

## STRATEGIES OF IMPOLITENESS IN THE KEEPING UP WITH THE KARDASHIANS SERIES ON YOUTUBE

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### Abstract

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**Keywords:**  
*Impoliteness,*  
*impoliteness*  
*strategies,*  
*pragmatics.*

The primary goal of this descriptive qualitative study was to investigate the strategies of impoliteness used by the speakers in the Keeping Up With The Kardashians series on YouTube. The utterances which contain the strategies of impoliteness uttered by the speakers within the series were taken as the data. Furthermore, the data were analyzed by identifying the impoliteness strategy according to Culpeper (2005)'s theory. Descriptive qualitative by Creswell & Creswell (2018) was performed in this research. The observational method was used as the method to collect the data. Furthermore, to analyze the data pragmatic identity method was conducted along with equalizing technique. The results showed at least fifteen utterances produced by the speakers with an impoliteness strategy in the three videos of the Keeping Up With The Kardashians series. The four (4) data showed negative impoliteness, four (4) data showed sarcasm / mock politeness, three (3) data showed withhold politeness, two (2) data showed bald on record, and two (2) data showed positive impoliteness. The negative impoliteness was the most frequently used by the speakers in the Keeping Up With The Kardashians series. Impoliteness is not always performed by rude behaviors but a simple utterance can also indicate the act of impoliteness.

**Kata Kunci:**  
*Ketidaksantunan,*  
*strategi*  
*ketidaksantunan,*  
*pragmatik.*

### Abstrak

Tujuan utama dari penelitian kualitatif deskriptif ini adalah untuk menyelidiki strategi ketidaksantunan yang digunakan oleh para pembicara dalam serial *Keeping Up With The Kardashians* di YouTube. Ujaran-ujaran yang mengandung strategi-strategi ketidaksantunan yang diucapkan oleh penutur dalam rangkaian tersebut diambil sebagai data. Selanjutnya, data dianalisis dengan mengidentifikasi strategi ketidaksantunan menurut teori Culpeper (2005). Deskriptif kualitatif oleh Creswell & Creswell (2018) dilakukan dalam penelitian ini. Metode observasi digunakan sebagai metode untuk mengumpulkan data. Selanjutnya untuk menganalisis

data identitas pragmatis dilakukan dengan teknik penyamaan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan setidaknya ada lima belas ujaran yang dihasilkan oleh narasumber dengan strategi ketidaksantunan dalam tiga video serial *Keeping Up With The Kardashians*. Empat (4) data menunjukkan ketidaksantunan negatif, empat (4) data menunjukkan sarkasme/pura-pura, tiga (3) data menunjukkan menahan kesantunan, dua (2) data menunjukkan strategi ketidaksantunan secara langsung, dan dua (2) data menunjukkan ketidaksantunan positif. Ketidaksopanan negatif adalah yang paling sering digunakan oleh para pembicara dalam serial *Keeping Up With The Kardashians*. Ketidaksopanan tidak selalu dilakukan dengan perilaku kasar tetapi ucapan sederhana juga dapat menunjukkan tindakan ketidaksopanan.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Communication is the way for human to interact with each other to fulfill their needs as social creatures. There are many ways to perform communication such as by doing a conversation, writing a message, or using sign language to communicate between speaker and hearer. By applying communication in daily life, people can deliver their intention which is conveyed in their message or utterance. Furthermore, people can also express their feelings through communication. The feeling of anger, happiness, sadness, and even confusion can be seen in someone's statements verbally or non-verbally. However, to deliver their message and intention well, the speaker and hearer should know how to do it properly to minimize the arising of social conflict. In brief, knowing the existence of impoliteness strategies in communication can help the speaker and hearer to perform their utterances appropriately.

The phenomena of impoliteness happened not only in the real life but also on social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others. The researchers found a tweet written on the official Twitter account of the American president, Joe Biden (@JoeBiden), posted on March 28, 2022. He wrote:

“Russia’s economy was ranked the 11th biggest company in the world before this invasion. **It will soon not even rank among the top 20 in the world.**”

The statement he wrote about the economic condition of Russia is clear without ambiguity. He talked about how Russia's invasion will impact its economic rank in the world. His statement directly embarrassed Russia by saying their economic rank will reduce not even among the top 20 in the world. Biden's statement raised pros and contra among the netizens but most of them agreed with what Biden said and mocked Russia as well so it ruined the reputation of Russia. As said by Culpeper (2011), bald on record is supposedly the strategy of some options for situations where the face threat is low, and off-record is for situations where the face threat is high.

In the report of Culpeper (2005), he said that impoliteness is one kind of phenomenon that has something to do with how the breach is communicated and taken. He also proposed that impoliteness is not an identical face-threat, it is intentional, is not banter, and last it is not bald on record politeness. As believed by Yule (2017), face in pragmatics is about the image of the public self and when we say something that shows a threat to someone's self-image it is called Face-Threatening Act (FTA). Another statement by Bousfield & Locher (2008), impoliteness is explained as behaviour that is aggravating to the face in a specific and certain context. Impolite expressions have an impact on the relationships between social communities. There are at least five impoliteness strategies according to Culpeper (2005) and they are bald on record, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm or mock impoliteness, and withhold politeness.

(1) Bald on record: This strategy occurred when the Face-Threatening Act (FTA) happened in a clear, unambiguous, direct, and also performed briefly to the face that is not irrelevant or minimized. The example is as follows.

Miranda : **“Anyway, you ended up disappointing me more than, um-more than any the other silly girls.”**

Andrea : “Um, I really did everything I could think of.” (Ratri & Ardi, 2019)

(2) Positive impoliteness: As stated by Culpeper (2005) this strategy is constructed to attack and damage the positive face of the addressee using the act of ignoring, disassociating, and excluding another speaker along with the use of inappropriate identity marks. The example is shown below.

Geisz : “... **when the case rises, just take it easy.** Anies has explained the issues well” (Putri et al., 2021)

- (3) Negative impoliteness: This strategy is used to attack and damage the negative face of the addressee’s wants. As explained by Culpeper (2005) to identify this strategy can be seen from the use of frightening, invading, scorning, and ridiculing the interlocutor. There are two examples of negative impoliteness as follow.

“As far as I know, **people who don't have a purpose in life are usually addicted to crystal meth**” (Pangaribuan et al., 2021)

Celestina : “You all done with that?”

Ramsay : “Yeah thank you, darling.”

Celestina : “No problem.”

Ramsay : “And this one of **the worst urine samples** you could ever give.”

Celestina : “(Laugh) thank you.” (Milal & Pramono, 2021)

- (4) Sarcasm or mock politeness: This strategy occurred when the FTA accomplished with the use of politeness strategies and it is insincere and remains the realisation. By using this strategy, the utterances are said in explicit meaning with the use of sarcasm and the aim is for being offensive to the hearer. The utterance of this strategy is shown below.

Thomas : “This is going to be difficult for you to hear, but he did it. He detonated it.”

Bea : “**He’s a rabbit.**”

Thomas : “I know. But somehow, he found the detonator, and he took his paw... And he did all that to come between us. (Sari et al., 2019).”

- (5) Withhold politeness: This strategy happened when the politeness absence is succeeded work in where it is expected to be. It is to attack speaker’s face by saying nothing in return and failing to show the politeness is that expected by the speaker from the interlocutor for example failing to thank. Below is the example.

Nadine’s mother : “You promised. Now, get out of the car.”

Nadine : **(SIGHS)** (Suhandoko et al., 2021)

From those explanations about impoliteness strategies, another expression of impoliteness was found in the “Kardashian-Jenner Sisters FIGHT Over Borrowed Clothes” video on their YouTube channel named Keeping Up With The Kardashians. This video was released on March 7th, 2022 and some of the clips from the video of this family got viral on social media because of the chaos that happened in that family and how they used bad language toward each other. The researchers found a dialogue between the siblings, Kendall (the speaker) and Kylie (the hearer).

Kendall : “No. Kylie!  
Kylie : “You know it is not necessary to borrow my shit.”  
**Kendall : “You’re just literally the biggest fucking bitch I’ve ever met.”** (00:50 – 00:54)

In this conversation, the speaker showed her disappointment towards the hearer (hearer) directly through her utterances. The speaker said something rude and unpleasant word to the hearer without hesitation to express her anger. However, the hearer did not say anything in return after hearing what the speaker said to her. As stated by Culpeper (2005), bald on record has occurred when the speaker directly attacks or damages the interlocutor’s face without having any intention to hide his/her feeling.

The researchers took two previous studies to overview the study regarding impoliteness strategies. The first previous study was conducted by (Kadhun & Abbas, 2021) used the theory of Culpeper (1996, 2015) regarding impoliteness strategies. Their data source of the research was taken from The Marva Collins movie as a case study. They undergone a descriptive qualitative method in this research. As for the result, they concluded the prominent strategy of impoliteness was positive impoliteness and withholding politeness.

Moreover, the impoliteness strategies research was also done by (Novalia & Ambalegin, 2022) with their aimed at analyzing the impoliteness strategies occurred in their data source Deddy Corbuzier’s Podcast on YouTube. Their main theory of this research was the impoliteness strategies based on the theory of Culpeper (1996). The researchers applied the descriptive qualitative method as the research methodology. The result showed the strategies in impoliteness performed

by the speaker and hearer in the podcast with five bald on record, four positive impoliteness, three negative impoliteness, two sarcasm or mock politeness, and one withhold politeness in the utterances.

From the previous and present research used different theory regarding impoliteness strategies which this research used the updated theory of Culpeper (2005). Compare to the previous studies, this research also had different data source to use. This research took three viral videos from the “Keeping Up With The Kardashians” series on YouTube as the data source because the researchers found related phenomena with the theory regarding impoliteness. Hence, it will be analyzed to find the impoliteness strategies used by the cast within the series. The necessity in conducting this research is to evaluate and serve a study regarding impoliteness strategies that occurred in social environment as we need to socialize and build a good relationship with each other.

## **METHOD**

Descriptive qualitative research is used for this research. As stated by Creswell & Creswell (2018), qualitative research is a method for investigating and comprehending the meanings that individuals or organizations assign to a social or human issue. Accordingly, Miles et al., (2014) discussed how the qualitative method describes how people interact, act, and handle situations in particular circumstances. Moreover, the strategies of impoliteness of the speakers were taken as the data source. The observational method by Sudaryanto (2015) was completed by watching the Keeping Up With The Kardashians video series. There are several steps for collecting the data. Firstly, the researchers watched the three videos of Kardashian’s family in the Keeping Up With The Kardashians series. Secondly, while watching the video, the researchers read the script as well at the same time and transcribed it to written utterances. Lastly, the researchers pointed out the utterance of impoliteness strategies.

As the method of analysing, pragmatic identity method averred by Sudaryanto (2015) was applied in this study. Furthermore, the equalizing is the technique of the pragmatic competence and was used to construct the context.

Which by means, the data was analysed by equalizing the data source with the theory. There are several steps to analyse the data that will be done by the researchers. Firstly, the researchers discovered the context of the points that already highlighted. Then the researchers analysed the strategies of impoliteness with the theory of Culpeper (2005). At the end, displayed the findings that were found in the data source.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Finding***

The appearance of impoliteness strategies found in this research within the three viral videos of Keeping Up With The Kardashians series on YouTube. There were fifteen utterances contained the impoliteness strategies that were uttered in a conversation. The discovered impoliteness strategies in the utterances were negative impoliteness, sarcasm or mock politeness, withhold politeness, bald on record, and positive impoliteness. The numbers of impoliteness strategies are displayed in table 1 below.

**Table 1: Impoliteness Strategies in the Keeping Up With The Kardashians Series**

<b>Impoliteness Strategies</b>	<b>Total</b>
Negative impoliteness	4
Sarcasm or mock politeness	4
Withhold politeness	3
Bald on record	2
Positive impoliteness	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>

### ***Discussion***

#### **Data 1**

**Context** : This is taken from the video titled “Kardashian-Jenner Sisters Fight Over Borrowed Clothes”. The conversation took place in the room of Kourtney held by the speaker called the hearer via video call to asked for an opinion towards their old sister’s dress to be worn on her birthday party later on.

**Khloe** : “Do you like this? Hold on.”

**Kim** : “For her birthday?”

Khloe : “Yeah, it’s vintage Dior.”  
(01:32 – 01:38)

The speaker showed the dress worn by Kourtney then asked about how it looks and the hearer answered out of the question “**for her birthday?**”. Both hearer and speaker knew that Kourtney will celebrate her birthday however, the hearer uttered the answer as if she mocks the dress. From the utterances of the hearer, the speaker showed an awkward face and tried to make things clear to comfort Kourtney. As the outcome, **sarcasm or mock politeness** is used in this utterance. Affirmed by Culpeper (2005) sarcasm can be seen from the utterances said in explicit meaning with the aim for being offensive to the hearer.

### **Data 2**

**Context** : The scene is still the same as in the data 1. After Kim talking with Khloe, Kourtney then took over the conversation and they were talking about whose dress is better with Kim.

**Kourtney** : “Yeah, I don’t know what you are talking about I’ve never dressed like you.”  
**Kim** : “...”  
(01:51 – 01:55)

Kim (the hearer) was accusing Kourtney (the speaker) for imitated her style in dressing that makes Kourtney mad. Then the speaker showed impoliteness by scorning the hearer about her tastes in dressing that can be seen in the speaker’s utterance “**...I’ve never dressed like you**”. There hearer did not say anything in return. In this conversation the speaker used **negative impoliteness** strategy.

### **Data 3**

**Context** : The conversation took place in their house when Kylie (the speaker) saw her sibling Kendall (the hearer) and tried to greet her after having an argument.

**Kylie** : “You look cute, Kendall.”  
**Kendall** : “Oh, like you deserve the outfit more.”  
(04:35 – 04:41)

The speaker said something nice to the hearer by complimenting her. However, because before the speaker and hearer had a fight over a dress, the hearer did not reply the utterance in a nice way. The hearer did not say thank you



over the compliment that given by the speaker. Which by means, in this conversation the impoliteness strategy that applied is **withhold politeness** because the hearer was failing to thank.

#### **Data 4**

**Context** : The conversation took place in Kim's bedroom. Kourtney (the hearer) came in to apologize to Kim (the speaker) about the fight over a dress and she was mocking Kim.

**Kim** : "Hi, Kourt. I thought you were mad at me."

Kourtney : "No, I, uhm..."

Kim : "You couldn't resist."

(05:19 – 05:26)

The speaker saw the hearer came in into her bedroom and then greet her. However, the speaker was directly saying an utterance that sounds like ridiculing the hearer because they were fighting before but then the hearer came to her. It can be seen from the utterance of the speaker "**I thought you were mad at me**" with mocking tone and the hearer could not reply the utterance properly as if she was confused to react. This shows **negative impoliteness** as the speaker tried to tease and ridicule the hearer. As explained by Culpeper (2005) negative impoliteness is used to attack and damage the face of the addressee's wants.

#### **Data 5**

**Context** : It was in a dining room and they were about to have dinner together, Kardashians family. Kris (the hearer) was the first one sitting in the dining room and then came Kourtney (the speaker).

**Kourtney** : "Mom, that outfit is really not flattering on you."

Kris : "..."

(07:38 – 07:41)

The speaker came and then saw the hearer sat in there. She was showing off her outfit to the hearer and then she commented the hearer's outfit explicitly instead of saying it looked ugly on her. The hearer did not say anything in return. This shows the use of **sarcasm/mock politeness** in impoliteness strategy.

### **Data 6**

**Context** : In the dining room, Khloe and her husband were about to get a sit for having dinner. However, since Kris did not expect the visitation of Corey because he never attended the dinner before so she was acting cynical towards Corey.

**Kris** : **“Oh, Corey. I thought you were never gonna get here. I would have you sit next to me but my Birken bag is sitting here so do you wanna sit next to my Birken bag?”**

**Corey** : I’ll sit next to your bag.  
(08:25 – 08:34)

Kris (the speaker) did not expect Corey (the hearer) came to the dinner. Since the dinner was supposed to be a family gathering of the Kardashians, the speaker did not adequately welcome the hearer. The speaker showed that she was ridiculing him by saying **“I thought you were never gonna get here”** and offered him to sit next to her bag instead of her. The hearer was acting awkward towards the utterances of the speaker. The outcome of this strategy is **negative impoliteness**.

### **Data 7**

**Context** : Khloe saw her sister and complained about Kourtney’s look especially the shoes. She was comparing their outfit and Khloe seems not happy with Kourtney.

**Kourtney** : **“Khloe, you can sit here but I really am not into those shoes.”**

**Khloe** : “What’s wrong with my shoes.”  
(08:34 – 08:40)

Kourtney (the speaker) offered Khloe (the hearer) to sit next to her, however, the speaker was staring cynically at the hearer and said that she did not like the shoes worn by the hearer. Instead of saying it looked ugly, the speaker uttered her opinion explicitly by saying **“I really am not into those shoes.”** The hearer is offended by the speaker’s utterances. In this scene, the speaker used **sarcasm/mock politeness**.

### **Data 8**

**Context** : Another daughter of Kris came, Kim. She was late to attend the dinner because she had to do some family business by her own.

Kris : “You’re doing amazing sweetie, amazing.”

**Kim** : “...”

(10:46 – 10:50)

Kris (the speaker) tried to compliment her daughter, Kim (the hearer) for working hard that day. However, the hearer was feeling upset that time because she felt like she was doing everything by herself. As the result, the hearer did not say anything in return and ignored the compliment given by the speaker.

**Withhold politeness** is used by the hearer since she was failing to thank the speaker and said nothing. This strategy applies to attack speaker’s face by saying nothing in return and failing to show the politeness (Culpeper, 1996).

#### **Data 9**

**Context** : This scene was taken from the video with title “Kris Jenner Literally Does Everything”. Khloe (the speaker) was working out at the gym due to her pregnancy. Then her mom, Kris (the hearer) came to see the speaker. She wanted to do the exercise alone by herself because her mom was not helping at all.

Khloe : “What are you doing here?”

Kris : “I came to help you work out.”

**Khloe** : “**What?**”

(01:23 – 01:26)

The speaker did not expect the visitation of her mom, the hearer. The speaker asked why the hearer was there because she did not want to be interrupted while working out. The intention of the hearer was good. However, the speaker was not happy with that so she did not appreciate the help that offered by the hearer. This means the speaker used **withhold politeness** that can be seen from her response by saying “**what?**” instead of thanking.

#### **Data 10**

**Context** : Still in the same video, in this scene Kris asked Khloe to be her assistant and helped her at work that day. Khloe then followed every activity that Kris did that time and was asked to buy Kris a lunch.

**Kris** : “Why don’t you bring my lunch in and I’ll eat quickly and then we can go over what the afternoon looks like. And make sure you record datelines.”

Khloe : “...”  
(06:17 – 06:25)

The utterance was delivered by Kris (the speaker) to Khloe (the hearer) after they arrived at the office of the speaker. The speaker asked the hearer to prepare her lunch for herself only. The hearer did not say anything in return and just went to do what the speaker asked. However, the hearer seems upset when the speaker said that because it made her feel like a servant. This shows **positive impoliteness** in the impoliteness strategies because the speaker was using the act of excluding or disassociating the hearer.

#### **Data 11**

**Context** : The conversation was held in the gym center where the Kardashians were working out. Kim was struggling to do the exercise and she felt like there was nothing as the outcome. Then she asked her father, Bruce who was also doing exercise.

**Bruce** : “Well, the thing is if you ain’t sweating you ain’t working.”

Kim : “That’s not true.”  
(04:35 – 04:39)

This utterance was uttered by Bruce (the speaker) to Kim (the hearer) when the hearer asked him why she was not sweating while working out. The speaker then directly attacked the hearer in a clear and unambiguous way. It made the hearer offended. The utterance said by the speaker showed the use of **bald on record** since he expressed it clearly and briefly.

#### **Data 12**

**Context** : Then came Khloe with her intention to annoy her father, Bruce who was helping Kim to do the exercise properly. Bruce was mad at Khloe because of that.

**Bruce** : “No, Khloe, come on, we’re working out. Just go, go, leave, leave.”

Khloe : “We can’t talk?”

Bruce : “No. Not to us. She’s working out.”  
(05:15 – 05:22)

The utterance was delivered by Bruce (the speaker) to Khloe (the hearer) because the hearer interrupted the speaker in the middle of working out with Kim. The speaker then asked the hearer to leave them even though the hearer wanted to talk. This shows the strategy of impoliteness in the act of ignoring and excluding another speaker, **positive impoliteness**. Culpeper (2005) explained this strategy is happened to attack the positive face of the addressee using the act of excluding another speaker.

### **Data 13**

**Context** : The next data is taken from another series titled “Khloe’s Drunk Arrest”. Khloe finally went back home after her arrest at the police station due to DUI. The conversation took place in the family room where all of them gather there and talked about Khloe’s matter.

**Bruce** : “This is the first I’ve heard about it? **I mean that’s really stupid you know.**”

Khloe : “...”  
(03:04 – 03:09)

Bruce (the speaker) was upset and delivered his utterance to his daughter, Khloe (the hearer) after knowing that she was getting arrested due to DUI. The speaker showed his disappointment towards his daughter, the hearer by saying how **stupid** it was for getting caught because of driving under the influence of alcohol. The speaker uttered his utterance clearly and directly to damage the face of the hearer and by mean of this the speaker was using **bald on record** of the impoliteness strategy. When the Face-Threatening Act (FTA) happened in a clear, unambiguous, direct, and also performed briefly to the face, it is called bald on record (Culpeper, 2005).

### **Data 14**

**Context** : Kim also advised Khloe, the youngest sister in Kardashians to act carefully especially while driving.

**Kim** : “**Forget about yourself. Kill yourself, that’s fine. It’s selfish of you to go and harm other people.**”

Khloe : “...”  
(03:31 – 03:36)

The utterance was uttered by Kim (the speaker) when she was talking to her sister, Khloe (the hearer) about how dangerous the DUI was. The speaker gave

advice to the hearer but it seems like she was invading the speaker by saying some mean things to the hearer. The hearer was just listening without saying anything. Hence, the strategy of impoliteness above is **negative impoliteness**.

#### **Data 15**

**Context** : Then Bruce, the father continued the conversation and expressed his disappointment towards Khloe due to her arrest.

**Bruce** : “**Congratulations, Khloe. You’re the first one in the family to get a DUI. Well way to go, Khloe.**”

**Khloe** : “...”  
(03:37 – 03:42)

The utterance was delivered by Bruce (the speaker) to congratulate her daughter, Khloe (the hearer) for getting arrested due to DUI. The speaker said she was the first one with DUI case in the family so he congratulated the speaker for that. DUI is not a good thing, hence, by mean of this the speaker was mocking the hearer with the use of sarcasm. As the outcome, the impoliteness strategy used by the speaker is **sarcasm or mock politeness**.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Impoliteness has a big role in communication. In order to build and maintain a good relationship in a community through communication, people should understand and aware with the existence of impoliteness strategies. As explained by the theory of impoliteness, it is an action that is upsetting to the face or self-public image of someone in a certain circumstance. By mean of this, impoliteness is not always performed by rude behaviors but a simple utterance can also indicate the act of impoliteness. To be more precise, it can be seen from the most dominant impoliteness strategies occurred in the data source was negative impoliteness. Even though their utterances did not contain harsh words, it succeeded to attack the face of someone by frightening, invading and scorning. In conclusion, it is necessary to learn about impoliteness strategies and the application of it in social interaction since it is also influencing the intention conveyed in an utterance.

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