

## IMPOLITNESS IN THE 2024 INDONESIAN PRESIDENTIAL AND VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE DEBATE: SOCIOPRAGMATIC STUDY

Muhammad Yusi Kamhar<sup>1✉</sup>, Kisyani Laksono<sup>2</sup>, Mulyono<sup>3</sup>, Suhartono<sup>4</sup>

Universitas Negeri Surabaya<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>

✉ [muhammad.yusi22047@mhs.unesa.ac.id](mailto:muhammad.yusi22047@mhs.unesa.ac.id)

### Abstract:

This paper analyzes various strategies of impoliteness in the debates of the presidential and vice-presidential candidates in Indonesia for the year 2024 using a Sociopragmatic approach. The research aims to explore various forms of violations of politeness maxims according to Leech's theory, such as the maxim of tact, the maxim of approbation, the maxim of modesty, the maxim of agreement, and the maxim of sympathy. The method employed in this research is descriptive qualitative method with data collection techniques through documentation. Data analysis is conducted by examining, interpreting, and analyzing the manifestations of linguistic impoliteness in the debates of presidential and vice-presidential candidates in 2024. The research findings indicate violations of all three politeness maxims in these interactions. This article recommends further research development on the six maxims within Leech's politeness theory. These findings are expected to contribute to the advancement of linguistics as a field and provide valuable insights for policymakers, political practitioners, and the general public.

**Keywords:** *Impoliteness, Debate, Politeness Maxims, Sociopragmatics*

Political debates play a critical role in shaping public opinion and determining the political landscape. The 2024 Indonesian presidential debates provide a unique opportunity to examine how language, specifically impoliteness strategies, influences the effectiveness of communication and public perception. Utilizing Geoffrey Leech's Politeness Maxims, this study aims to analyze breaches in these maxims and interpret their impact on voter behavior and democratic engagement (Rahim et al., 2023). The findings intend to contribute to linguistic and pragmatic studies by detailing the use of impoliteness in political rhetoric and offer insights for political practitioners on fostering more ethical and effective communication strategies.

The 2024 Indonesian presidential and vice-presidential debates are crucial components of the democratic process, providing a platform for candidates to present their visions and demonstrate their communication skills. The language used in these debates often involves complex persuasion techniques, including strategic impoliteness, which plays a critical role in how candidates argue and counter their opponents (Bippus & Young, 2020; Hammod & Abdul-Rassul, 2017; Woolard, 2020). Analyzing these instances of impoliteness offers valuable insights into the communication strategies employed by candidates to enhance their arguments or undermine their rivals.

Impoliteness in language can manifest both verbally and non-verbally (Bippus & Young, 2020). Verbal impoliteness includes verbal aggression such as swearing, mocking, and insulting, often seen in oral communication among students. Cooper identifies nine categories of verbal aggression, including belittling, rejection, blaming, exaggerating faults, threats, cursing, regretting, unfair comparisons, and negative predictions. In political debates, impoliteness ranges from direct attacks to subtle insinuations, reflecting power dynamics and persuasive strategies aimed at influencing public opinion (Cooper, 2016). This study examines such phenomena using Geoffrey Leech's politeness maxims, focusing on wisdom, praise, modesty, agreement, and sympathy, all of which can be violated in debates.

## HEADING 2

### Pragmatic

Pragmatic theory, particularly as developed by Geoffrey Leech and further expanded by Brown and Levinson, offers a sophisticated lens for analyzing speech acts within the complex realm of political communication. Leech's Principles of Politeness emphasizes the necessity for communication to adhere to certain societal norms to be considered polite. These norms govern the ways in which individuals interact within various social contexts, setting expectations for respectful and considerate communication. In political debates, the adherence to or violation of these norms can profoundly influence the public's perception of a candidate, thus impacting their political effectiveness and appeal (Chatzikyriakidis, 2020). Building upon Leech's foundational work, Brown and Levinson introduced a nuanced theory that includes politeness strategies specifically designed to mitigate the effects of face-threatening acts (Culpeper et al., 2017). These acts are communicative behaviors that risk harming the listener's sense of self-esteem or social identity.

Brown and Levinson's theory further elaborates on the use of politeness strategies that vary in directness, from overt challenges to more subtle hints or suggestions (Saleem et al., 2021). These strategies are instrumental in a debate setting, allowing candidates to express disagreement or critique without overtly offending the opponent or the audience. This balance is vital in maintaining a persona that is both assertive and likable, capable of leadership yet still relatable and respectful to the electorate.

### **Sociopragmatics**

Sociopragmatics plays a crucial role in understanding how language is used within specific social contexts, particularly in environments as charged as political debates. This subfield of pragmatics examines how various social factors such as status, power, and social distance influence communicative choices. These elements are particularly salient in political contexts, where the dynamics between speakers can significantly shift the perception and effectiveness of their spoken words. By examining these social variables, sociopragmatics provides insights into why certain linguistic strategies are employed and how they are received by different segments of the population (Abd El-Jawad, 2000).

Janet Holmes, a noted sociopragmatist, argues that an effective communication strategy in political arenas must consider underlying social factors that could influence the impact of language (Abd El-Jawad, 2000). These include recognizing power relations,

status differences among speakers and listeners, and the perceived social distance between them. In a debate, a candidate might use more formal language when addressing an issue of national security to project authority and seriousness, while switching to a more colloquial tone when discussing local issues to appear approachable and relatable. Such shifts not only reflect strategic linguistic choices but also a keen awareness of sociopragmatic principles (Nuryani et al., 2021). Thus, sociopragmatics offers a valuable lens through which the intricate dance of language use in political debates can be analyzed, providing deeper insights into the tactical deployment of rhetoric in pursuit of political power.

### HEADING 3

This research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach to explore the dynamics of impoliteness in the political debates of Indonesian presidential and vice presidential candidates in 2024. The qualitative approach allows for in-depth analysis of complex linguistic phenomena and linguistic impoliteness cannot be measured quantitatively (Kamhar et al., 2024). This study focuses on violations of Geoffrey Leech's maxim of politeness. Primary data in the form of debate transcripts accompanied by secondary data from academic literature will be collected through video recordings which are transcribed and analyzed to identify forms of verbal and non-verbal incivility. Analysis involved initial coding, categorization, contextual interpretation, and theory integration as depicted in the following table.

Data Encoding Table

Debate Session Code	Data Classification Based on Maxims	Data Source Initial Code
1	TM: (Tact Maxim)	ARB.01: (Capres 1)
2	GM: (Generosity Maxim)	MI.01: (Cawapres 1)
3	AM: (Approbation Maxim)	PS.02: (Capres 2)
4	MM: (Modesty Maxim)	GRR.02 (Cawapres 2)
	AgM: (Agreement Maxim)	GP.03 (Capres 3)
	SM: (Sympathy Maxim)	MMd.03 (Cawapres 3)

Validity and reliability were strengthened through triangulation and inter-rater analysis, although this study had limitations in analyzing the nuances of non-verbal communication and the potential for subjectivity in contextual interpretation. The research aims to provide in-depth insight into the dynamics of political debate and its impact on democracy and voter behavior in Indonesia.

## HEADING 4

### Debate Analysis 1

In the political debates analyzed, the author observed various violations of politeness maxims that reflect the complexity of social interactions and communication strategies within the political arena. A sociopragmatic investigation reveals how language serves not only as a medium of information but also as a tool for social influence and power. The following is the data for debate 1.

**Debate Table 1**  
**Data on Violations of the Maxim of Politeness**

Data	Data Code
<b>Banyak aturan ditekuk sesuai dengan kepentingan yang sedang memegang kekuasaan</b>	1/TM/ARB.01
<b>Ada yang lebih penting saya kira, meskipun seluruh proses memang harus dilalui</b>	1/GM/GP.03
<b>Mas anis..mas Anis.. Saya berpendapat, mas Anis ini berlebihan... Kalau demokrasi kita tidak berjalan, tidak mungkin Anda jadi Gubernur.</b>	1/AM/PS.02
<b>Pak Prabowo, perlu saya sampaikan bahwa Ketika kami bertugas di Jakarta, maka ada begitu banyak ijin-ijin Gereja yang mandek 30 tahun, 40 tahun dan tuntas dibereskan. Dalam Sejarah gubernur Jakarta, yang paling banyak memberikan ijin rumah ibadah adalah Gubernur Anisbaswedan.</b>	1/MM/ARB.01
<b>Susah kalau kita menyalahkan angin, hujan, ya mungkin tidak perlu ada pemerintahan</b>	1/AgM/PS.02
<b>Inilah bedanya orang berbicara memakai data dengan orang berbicara memakai fiksi</b>	1/AgM/ARB.01
<b>Kita ini bukan anak kecil mas Anis, Anda juga paham, sudahlah, sekarang begini, intinya rakyat yang putusan, rakyat yang menilai, kalau rakyat tidak suka Prabowo Gibran, gak usah pilih kami Saudara2 sekalian</b>	1/AM/PS.02
<b>Mas Anis, Sorry yeee...Sorry yeee..</b>	1/SM/PS.02

In the 2024 Indonesian presidential debates, candidates' communication strategies reveal a complex interplay between maintaining politeness and advancing their political agendas, often resulting in violations of Geoffrey Leech's maxims of politeness. For instance, the wisdom maxim, which emphasizes the importance of respecting rules and the democratic process, is blatantly disregarded in statements like "Banyak aturan ditekuk sesuai dengan kepentingan yang sedang memegang kekuasaan." Such remarks imply that the existing power structure manipulates rules for personal gain, thereby showing a lack of respect for democratic norms and processes.

Furthermore, the generosity maxim, which involves prioritizing others' needs, is also often compromised. A statement like "Ada yang lebih penting saya kira, meskipun seluruh proses memang harus dilalui" suggests prioritizing certain issues over

procedural integrity, which may neglect the importance of following established processes. Similarly, the approbation maxim, intended to avoid criticism and instead offer praise, is violated when candidates make personal attacks under the guise of praising democracy, as seen in "Mas Anis ini berlebihan... Kalau demokrasi kita tidak berjalan, tidak mungkin Anda jadi Gubernur." While this statement acknowledges democratic success, it simultaneously undermines an individual opponent, reflecting a strategic yet impolite critique.

Lastly, candidates frequently disregard the agreement maxim and the sympathy maxim, essential for fostering harmony and empathy in conversation. Phrases like "Susah kalau kita menyalahkan angin, hujan, ya mungkin tidak perlu ada pemerintahan" and "Inilah bedanya orang berbicara memakai data dengan orang berbicara memakai fiksi" reveal a tendency to challenge and subtly criticize opponents, rather than seeking common ground or expressing genuine sympathy. Statements like "Mas Anis, Sorry yeee...Sorry yeee..." may sound sympathetic but can be interpreted as condescending, thereby failing to show genuine empathy. These strategic violations illustrate how candidates maneuver language to undermine their opponents while risking their credibility and potentially alienating segments of the audience.

## Debate Analysis 2

Based on the analysis of the second vice-presidential debate from the provided transcript, it appears that various maxims of politeness are often violated during intense and strategic interactions among the debate participants. These violations not only illustrate the dynamics of power and conflict but also show how political communication can become an arena for complex social influence.

As a result of gaining knowledge through studying with scholars, Al-Mawardi has a talent and tendency for political fiqh that began to be ingrained in his body. One of his works on political fiqh, namely *Ál-Ahkam Al-Sulthaniyah wa Al-Wilayat Al-Diniyah* (Bakry, 2021).

**Debate Table 2**  
**Data on Violations of the Maxim of Politeness**

Data	Data Code
Gus Muhaimin ini agak aneh ya. Pengen bangun kota selevel Jakarta, tapi enggak setuju sama IKN, tapi ya monggo lah ya enggak apa-apa.	2/TM/GRR.02
Yang saya tanyakan belum dijawab. Saya itu tenang saya itu tanya tips and triknya agar investasi ataupun project-project besar bisa di sana.	2/TM/MI.01

Sejauh yang kita baca, sampai sekarang belum ada satu pun investor yang masuk ke sana. Coba kalau ada, sebutkan. Kalau ada, sebutkan	2/GM/MMd.03
Apa sih perbedaan antara penerimaan pajak dan tax ratio. Anda bicara 23%. 23% dari apa ini? Kalau anda bicara bahwa beda antara penerimaan pajak dan tax ratio atau rasio pajak. Kan kalau persen kaitannya dengan PDB. Apa 23% dari APBN atau apa. Kalau 23% dari APBN, itu salah.	2/AM/MMd.03
Pak Mahfud, kalau diplomasi sebagai pemasaran itu normatif ya. Ini sudah menjadi pengetahuan umum. Yang paling penting itu adalah bagaimana <i>nyelep</i> para diplomat agar berubah wajah menjadi pemasar-pemasar yang tangguh.	2/AM/MI.01
Mungkin Prof Mahfud dan Gus Muhaimin kurang paham dengan apa yang sudah saya paparkan. Saya tadi juga bicara masalah infrastruktur sosial. Stunting itu lho, Pak. Tapi, enggak apa-apa. Saya perjelas lagi.	2/MM/GRR.02
Barang kali mas Gibran sudah tahu, atau belum tahu juga, karena ini baru.	2/MM/MMd.03
Kalau masalah SIPD, ya tentu saya tahu pak. Saya kan wali kota pak. Saya pasti pakai SIPD, untuk perencanaan anggaran kami pak. Tapi kembali lagi ke pertanyaan saya pak, pak Prof Mahfud menjawab 2 menit, tapi pertanyaan saya belum dijawab sama sekali Pak	2/MM/GRR.02
Mas Gibran yang terhormat. Tadi itu pertanyaan yang dibaca oleh moderator, bagaimana strategi paslon untuk memastikan penyediaan infrastruktur sosial tanpa membebani keuangan daerah? Kayaknya belum terjawab.	2/AgM/MMd.03
Target 5,5 sampai 6% itu dengan kalkulasi agar kalau kita tidak terlampaui realistis, kita khawatir ujung-ujungnya utang luar negeri lagi. Utang luar negeri yang terlampaui banyak ini mengakibatkan beban bukan hanya pemerintahan hari ini, tetapi juga anak turun kita akan mengalami banyak beban hutang yang panjang.	2/AgM/MI.01
kita punya sistem baru yang lebih efektif dan ramah terhadap investasi, tetapi sekali lagi, pemerintah terlampaui lambat dalam mengimplementasikan itu semua, sehingga harus kita <i>slepet</i> , supaya lebih cepat lagi menyediakan sarana dan prasarana bagi percepatan izin.	2/SM/MI.01
karena Prof Mahfud adalah ahli hukum, saya ingin bertanya bagaimana regulasi untuk <i>Carbon Capture and Storage</i> .	2/SM/GRR.02
Sejauh yang kita baca, sampai sekarang belum ada satu pun investor yang masuk ke sana. Coba kalau ada, sebutkan. Kalau ada, sebutkan.	2/SM/MMd.03

During the second political debate, various interactions among the candidates demonstrated frequent violations of Geoffrey Leech's politeness maxims, shedding light on the complex strategies and interactions employed. Notably, the Maxim of Wisdom was often breached, exemplified by Gibran's provocative questioning of Mahfud and the pointed remarks both exchanged regarding their respective stances and inconsistencies, particularly concerning environmental commitments and past support for projects. This approach, while potentially engaging for an audience, risks distorting the productive discourse and could lead to misinformation. Mahfud's direct challenge to Muhaimin's knowledge and Muhaimin's unanswered queries about large-scale investments further illustrate the strategic yet confrontational use of language in the debate.

In terms of the Maxims of Generosity and Praise, the debate setting also highlighted a lack of constructive engagement and acknowledgment of valid points across

the board. For instance, Mahfud’s critique of tax revenue explanations and Muhaimin's normative response to questions about diplomacy showcased a dismissive attitude rather than an openness to dialogue. Such interactions suggest a reluctance to explore common ground or appreciate the nuances in each other's arguments, focusing instead on highlighting flaws or oversimplifications. Gibran’s assertions about his administrative actions in Solo, meant to showcase transparency and accountability, paradoxically did little to foster a humble or collaborative atmosphere, often overshadowing an opportunity for meaningful exchange.

Finally, the Maxim of Agreement and Sympathy were scarcely observed, with most discourse marked by sharp criticisms and minimal efforts to empathize with opposing viewpoints. Mahfud’s challenge to Muhaimin’s ambitious urban development plans and Gibran’s call for straightforward answers underline a broader pattern of communication marked more by contention than by consensus-building. These dynamics, while indicative of a robust democratic process, point to a potential erosion of trust and cooperation essential for effective governance. In summary, while such debates are crucial for public engagement and accountability, the frequent violations of politeness maxims could hinder the long-term effectiveness of political communication and the ability to achieve pragmatic, collaborative solutions.

### Debate Analysis 3

From the analysis in Table 3 concerning the political debate involving Anis, Ganjar, and Prabowo, we can identify several violations of Geoffrey Leech's politeness maxims. The data shows that in this political debate context, violations of politeness maxims are often used as a strategic tool to strengthen one's own position while weakening the opponent, which may be effective in a debate but potentially damaging in a broader and more collaborative communication context.

**Debate Table 3**  
**Data on Violations of the Maxim of Politeness**

Data	Data Code
“Berapa skor yang bapak berikan atas kinerja Kementerian pertahanan yang dipimpin oleh bapak Prabowo”. <b>Anis</b> “Lima”. <b>Ganjar</b> “Kalau menurut saya skornya di bawah lima mas Ganjar, kalau 5 terlalu tinggi” <b>Anis</b> “Mas Anis gak usah takut, disebut saja angkanya berapa gtu lho, kayak saya gtu lho, jangan di bawah lima, sebut saja berpa” <b>Ganjar</b> “sebelas dari seratus” <b>Anis</b>	3/TM/ARB.01

Bapak presiden menyampaikan, bapak punya lahan lebih dari 340.000 hektar, sementara TNI kita, prajurit kita lebih dari separuh tidak punya rumah dinas, itu fakta tidak perlu dibicarakan secara tertutup, itu kekurangan yang harus kita perbaiki.	3/GM/ ARB.01
Bapak tadi mengatakan, akan meningkatkan kesejahteraan, pak, bapak ini sudah Menhan sudah 4 tahun hamper 5 tahun, bukan calon Menhan, jadi harusnya menunjukkan inilah yang sudah saya kerjakan, bukan mengatakan apa yang akan dilakukan.	3/AM/ ARB.01
Ini sedikit ngajari kendel mas Anis biar berani, Apa yang kemudian saya lakukan untuk membela para TNI kita, saya bersama mereka, mendengarkan, saya berkeliling Indonesia, saya mampir bertemu mereka.	3/MM/GRR.02
Data-data yang bapak pegang adalah keliru, dan juga pak Ganjar tadi juga banyak kelirunya, saya sangat transparan, dan semua partai yang mengukung bapak Profesor Anis mendukung APBN, berarti mendukung program saya.	3/AgM/GRR.02
Saya senang sekali, bapak memantik saya data saya tidak benar, silakan bantah data saya hari ini pak, dan saya ijin kan kalau ada staf mau bantu.	

Based on the analysis of data from Table 3, it is evident that violations of politeness maxims occur during the debate. In the political debate that took place, various communication dynamics emerged among the candidates, reflecting both the use and violation of Geoffrey Leech's politeness maxims. From the data provided, we observe intense interactions between Anis, Ganjar, and Prabowo. For example, Anis questioned Ganjar about his assessment of the performance of the Ministry of Defense led by Prabowo. Ganjar responded with a score of "five," which Anis then questioned as being too high, subsequently suggesting a score of "eleven out of a hundred." This indicates a violation of the maxim of wisdom, where Ganjar and Anis disagreed on a relevant and objective assessment, prompting Anis to state a very low evaluation.

Anis also highlighted the issue of Prabowo's extensive land ownership in contrast with the lack of official housing for TNI soldiers, emphasizing shortcomings in the government that should be addressed, reflecting the use of the maxim of generosity where he focuses on the deficiencies that need to be corrected rather than concealing the situation. Furthermore, Anis criticized Prabowo, who has served as the Minister of Defense but still talks about what will be done in the future rather than what has been successfully achieved, showing a violation of the maxim of approbation because it does not acknowledge existing performance.

From Ganjar's side, he tried to teach Anis to be bolder in expressing his opinions, and Prabowo defended himself by asserting transparency and support from political parties for his programs, and criticized the data used by Anis and Ganjar as incorrect, which implies an effort to maintain integrity within the maxim of agreement.

Through these interactions, it can be seen that the debate is not only an arena for the battle of ideas but also a field where communication ethics and rhetorical strategies are at stake. Violations of politeness maxims, although potentially damaging to the effectiveness of communication, are used by the candidates to sharpen attacks and defend their respective positions, showcasing the complexity in the dynamics of modern political communication.

### Debate Analysis 4

The data presented in Table 4 will reveal violations of politeness maxims, underscoring the complex dynamics and strategies employed during the political debate. These findings indicate how, during such debates, participants frequently disregard the principles of effective and respectful communication as outlined by Geoffrey Leech. This analysis demonstrates the critical role language plays as a tool of power, which not only impacts the debate's quality but also affects public communication efficacy.

**Debate Table 4**  
**Data on Violations of the Maxim of Politeness**

Data	Data Code
Gus Muhaimin ini lucu ya, menanyakan tentang lingkungan hidup, tapi itu kok pakai botol-botol plastic, padahal saya pak Ganjar prof Mahfud, pakai botol kaca, itu bagimna itu komitmennya,	4/TM/GRR.02
Saya lagi cari jawaban Prof Mahfud, saya nyari-nyari di mana ini jawabannya, kok gak ketemu, saya tanya masalah inflasi hijau, kok malah menjelaskan ekonomi hijau.	4/TM/GRR.02
Saya juga ingin mencari jawabannya, ngawur juga tuh, gila ini, ngarang-ngarang ndak karuan, mengaitkan sesuatu yang tidak ada, gini lho kalau akademis itu pertanyaan kayak gtu itu recehan. Itu tidak layak dijawab menurut saya.	4/TM/MMd.03
Terima kasih mas Gibran, apa yang Anda sampaikan hanya mengulang apa yang saya sampaikan.	4/GM/MI.01
Enak banget ya Gus ya jawabnya sambil membaca catatan tadi.	4/AM/GRR.02
Mungkin Gus Muhaimin tidak paham dengan pertanyaan yang diberikan ke saya, mungkin dapat contekan dari pak Tom Lembong mungkin ya.	4/MM/GRR.02
Sepertinya Prof Mahfud agak ngambek ya, soalnya sudah dua kali saya memberikan pertanyaan yang sulit, selalu dikomen pertanyaan receh, ya kalau receh dijawab pak.	4/AgM/GRR.02
Mas Gibran saya mengormati Anda sebagai calon wakil presiden, sehingga saya tidak akan bicara secara menjebak dan receh-receh.	4/SM/MMd.03
Sepertinya Prof Mahfud agak ngambek ya, soalnya sudah dua kali saya memberikan pertanyaan yang sulit, selalu dikomen pertanyaan receh, ya kalau receh dijawab pak.	4/SM/GRR.02

In the analysis of the fourth debate, clear violations of politeness maxims highlight the intense and often confrontational nature of political discourse. Provocative interactions frequently breach the maxim of wisdom, where candidates like Gibran pose

challenging questions not conducive to constructive dialogue, and Prabowo asserts universal support for his proposals, potentially coercing consensus rather than fostering genuine agreement. These tactics demonstrate strategic communication used to dominate rather than enlighten the debate, undermining the potential for nuanced understanding among the audience.

The debate also shows a frequent disregard for the maxims of generosity and praise. Participants often fail to recognize or appreciate opposing viewpoints, with instances like Muhaimin's dismissal of Gibran's contributions reflecting a broader reluctance to engage positively with competitors. This atmosphere is compounded by the near absence of commendation for valid arguments, where instead, participants focus on criticizing and highlighting flaws in each other's statements. Such dynamics emphasize conflict over collaboration, detracting from the substantive evaluation of policies and ideas.

Furthermore, modesty and sympathy are seldom evident in the interactions, with candidates displaying overt confidence and often neglecting the potential impact of their words on others. This lack of empathy and humility not only colors the debate as aggressively competitive but also risks alienating the electorate from the democratic process. Overall, the fourth debate serves as a stark example of how the neglect of politeness maxims can lead to a focus on personal victory rather than productive political discussion. This underscores the need for political communications to adhere more closely to ethical standards that promote respect, understanding, and constructive public discourse.

## CONCLUSION

The sociopragmatic analysis of the 2024 Indonesian presidential and vice-presidential debates reveals that candidates strategically use impoliteness to challenge opponents and control the narrative, often at the expense of substantive policy discussions. While these tactics capture voter attention, they risk prioritizing personality over policy and misleading voters. The findings highlight the need for ethical communication practices in candidate training and better voter education to distinguish between rhetoric and substantive policy. This approach aims to enhance public discourse and strengthen democracy by fostering a more informed electorate. Future research

should explore how these strategies affect voter behavior and election outcomes to promote a political environment valuing transparency and respect.

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