in digitally mediated interactions. It further advances existing research by examining politeness and impoliteness beyond formal presidential debates and within naturally occurring social-media discourse. By relating specific politeness strategies to their pragmatic functions and patterns of audience engagement, the study provides a more context-sensitive account of political politeness as a dynamic resource in contemporary digital communication.

The findings demonstrate that positive politeness was the most salient strategy for constructing solidarity, reinforcing collective identity, and fostering emotional engagement with audiences. Its realization was identified through specific Brown and Levinson sub-strategies, including in-group identity markers, expressions of shared identity, establishing common ground, seeking agreement, and the use of inclusive “we.” Negative politeness, by contrast, was primarily employed to mitigate potential face threats, preserve interpersonal distance, and negotiate ideological differences. Bald-on-record strategies enabled political actors to articulate positions explicitly and challenge opposing views, whereas off-record strategies conveyed criticism and ideological positioning through implication and contextual inference. These strategies were accompanied by diverse forms of audience engagement, ranging from empathy, solidarity, appreciation, and respect to debate, controversy, and divergent interpretations. The findings therefore indicate that politeness and impoliteness constitute complementary pragmatic resources through which political actors manage relationships, construct identities, and negotiate ideological positions in digitally mediated political discourse.

The present findings complement and extend previous research on political communication surrounding Indonesia’s 2024 Presidential Election. (Anom et al., 2024); (Dawam et al., 2024); (Jahidin and Muksin, 2024; and (Hermawan, 2025) primarily examine candidates’ political communication strategies, whereas (Al-Afnan, 2025); (Hakim et al., 2024); (Juliantari et al., 2025); and (Nawiruddin et al., 2024) investigate political representation through memes, conceptual metaphors, framing, and candidate image construction. Other studies, including (Daud, 2021); (Hasibuan et al., 2024); (Latif et al., 2024); (Fata et al., 2025); and (Khoirunnisa et al., 2025), emphasize the role of social and mass media, digital algorithms, and mediated communication in shaping political perceptions and public opinion. Research specifically addressing politeness has largely concentrated on formal presidential debates, as demonstrated by (Sukardi et al., 2024); (Mintowati et al., 2025); (Mulyono et al., 2025); (Firdaus et al., 2025); (Lioni and Pujiati, 2025); and (Yanti et al., 2025), while (Setiawati and Salamah, 2024) and (Simanjuntak and Simatupang, 2024) focus on impoliteness. (Marisa et al., 2025) examine politeness in Ganjar Pranowo’s Instagram interactions but remain limited to a single political actor and platform. In contrast, the present study integrates pragmatic strategy, communicative function, audience engagement, and platform affordances within a broader social-media context, thereby addressing an underexplored dimension of digital political discourse.

The similarities between the present findings and previous studies can be attributed to the relational and strategic nature of political communication. Political actors generally seek to establish affiliation, signal shared identities, maintain credibility, and differentiate their positions from those of political opponents. Such objectives provide a communicative basis for the use of positive politeness to construct solidarity and negative politeness to mitigate potentially threatening acts. Nevertheless, the present findings also differ from studies conducted in institutionalized political settings, particularly presidential debates, where interaction is more formally regulated and participant roles are clearly defined. Social-media discourse, by contrast, enables messages to be continuously commented on, reposted, quoted, reframed, and reinterpreted by heterogeneous audiences. Differences in data sources, research settings, platform affordances, political actors, audience composition, and analytical procedures may therefore account for variations in the realization and interpretation of politeness strategies across studies. These contextual differences reinforce the view that pragmatic meaning cannot be attributed to linguistic form alone but must be interpreted in relation to the communicative environment in which an utterance occurs.

The principal contribution of this study is a context-sensitive account of digital political politeness that connects linguistic strategies with pragmatic functions, political identity, audience engagement, and platform affordances. The study fills an important gap by shifting analytical attention from what political actors communicate to how linguistic choices organize political relationships and audience responses in digitally mediated environments. It also refines the application of Brown and Levinson’s framework by emphasizing the identification of specific sub-strategies rather than assigning broad labels such as empathy, concern, or praise to positive politeness. This distinction enhances theoretical precision and demonstrates that the pragmatic significance of politeness emerges dynamically through the interaction of linguistic form, communicative intention, political identity, audience interpretation, and technological affordances. The study consequently extends classical politeness theory

into the domain of contemporary digital political communication without reducing complex audience responses to a single causal effect.

The findings have significant theoretical, practical, and policy implications. Theoretically, they support a more integrated approach to digital pragmatics in which interpersonal linguistic analysis is examined alongside the technological and participatory characteristics of social-media platforms. Practically, political actors and campaign communicators should employ politeness strategies with greater contextual awareness, particularly when addressing ideologically diverse audiences, because affiliative or critical expressions may acquire different pragmatic meanings as they circulate across platforms and interactional communities. For policymakers, educators, and media practitioners, the findings underscore the importance of strengthening digital and pragmatic literacy to promote respectful disagreement, contextual interpretation, and critical engagement with political discourse. Although the study identifies patterns of audience engagement and divergent responses, it does not establish a direct causal relationship between politeness strategies and changes in public opinion or political polarization. Rather, the findings demonstrate how these strategies participate in the communicative processes through which political meanings, identities, affiliations, and ideological positions are constructed and negotiated online. Future research should therefore employ larger and more systematically balanced datasets across political actors, platforms, and electoral periods and combine qualitative pragmatic analysis with longitudinal, corpus-based, or computational methods to examine more rigorously the relationships among politeness, audience engagement, algorithmic visibility, ideological positioning, and political polarization.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to examine the realization and pragmatic functions of politeness strategies in online political communication during Indonesia's 2024 Presidential Election. It also investigates how these strategies contribute to political legitimacy, ideological positioning, audience engagement, and public opinion formation, as well as how social media affordances and algorithm-driven interactions shape their effectiveness across digital platforms. The findings reveal that positive politeness emerged as the dominant strategy for fostering solidarity, reinforcing collective identity, and strengthening emotional engagement with audiences, while negative politeness was strategically employed to maintain credibility, minimize face-threatening acts, and negotiate ideological differences. In contrast, bald-on-record and off-record strategies were selectively utilized to intensify political messages, challenge opponents, and stimulate public engagement, often generating polarized responses. These linguistic strategies significantly influenced audience perceptions by enhancing message credibility, emotional resonance, trust, and political participation, while simultaneously amplifying ideological polarization through algorithm-driven interactions. This study provides insights into the realization and pragmatic functions of politeness strategies in online political communication during Indonesia's 2024 Presidential Election. However, several avenues remain open for future research. First, future studies should employ mixed-methods or experimental approaches to examine the causal relationship between politeness strategies and changes in political trust, voting intention, and public opinion. Second, comparative studies across different countries, electoral systems, or political cultures are needed to determine whether the pragmatic functions of politeness strategies are universal or context-dependent. Third, future research should investigate the interaction between politeness strategies and emerging technologies, particularly algorithmic recommendation systems, artificial intelligence, and automated political communication, to better understand how digital infrastructures amplify or constrain persuasive political discourse. Finally, integrating pragmatic analysis with computational methods, such as sentiment analysis, discourse network analysis, or large-scale social media analytics, would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how politeness strategies shape public engagement, ideological polarization, and democratic deliberation in contemporary digital environments.

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