POLITENESS IN THE COMMENT SECTION OF AN INTERVIEW VIDEO WITH THE FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL EHUD OLMERT ON EURONEWS YOUTUBE CHANNEL

A THESIS

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ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM

FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES

HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY

MAKASSAR

2024

LEGITIMATION

THESIS

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BY

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It has been examined before the Board of Thesis Examination on Monday, 12 August 2024 and is declare to have fulfilled the requirements.
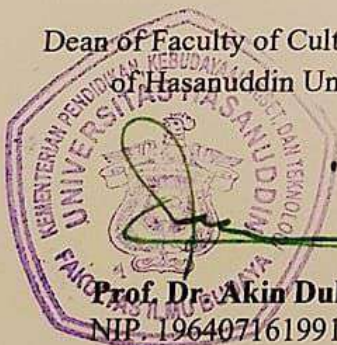
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With reference to the letter of the dean of Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University No. 1265/UN4.9.1/KEP/2023 regarding supervision, we hereby confirm to approve the undergraduate thesis draft by Muhammad Nur Abul Khair (F041171339) to be examined at the English Literature Study Program of Faculty of Cultural Sciences.

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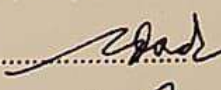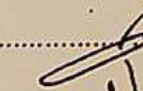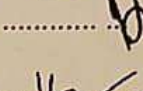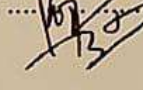
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AGREEMENT

On August 16, 2024, the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by Muhammad Nur Abul Khair (F041171339) entitled Politeness in The Comment Section of An Interview Video With The Former Prime Minister of israel Ehud Olmert on Euronews Youtube Channel submitted in fulfillment of one of the requirements to obtain *Sarjana* Degree in English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

Makassar, August 16, 2024
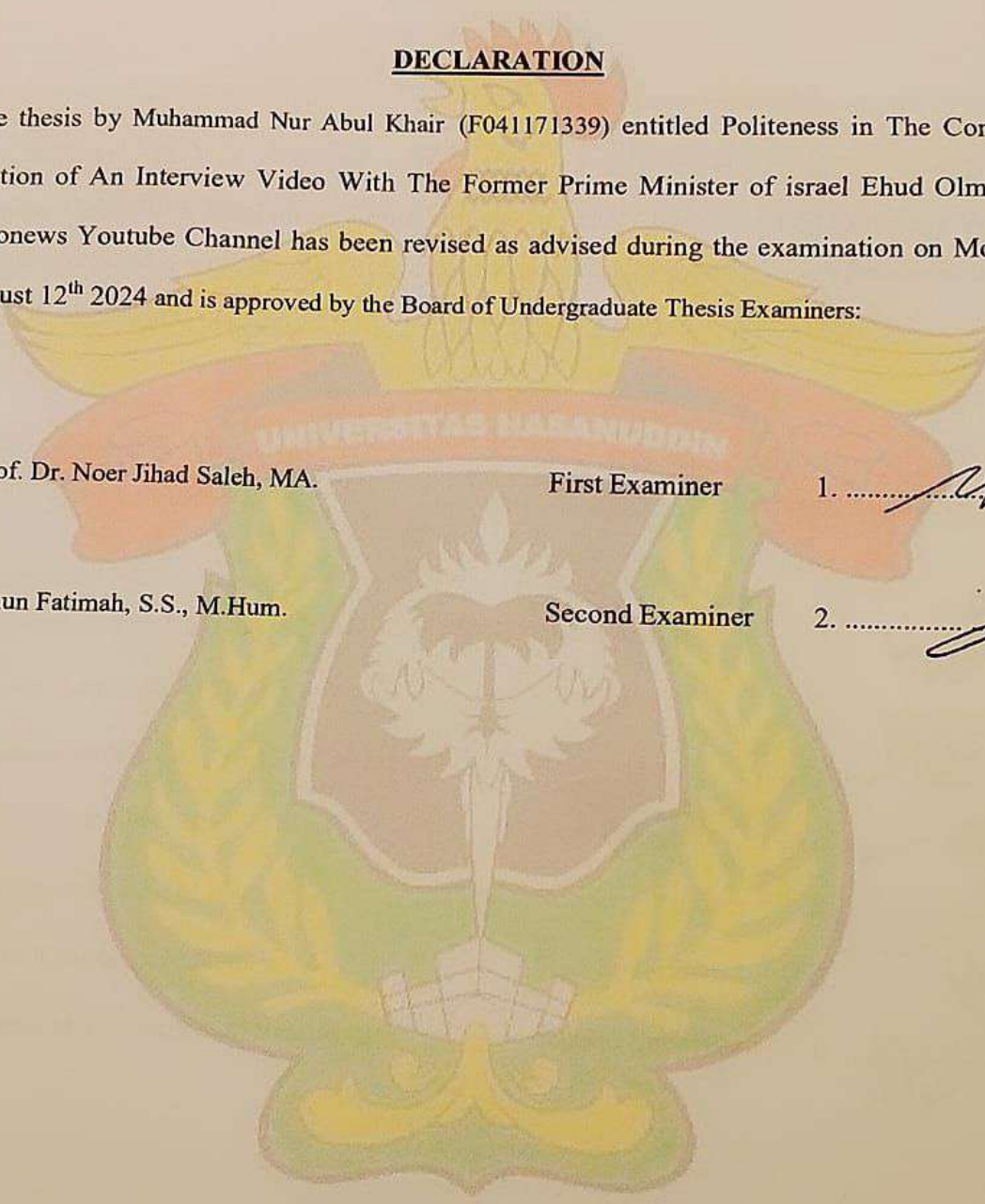
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The thesis by Muhammad Nur Abul Khair (F041171339) entitled Politeness in The Comment Section of An Interview Video With The Former Prime Minister of israel Ehud Olmert on Euronews Youtube Channel has been revised as advised during the examination on Monday, August 12th 2024 and is approved by the Board of Undergraduate Thesis Examiners:

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STATEMENT LETTER

The undersigned,

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Hereby, the writer declares that this thesis is written by himself. This thesis does not contain any materials which have been published by other people, and it does not cite other people's ideas except quotations and references.

Makassar, August 16th, 2024

Muhammad Nur Abul Khair

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the first place, the writer would like to express the biggest gratitude to Allah SWT who has always given health, spirit, patience and also guidance to help the writer finishing this thesis. May Allah SWT always show us the right way in this life.

In this opportunity, the writer would like to express deep appreciation and thankfulness to people who have supported and helped the writer in finishing the thesis. Thus, in this piece of paper, the writer is huge gratitude is dedicated to the writer's beloved parents who have loved, advised, their greatest love and supported, morally, and materially.

During the time of working this thesis, the writer found many problems and made the writer down. However, those problems could be solved with the support and help by the people around the writer. Hereby, the writer would like to express her thanks to:

1. **Prof. Dr. Ir. Jamaluddin Jompa, M.SC.** as the Rector of Hasanuddin University, he has given his in leading this university.

2. **Prof. Dr. Akin Duli. MA.** as the dean of Faculty of Cultural Sciences.

3. **Prof. Dra. Nasmilah, M.Hum., Ph.D.** as Head of English Department.

4. **St. Sahraeny, S.S., M.App.Ling.** as secretary of English English Department, and **All of English Literature Study program's Lectures and Staff** who helped whether in lecturing and administration process.

5. **Prof. Dr. M. Amir P., M.Hum.** and **Dr. Abbas, S.S., M.Hum.** as supervisors who have given their time to supervised and guided the writer by providing advice and support so that the writer is able to complete this thesis.

6. **Hj. Siti Aminah, S.Sos** as mother, **Muhammad Assiddiq, S.T** as brother and **Briptu Ibnu Fariq** as husband who have given the writer their greatest love, support and also moral and material support.

7. **All my friends** who always support and help the writer.

May Allah SWT always be with them and give His mercy, guidance and blesses for them. Overall, the writer hopes this thesis can give a bit contribution to the English Literature Study Program.

Makassar, July 2024

The writer,

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the use of politeness strategies in the comment section of a YouTube interview video with former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, conducted by Euronews in 2023. The study focuses on how commenters navigate online discussions about sensitive topics like the Israel-Palestine conflict using Brown and Levinson's politeness theory. Through qualitative content analysis, the research identifies various politeness strategies, including positive politeness, negative politeness, bald on-record, and off-record strategies. These strategies reflect the commenters' positions on the conflict and their responses to Olmert's statements. The study contributes to understanding how politeness affects online discourse, especially in politically charged environments, and offers insights for fostering respectful and constructive digital interactions.

Keywords: Politeness Strategies, Online communication, Digital interactions, Social dynamics, Online discourse.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a complex and ongoing dispute between the State of Israel and the Palestinian people who have lived in the region for centuries. The conflict revolves around competing claims to land, political independence, and self-determination. It has been a major source of instability and violence in the Middle East for decades, with no clear solution in sight. The roots of the conflict can be traced back to the early 20th century, and it has resulted in numerous wars and terrorist attacks. The situation remains highly volatile, with both sides facing significant challenges and obstacles to a peaceful resolution.

The Israeli government plays a key role in the Israel-Palestine conflict. Israel is the leading power in the region and has significant control over the territory and resources of Israel and the Palestinian territories. The Israeli government is responsible for defending its citizens and maintaining security in the region, as well as for negotiating and implementing policies related to the conflict. The Israeli government has been involved in numerous military operations and negotiations with Palestinian leaders and has also faced criticism for its treatment of the Palestinian people. The

government's actions and policies have been highly influential in shaping the ongoing conflict.

The online comments on the Israel-Palestine conflict can vary greatly and tend to reflect a range of perspectives and opinions. Some Netizens express support for one side or the other, while others may be more critical of both sides and their actions. There may be discussion about the historical context of the conflict, as well as concerns about human rights and the violence experienced by both Israelis and Palestinians. Some comments may also express frustration over the lack of progress towards a peaceful resolution. Online communities and forums can also attract people who hold extreme views on either side of the issue, leading to heated debates and polarizing opinions.

In the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict, there have been instances where the Israeli government has been accused of lying or misrepresenting information related to the conflict. Some examples include denying knowledge of certain military operations, making false claims about events or the use of certain weapons, or denying responsibility for civilian casualties. In some cases, the government has also misrepresented facts related to the conflict to fit a particular narrative or to justify actions taken in the region. It's important to note that many governments, including Israel, often provide biased or incomplete information during times of conflict, and it is important to critically assess and verify information.

The Al-Shifa hospital in Gaza has been the subject of controversy and debate in recent years due to the presence of a Hamas command center beneath the hospital. The command center is said to have been used by Hamas to coordinate military operations, plan attacks, and store weapons and ammunition. The presence of the command center has called into question the neutrality of the hospital, which is meant to be a place of healing and humanitarian aid. There have been accusations from different sources about the extent and existence of the command center, however, it remains a controversial and contentious issue in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

In 2014, former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert gave an interview to The Times of London in which he claimed that Israel had built a tunnel under the Al-Shifa Hospital during the 2008 Gaza War. He said that the tunnel was intended to allow Israel to gather intelligence on Hamas, and that the tunnel was built with a large tunnel boring machine. Olmert also claimed that Israel did not detonate explosives in the hospital, but that the damage was the result of combat operations in the area. His claims have been disputed by some but remain a topic of discussion and debate.

In 2023, he did another interview with Euronews. He claims that Hamas command centre is in the south of Gaza not al Shifa Hospital. Also in the interview, he stated that Israel has a right to defend itself and eliminate Hamas by attacking Gaza. Due to his perspective on the war in Gaza, many online comments varied. Some of them showed support for him, and many of them disagreed with him.

Brown and Levinson's politeness theory is a linguistic model that focuses on how speakers communicate to be polite and avoid offenses. The theory describes two kinds of politeness: positive politeness, which involves showing appreciation for the listener, and negative politeness, which involves avoiding making offensive demands. The theory also includes a concept called "face", which refers to the positive self-image that individuals want to project and maintain. The theory is useful for understanding how people use language to express and negotiate politeness and social relationships.

Analyzing the comment section in social media using politeness strategy is important as it can provide a deeper understanding of the communicative styles, norms, and attitudes present in the online community. By identifying politeness strategies used, such as hedging, compliments, apologies, and indirectness, it can provide valuable insights into the dynamics of the online discourse, the relationship between the speakers, and their attitude towards the topic discussed. This information can be useful in several contexts, such as marketing research, public relations management, and in understanding the nuances of online communication.

The researcher decided to write this research. This research is entitled "The Politeness in The Comment Section in An Interview Video with The Former Prime Minister of Israel Ehud Olmert on Euronews YouTube Channel". The researcher hopes that this research helps students and academics to understand the exploration of the study of politeness.

B. Scope of Problem

It is interesting to explore politeness strategies in the comment section of the interview video with Ehud Olmert on Euronews YouTube channel. this research will focus on identifying the kinds of politeness strategy in the comment section of the interview video with Ehud Olmert on Euronews YouTube channel.

C. Identification of Problem

1. Israel-Palestine conflicts are trending on social medias.

2. Israel government often lies on social medias.

3. People have different views towards Israel government's policy.

4. People use politeness strategies in commenting on social medias.

5. Brown & Levinson's Politeness Strategy is helpful to analyze people's comment

D. Research Questions

1. What politeness strategies are used in the comment section of the interview video with Ehud Olmert?

2. How is the realization of the identified politeness strategies?

E. Objective of the Study

1. To finds politeness strategies in the comment section of the interview video on Youtube.

2. Categorizing Politeness Strategies using Brown And Levinson (1987) 's theory.

F. Significance of the Study

1. Therotically, this research provides information and insight of politeness strategy that can help another researcher in using Brown & Levinson's politeness theory.

2. Practically, readers can use this research to understand their own behavior and other people's while commenting on social media.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Previous Research

There are some previous studies that the writer find related to implicit meaning. However, they all have different objectives with this research.

The first study was conducted by Wardatul Jamilah et al. (2022), The research is entitled "Politeness in Language in the Comments Column on the TVOne News Youtube Channel "Lesti Billar's Drama Case of Domestic Violence". The purpose of this research is to study the politeness strategy in the comment section of the news. The results of this research show five of the six politeness maxims in Leech's language were found. from 25 data, 20 data were included in the 5 maxims, namely: 4 maxims of wisdom (tact maxim), 2 maxims of generosity (generosity maxim), 4 approbation maxims, 3 modesty maxims, and 7 sympathy maxims.

The second one is a research by Yunisaa Ammaida (2020), entitled "Politeness Strategies of the Comments toward Trump's Instagram Post on International Women's Day". The research aimed to describe politeness strategies employed by the users to give comment toward Donald Trump's Instagram Post on International Women's Day and to explain the factors that influence the users to use the strategies. The researcher used the theory of politeness strategy by Brown and Levinson (1987). In this reserach,

the researcher found that positive politeness strategy has the highest frequency with total 276 (53%) data out of 525 data used by the users to give the comment toward Donald Trump's Instagram post on International Women's Day. The researcher also found social distance factor is the most influential factor in the use of politeness strategy. It means when the users use social media to give comments, they want to show solidarity, treat the other users as a member of in-group, a friend, a person who are known and liked. So it can save the users and Donald Trump's face and can minimize the distance between the user and Donald Trump.

The third one is Barry Kavanagh (2016), the research was entitled "Emoticons as a medium for channeling politeness within American and Japanese online blogging communities". This paper aims to examine how Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies are channeled through the medium of emoticons in American and Japanese online personal weblog comments. Results showed that although American and Japanese blog comment writers both utilized emoticons that helped to convey positive politeness strategies Japanese used them significantly more than Americans. It is argued that this challenges the notion of Japanese as being a negative orientated culture within this online blog community.

All three studies above share the same focus in examining politeness strategies on online interactions. The second and the third use Brown and Levinson (1987)'s politeness strategies, while the first one is utilizing Leech's politeness maxims. As for the differences, the first one is aim to study politeness strategies specifically in the

comments section related to the news event. While the second one aims to describe politeness strategies in response to a political figure's social media post and to explain the influencing factors. And finally the third one aims to examine hwo emoticons channels politeness strategies in different cultural context.

To compares the three previous researches to this present study is that is to provide insights into how traditional politeness theories apply or need to be adapted for the digital age, particularly in public and often contentious online spaces.

B. Theoretical Background

1. Politeness Theory

The concept of politeness, as proposed by Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson (1987), focuses on addressing offenses to a person's self-esteem and asserting positive social values in social interactions. Such self-esteem is referred as the sociological concept of face (as in "save face" or "lose face") to discuss politeness as a response to mitigate or avoid face-threatening acts such as requests or insults. Notable components in the framework of the theory include positive and negative faces, face threatening act (FTA), strategies for doing FTAs and factors influencing the choices of strategies. Brown and Levinson (1987) outline four main types of politeness strategies:

bald on-record, negative politeness, positive politeness, and off-record (indirect) as well as simply not using the face-threatening act.

a) Positive and Negative Acts

According to Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, positive and negative acts are related to the concept of "face," or social value, both to one's self and to others[1]. Positive face refers to the positive and consistent image people have of themselves, and their desire for approval. Negative face, on the other hand, is the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, and rights to non-distraction[3]. In other words, positive face involves a desire for connection with others, while negative face needs include autonomy and independence.

Examples:

Positive acts:

1. Complimenting: "You did an amazing job on that project!"

2. Expressing admiration: "I really admire your dedication and hard work."

3. Offering help: "If you need any help with your presentation, just let me know."

4. Agreeing with someone: "I completely agree with your point about team collaboration."

5. Sharing a joke: "Remember that hilarious story you told last week? It still cracks me up!"

Negative acts:

1. Requesting: "Can you help me move this weekend?"

2. Giving orders: "You need to submit the report by tomorrow."

3. Interrupting: "Sorry to cut you off, but we need to move on to the next topic."

4. Criticizing: "Your proposal lacks some important details."

5. Making assumptions: "I assumed you'd be available for the meeting on short notice."

b) Bald on-Record

According to Brown and Levinson, the bald on-record strategy is a direct way of saying things, without any minimization to the imposition, in a direct, clear, unambiguous, and concise way[3]. For example, a bald on-record statement could be something like "Do X!". This strategy is used when the speaker wants to be as clear and direct as possible in their communication. It is often used in situations where there is little concern for the face needs of the hearer or where the social norms dictate that directness is appropriate.

Examples:

1. Command: "Close the door."

2. Request: "Give me the report."

3. Instruction: "Turn off the lights."

4. Warning: "Watch out for that step."

5. Reminder: "Don't forget the meeting at 3 PM."

c) Off-Record

According to Brown and Levinson, the off-record strategy is a way of communicating indirectly, using language that removes the speaker from the potential to be imposing. This strategy is used to express something general or different than the speaker's true meaning and relies on the hearer's ability to infer the intended meaning. Brown and Levinson define off-record strategy as a communicative act which is done in such a way that it is not possible to attribute one clear communicative intention to the act. In this case, the actor leaves her/himself an "out" by providing her/himself with a number of defensible interpretations. There are fifteen strategies indicating off-record politeness as expressed in Brown and Levinson's theory (1987).

Examples:

1. Hinting: "It's getting late." (Implying that it might be time to leave without directly saying it.)

2. Understating: "I wouldn't mind a bit of help." (Meaning the speaker actually needs help but downplays the necessity.)

3. Using metaphors: "The grass isn't always greener on the other side." (Suggesting that someone's desire for change may not lead to better outcomes.)

4. Being ambiguous: "I wonder who left the door open." (Implying the listener should close the door without directly asking them to.)

5. Being ironic: "What a wonderful time to be out of gas." (Implying that it is actually a very inconvenient time to be out of gas.)

d) Face-Threatening Act

According to Brown and Levinson, a face-threatening act (FTA) is an act that challenges the face wants of an interlocutor[3]. Face-threatening acts may threaten either the speaker's face or the hearer's face, and they may threaten either positive face or negative face[3]. Positive face refers to the positive and consistent image people have of themselves, and their desire for approval. Negative face, on the other hand, is the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, and rights to non-distraction. In other words, positive face involves a desire for connection with others, while negative face needs include autonomy and independence.

Examples:

Threatening Positive Face:

1. Criticizing: "Your presentation was really boring."

2. Disagreeing: "I don't think your plan will work."

3. Ignoring someone: Not acknowledging someone's greeting or comment.

4. Insulting: "You always make such careless mistakes."

Threatening Negative Face:

1. Making a request: "Can you work overtime this weekend?"

2. Giving an order: "You must finish this by tomorrow."

3. Interrupting: "Sorry to interrupt, but I need to say something."

4. Asking a personal question: "Why are you still single?"

Threatening the Speaker's Face:

1. Apologizing: "I'm really sorry for my mistake."

2. Admitting fault: "I messed up the project."

3. Requesting help: "Can you help me with this task?"

4. Expressing gratitude: "I can't thank you enough for your support."

2. **Interview**

A media interview is a conversation between a journalist or other member of the media and a person who has information that the media outlet finds valuable. This person could be a subject matter expert, a celebrity, a public figure, or anyone else with relevant insights.

Media interviews are conducted for various purposes, such as providing information and detail, creating interest, and building awareness. They can be used to gather information, opinion, or insight on a particular topic for the benefit of the media outlet's audience.

There are many kinds of media interviews, including those for television, radio, print, and online media outlets. Nowadays, company spokespersons should also be prepared for interviews on new and emerging media, such as podcasts and social media live broadcasts or audio events.

The interviewee does not usually have the questions in advance, but they should take time to prepare answers to likely questions. The interview might be in-person, over the phone, or via video chat.

In public relations, these interviews are meant to provide a platform to share your message, build credibility and authority, and put a human connection to the brand. With interviews, you might not be directly selling a product or service, but you are offering insight and value into who you are and what you do.

The concept of politeness, as proposed by Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson, focuses on addressing offenses to a person's self-esteem and asserting positive social values in social interactions. Such self-esteem is referred as the sociological concept of face (as in "save face" or "lose face") to discuss politeness as a response to mitigate or avoid face-threatening acts such as requests or insults. Notable components in the framework of the theory include positive and negative faces, face threatening act (FTA), strategies for doing FTAs and factors influencing the choices of strategies. Brown and Levinson outline four main types of politeness strategies: bald on-record, negative politeness, positive politeness, and off-record (indirect) as well as simply not using the face-threatening act.

3. **YouTube**

YouTube is an American online video sharing platform owned by Google. It was launched on February 14, 2005, by Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim, three former employees of PayPal. The company is headquartered in San Bruno, California, United States.

YouTube allows registered users to upload and share videos with anyone able to access the site. These videos can also be embedded and shared on other sites. Every minute of every day, more than 35 hours of video is uploaded to YouTube.

It is the second most visited website in the world, after Google Search. YouTube has more than 2.7 billion monthly users, who collectively watch more than one billion hours of videos every day.

In addition to being a platform for sharing and viewing videos, YouTube also offers services like YouTube Kids, YouTube Music, YouTube Premium, YouTube Shorts, and YouTube TV. It also incorporates Google's AdSense program, generating more revenue for both YouTube and approved content creators.

In October 2006, YouTube was purchased by Google for $1.65 billion. Since its purchase by Google, YouTube has expanded beyond the core website into mobile apps, network television, and the ability to link with other platforms.

4. Comment Section

The comment section on YouTube is a feature that allows users to express their thoughts, reactions, and opinions about the content they watch. It is located underneath the video itself. Here's how it works:

a) Posting Comments

Users can post their own comments by typing their message in the 'Add a comment' field and clicking 'Comment' to post. They can also edit or delete any of their own comments.

b) Engaging with Comments

Users can like, dislike, reply to other people's comments, or even report inappropriate comments. Replies to a comment are threaded beneath the original comment so users can follow the conversation.

c) Community Building

The comment section allows users to participate in a community and conversation around the content they watch. It can be a powerful opportunity for positive community building and engagement.

d) Moderation

Content creators can manage comments on their videos using various features to encourage positive interactions and address negative ones. They can use the heart icon, pin comments, reply to comments to show appreciation and build a community. They can also use comment filters to find comments that contain questions,

keywords, or other criteria. Inappropriate comments can be removed, hidden, or flagged. Content creators can also set upload defaults, hold comments for review, create a blocked words list, or add comment moderators to moderate comments on a channel level.

However, the comment section is only available if the video's owner has turned on comments. Once a comment is posted, it will be public and associated with the user's YouTube account.