

# **SATIRICAL POLITENESS CONSTRUCTION IN "WAR MACHINE" MOVIE**

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## **Abstract**

Not many studies considered politeness in movie as politeness that was deliberately constructed by the director for a specific purpose. This research views that in part of War Machine movie scenes contained some constructions of politeness, politeness involving satire as a means of criticism, which we called Satirical Politeness. Scenes containing actions or satiric utterances, whether delivered by speakers (S) or hearer (H) in managing their faces, were the focus of this study. Qualitative analysis of movies produced as a reaction after the attacks of 19/11/01 was called 'qualitative under fire' (Denzin, 2009a). Data were analyzed using Brown & Levinson's (1987) perspectives. They were measured by looking for Weightiness. The Weightiness was determined by how strong the ranking of imposition was. The rank of imposition (Rx) was determined by the high and low of P (position) between the speech participants, and it was determined by the far and near distance (D) of the speech participants. There were many meanings behind the facework that each actor played concerning satire. The satirical politeness in the War Machine movie applied in several ways, namely; 1) satirical attitude to show disagreement, 2) jumping politeness strategy to save the face of the interlocutor, but still attacking his face in a more relaxed way, 3) anecdotal bald on record attitude used to reduce the credibility of real characters outside the movie, 4) Creating negative stigma of a real character by attaching hedge and exaggerate acts, 5) praising with insulting meanings through Bald on record and exaggerate.

**Keywords:** Politeness, satire, satirical politeness, facework, FTA, movie

## **INTRODUCTION**

Humans actualize themselves by communicating with each other through several modes (speech, writing, pictures, actions, etc.). These modes can be described as "languages" (Aumont, 1993; Daniela, 2014). These modes are a way for someone to convey messages to others. These modes can be intertwined in communication or stand-alone. Like the language of a movie, which involves the processes of speech, writing, picture, and action, together in a cinematographic process for one purpose, namely a show that can convey a message to the audience.

In the process of telling a story, a director has special linguistic considerations. Because in essence, the movie is one of the three universal languages, besides mathematics and music. These technological media are often called 'new languages' (Barthes, 1977; Daniela, 2014). The new language, in this case, is a language at a different level of communication. If a direct conversation is called natural communication, then film media is language composed of non-natural communication. Movie media is the expression in the form of 'cinematic language.' Cinematic language is a set of messages consisting of five channels; 1) moving photographic images, 2) recorded phonetic sounds, 3) recorded sounds, 4) recorded music sounds, and 5) writing (Casebier & Monaco, 1977). This shows that all forms of communication, whether in the form of speech, gestures, politeness and the accompanying contexts, are arranged in such a way by the maker.

In this period of 30 years, politeness has become a very strategic topic and has undergone a tremendous expansion of studies. Since (Goffman, 1967; Lakoff & Ide, 2005) has identified the power of the face, which he thinks is invaluable, and he believes that a

person tends to have an emotional response to faces (facial expressions) between the speaker (S) and hearer (H). From the face people can perceive the 'sense.' Since that time, the study of politeness has grown, and realized that social harmony in communication acts such as the Cooperative Principle (Grice, 1995) and 'politeness' (Brown & Levinson, 1987) has a function in functional social communication.

Many studies on 'politeness' in movies view the movie as a natural communication process. 'Politeness' in the film has a different position where at first politeness is a phenomenon formed from the adjustment of speakers and listeners to a norm in society (Al-duleimi, Rashid, & Abdullah, 2016; Reiter, 2003), then the movie has its own space. In movie, politeness is arranged in a cinematic context, just as novels and other literary works are arranged in terms of plot, setting, property, and other elements. If Thuan (2017) tried to operate Pragmatics, more specifically on politeness as a description of the interpretation of characters in literary works, then he must pay attention to details in the plot context, setting context, property context, and the context of the situation built by the director.

Brown & Levinson's (1987) understanding about 'saving hearer's face' needs to be addressed more broadly. That is, if the conversation occurs naturally, the hearer is the interlocutor in a dialogue. However, if the conversation takes place in a movie, then there are two levels of listeners, namely; 1) a hearer constructed by the director with various choices of speech and 2) a hearer as a movie audience. Communication that seems to fail in a movie is something on purpose to be unsuccessful. The impoliteness in the movie could be politeness that is considered very polite for the audience. Speakers who insult the interlocutor in a film are not necessarily able to threaten the interlocutor's face, except because they are conditioned to be threatened by the filmmaker. The success of communication in the movie is not the smooth communication in each scene, but the extent to which the movie can convey signs and meaning to the audience. Therefore, researches on politeness and other aspects of pragmatics should begin to realize this phenomenon. As well as Ulfa, (2019) justified theoretically that the ideal communication is fluent. For her, the fluency of communication depends on the speaker and the hearer's working together. Whereas, the cooperative or uncooperative attitude between speaker and hearer in the movie is arranged based on a scenario. It is conceivable that if a movie shows cooperatively dialogue continuously, then a movie will not be able to present a constructive and fascinating plot to the audience.

We prefer Holtgrave's perspective that the essential thing in communicating is taking the standpoint between speaker and hearer (Holtgraves, 2005; Krauss & Fussell, 1991). In making a movie, there is a process of compiling a communication perspective. So that, every conversation presented between S and H (in frame) can be understood and has benefits for the audience. Therefore, the movie often shows a conversation full of impoliteness with one goal as a 'strategy of offense' (Culpeper, 2013). This offense may be aimed at criticizing (in the sense of satire) the audience's personal as social beings. It could also be that an offense is directed at a person or group of people through the audience's understanding of the movie. It means impoliteness is the personal choice of the speaker or scenario maker to violate it (Lakoff & Ide, 2005). This criticism through the realization of politeness is what we call Satirical Politeness.

Through the cinema screen, politeness is constructed by a particular social order to make the satire not highly threaten the face of the audience. This satire concept is called by Leech (2014) 'Conversational Irony' where the speaker (S) says something trivial, superficial which according to him is polite on the contrary, it is understood as Face Threatening Act (FTA) by hearer (H). It is due to the speakers who deliberately violate the principle of politeness indirectly but allow H to get to the most offensive point.

In some ways, Leech provides examples to illustrate that irony tends to be more subtle than sarcasm from a politeness perspective. The irony is exemplified as follows; "Good

Afternoon Sue" which was said by the speaker, a superior to his subordinate, the subordinate was in a state of being late in a meeting. Sarcasm has more direct and face-threatening, for example in a discussion, a friend speaks more than his portion so that the speaker is uncomfortably saying "Sorry I spoke" to interrupt the conversation. This sentence has a literal meaning that implicitly contradicts the situation (Burgers, Schellens, & Mulken, 2011) as well as; "You are very clever. In a very young age you have stolen", this 'clever' means ignorance. This example gives the nuance that Leech's Conversational Irony refers to figurative satire that is conveyed seriously through speech acts and implicit politeness.

One thing that has not been discussed by Leech is politeness which is conveyed with silliness and humor but has a relatively sharp mockery. By not overriding what Leech has explained, but instead giving an added perspective, we prefer the term Satirical Politeness because the fact is that non-natural communication or through the media, whether movies, dramas or comics often use satire as a tool to insult certain parties.

The purpose of focusing on politeness in the realm of satire is to dissect the phenomena that occur behind the movie as a means of criticism (satire), especially films that contain 'mockery' from a pragmatic perspective. It is essential to prove that literary works in the form of plays, both in the form of performances and movies, are very complex acts of communication and can be explored from various angles because most of this work can only be understood through performance (Culpeper, Short, & Verdonk, 1998; H.Jucker, 2016). There are three aspects of politeness in the movie that can be explored; 1) politeness in the film as a single movie that communicates with the audience as movie respondents. H.Jucker (2016) considered this case as communication between writers and readers, 2) movies as a communication picture constructed by the director to create a world of stories.

Politeness in a satirical movie does not necessarily criticize the audience directly but uses the audience's mind to believe the information conveyed in the movie. The goal is to build the attitude of audiences into; flat, against, believe, or admire. We are guided by the perspective of Culpeper et al., (1998) that in performing arts, impoliteness is not uttered for the entertainment of the audience, because it can cause symptoms of social conflict or social disharmony. Therefore, satirical politeness is needed to be a face threat packed in non-threatening laughter.

For this reason, we need to specialize in this satirical politeness study as a notable study to follow up. This study has relatively broad benefits, especially for linguists who study the language of the movie, who view movie not only as a spectacle but as a scenario designed as a social guide. Therefore the study of satirical politeness can be a specific choice to examine the purpose of satirical movies playing their satire. What object/who is being criticized? In what context is the ridicule containing criticism built? How is the process of criticism conveyed through the perspectives of politeness? This study takes a satirical movie entitled "War Machine" as an example of a satirical construction study of politeness.

## **Review of Literature**

### ***Satirical Movie***

The film is the delineation of the tangible world. It is revived through the construction of stories. Then it is displayed on the cinema screen as a medium of entertainment, communication, let alone criticism. The characteristic of the movie is filtering reality through photography, both still and moving images, called "reproducing the world before the lens" (Prince, 2014). Meanwhile, Phiddian (2013), with a strong influence from Horace argues that satire is a means to attack an established mindset by using a caricaturist tradition (joke) for coercive purposes, encouraging the attacked party to do something according to the attacker's wishes. However, the understanding of satire underwent a radical movement to become softer, far from the characteristic of sarcasm, which tends to be 'direct' or irony, which is

indirect but packaged more seriously. In its development, satire uses a lot of strategies, the essence of which is "ridicule" or cursing. Quintero (2007) assumed that this is done to avoid direct insults and harsh words. The mockery is packaged in an artistic nuance that is intriguing but still at its core. For him, direct insults are not satire.

Satire is the attitude of making fun of by imitating the object being mocked by exposing their ignorance or shortcomings. Meanwhile, the movie is a medium for imitating reality. In their development, satire movies are more identified with a light movie, far from formalist and intellectual scenes called 'anti-intellectual' (Blanchard, 1995; Quintero, 2007). Why are satirical movies today more likely to display "technique of mockery"? It was told by Quintero (2007) that in the fourteenth centuries Voltaire shone with his serious satire, which attacked his opponent sharply. But in the end, this sharpness becomes personal envy, a deep hostility, which results in "satire of death with its victims." Following the function of literature, which is *dulce et utile* (fun and beneficial). The satirical perspective has shifted into a cheerful satire. Quintero (2007) describes that in an insinuation we laugh, in hostility we laugh, we participate in something that entertains us. Here is a strong reason why satirical movies, or even the notion of satire itself, shift to witty satire, parody, and the like.

What distinguishes the movie from other works of art is its photographic recording capacity (Elsaesser & Buckland, 2002). Its composition consists of a narrative and cinematic (Khalsiah, Fadhillah, Fatmawati, & Fitriani, 2020), both of which cannot be separated and connected to convey messages. Therefore, the satirical movie delivered through the satirical genre in the form of ridicule, silliness, laughter with the aim of satire, attack, an individual or group of people or direct the audience to defend, hate, or laugh at someone, the audience is expected to have the same perception as the moviemaker.

### ***Satirical Politeness***

A person will use his politeness to adjust to whom he is talking to and where he is. The person prefers to be less direct in his speech for a particular interest or maintain a specific understanding in communicating. According to Watss (2003) this attitude is to identify the criteria of politeness through the perspective of the interlocutor. The characteristic of politeness is not as easy as we think. Because of this, in seeking to find a consensus of polite, one must take cover in very general statements. It is to explore the desires of others or "an awareness of other people's face wants" (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Sukarno, 2018).

In criticizing, one can use several alternatives, namely; 1) Intentional threats to face, 2) Incidental threats to face, and 3) Accidental threats to face (Bousfield, 2008; Goffman, 1967; Salman, 2019). However, all three represent impoliteness or face threat. To avoid this, necessary to have a form of criticism packaged in silliness to avoid audiences or hearer's face threats. It is notable because the most important thing in communication is maintaining one's face (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

As previously stated by (2014) regarding "conversational irony," that irony, especially verbal irony, is seen as an insulting attitude by using figures of speech or hyperbole (Sperber, 1984). That concept places more emphasis on satire made by using figurative words. It is different from the criticism delivered in a silly, witty way, and implied ridicule. The irony is taken seriously in a deepening of emotions packaged in figurative friendliness and states something contrary to the actual situation. Meanwhile, satire is delivered in a fresh and laughing way, such as Cook's (1992) view that satirical political stories often have serious implications even though they are covered by 'jokes.' Therefore, satire is frequently functioned to mock a system.

Most satire is often covered by the joke, which has a sharp satirical power because a satirist not only constructs a series of silly stories that invite laughter, but he dives more into

an explicit slap in the form of words or actions. Satirist constructs his absurdity by demanding a perception from the reader or audience, not mere feelings. He wants to generate audience energy to act, not just a viewing experience (Paulson, 2019; Quintero, 2007).

For this reason, the concept of "satire politeness" is an offer for researchers to study and explore satire that is packaged in a movie using a politeness perspective. This concept is expected to be a trigger for Pragmatic research on movies from a more extensive perspective.

### **Synopsis of War Machine**

According to Bradshaw (2017) in The Guardian newspaper, the movie "War Machine" is gray, in the sense that it is not too funny to be called satire, but also not real enough to be considered a political criticism, and not quite worthy of being used as a satire as a war movie. The movie, directed by David Michôd, was adapted in a very flexible way from Michael Hastings' book "The Operators: The Wild and Terrifying Inside Story of America's War in Afghanistan." This movie told a semi-fictional story about the experiences of US General Stanley A. McChrystal during the conflict in Afghanistan. McChrystal was in command until he was fired by President Obama for making reckless critical remarks about his administration to a reporter from Rolling Stone magazine.

In this movie, General Glen McMahon as a representative of General Stanley McChrystal is described as a manly and pacing figure. He had a habit of morning walks in very unattractive shorts, and spoke in a growling house accent with the corners of his mouth permanently twisted. This character is nothing like the real General Stanley McChrystal, which you can watch on YouTube: he has a husky voice, but instead looks like an intelligent and easygoing human being.

The movie described four-star General Glen McMahon renowned for his effective leadership in Iraq. He was sent to Afghanistan to prepare for a government assessment to end the ongoing war. He was given the latitude to do, in the condition that he did not ask for more troops. McMahon and his staff, especially his aide Major General Greg Pulver, were united in their belief that the war could be won, and decided to recommend that President Obama allow an additional 40,000 troops to secure Helmand province to stabilize the country. However, the Secretary of State thought that sending troops would execution of elections. Therefore, McMahon's report would not be reviewed until after the Afghan presidential election.

McMahon was notified that due to alleged irregularities in the vote count, the second round of elections had to be held, further delaying vote review. Disgusted, McMahon leaked the assessment to the Washington Post and arranged an interview with 60 Minutes, in which he revealed that, in the past 70 days, he had only been given one meeting with President Obama. In response, the US government announced that it would send 30,000 troops to Afghanistan and that all US and coalition troops in the country would leave within 18 months. In an attempt to muster the remaining 10,000 troops, McMahon was confronted by a German official who was skeptical of his approach and argued that McMahon's plan would only lead to more losses. However, both Germany and France agreed to equip the necessary troops for McMahon's planned attack, codenamed "Operation Moshtarak" with the approval of Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

The operation was launched but soon ran into trouble when several civilians were accidentally killed on McMahon's instructions. When he called a public meeting to explain the incident, the crowd became hostile and demanded that McMahon and his troops leave. To make matters worse, McMahon learned that Cullen's article had been published, and paints a negative picture of him and his staff for publicly opposing the President and mishandling the war effort. Knowing that he would be fired for his actions, McMahon returned to Washington and later took a job as a civilian consultant.

In the aftermath of the incident, Cullen pondered the consequences of his article, noting that he hoped McMahon's downfall would eventually convince the government to stop attacking foreign countries and end the war in Afghanistan. However, the government only assigned a new general to replace McMahon.

## **METHOD**

This research is classified as qualitative inquiry research, which has an under fire specification. Qualitative inquiry is often used as a blanket for all forms of social inquiry that rely on qualitative data (data in the form of words), including ethnography, case study research, naturalistic inquiry (Given, 2008). Broadly speaking, Qualitative Inquiry has the aim of understanding the meaning of human actions. Meanwhile, Qualitative Inquiry with a specific 'under fire' analyzes the segmentation of human actions after the 9/11/01 terror. Several works tend to be influenced by this incident, and one of them is a war genre movie with problems that occur in Afghanistan, such as "War Machine." Of course, the work has a double truth, namely political truth, and pragmatic truth. Both are processed from local knowledge and global context (Denzin, 2009b).

The position of the movie before publication is without an audience. In addition, the dialogue and action in the movie are arranged according to the author's point of view. Afterward, the viewer may wonder if the storyline shows anything, and the movie leaves itself with its perspective, while the audience is free to guess. In terms of communicative composition, this phenomenon does not meet the communication requirements. However, these shortcomings cannot be considered as uncommunicative, but communication in the form of performance or expression (Vanderveken & Kubo, 2001; Wilson & Sperber, 1988).

This study focuses on investigating war-themed movies as language products. It focused on politeness practices contained in the movie. The aim is none other than to find out the critical meaning behind the politeness conveyed in the movie 'War Machine'. Politeness in the movie is an implied action that is deliberately arranged to be presented to the audience as knowledge, criticism, advice, propaganda, prohibitions, and even orders. Kecskes, (2010) emphasized that what is said and what is implied was set for a specific interpretation. The director designed utterances supported by various elements in such a way as to direct the audience's thoughts to a certain mindset. As for the success or failure of the director's goal as a storyteller, it is not the main thing, but the most important thing is the process of a director and his team in convincing the audience's mindset in a particular state of mind.

The data source is taken from the movie "War Machine" (Michôd, 2015), released by IMDb in 2017. This movie is an adaptation of a note entitled "The Operators" by Hastings (2012), which reflected the Afghanistan war condition. The movie is told satirically but does not leave a realistic essence behind it.

The data was taken by classifying the scene domain which contains politeness related to the act of criticizing satirically. Domain analysis was applied to sort politeness strategies and their contexts. Taxonomy analysis was used to show the quality and purpose of satiric politeness (Ardi, Nababan, & Santosa, 2019; Santosa, 2017; Spradley, 1980). The scenes that contain satirical politeness were confirmed with the contexts of the situation and setting by making a taxonomy of face threat weights by (Brown & Levinson, 1987); weight Wx (Weightness) in which there are considerations: D (Distance), P (Power), and R (Ranking of impositions in the particular culture).

To connect the results of the analysis with the world outside the movie, whether social, historical or reality, an analysis of cultural themes was carried out to determine the correlation of the movie with existing cultural facts so that the analysis truly represents that the movie is made based on reality or to influence reality.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Satirical Attitude

#### 'Bald on record attitude' to show disagreement

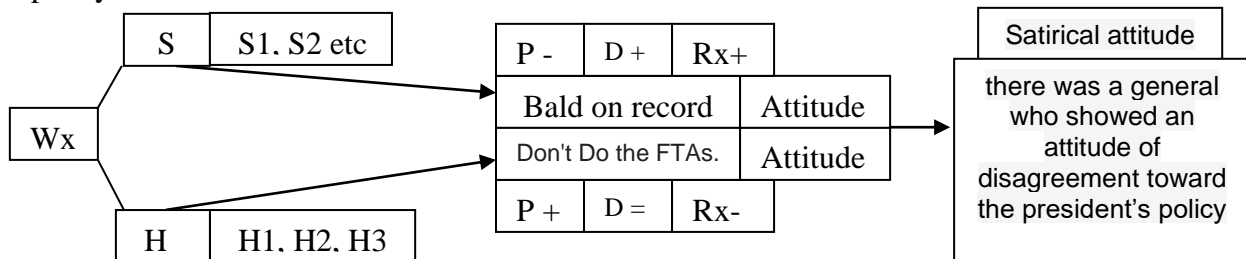
##### Example 1 (Mnt 08.57)

**Context:** Before this scene, Glen and his soldiers were staring at the knitted carpet figured Obama, with the back sound of mocking nuance "Huuuuuuuu". After that Glen met Ambassador MacKinnon (PAT). In the room were waiting for some of his co-workers Dick Waddle and Ray Cannuci. After the introductory session, Glen invited his men to sit down before the host invited him.

GLEN : Grab a seat, boys. (to his men)  
 MEN : SITTING  
 DICK : I'm calling myself Richard now, Pat, if you don't mind.  
 PAT : Oh? O kay, Okay, fine. Uh...That's fair. My apologies.  
 DICK : Hmm

The bald on record "Grab a seat boys" used by S to H in case of the context of position (P), and the distance (D) has met the requirements, which a boss ordered his subordinates to sit down. However, in the context of the situation, this should have very strong Rx (rank of imposition) because the situation was in an office that did not belong to S but belonged to H1. The host (H1), who was accompanied by, H2 and H3 did not invite S and his men to sit down. In the context of cultural fairness, H1, H2, and H3 should feel offended (experienced face threats) because this behaviour was classified as mockery, but on the screen, the three of them look normal or didn't show any expression of threatening face.

In the previous scene, a contradictory attitude was shown, wherein the interaction process in the movie a seriousness presented in respecting the president picture. But on the contrary, the audience caught a different perception, that seriousness appeared as a mockery because the position and expression of respect seemed insulting. The bakcsound "Huuuu" in this scene seemed to be a ridiculous salute to the image of Obama hanging on the carpet in the office lobby had indicated that since before the incident, S deliberately wanted to threaten the face of H1 and his friends as a consequence of S's disapproval of President Obama's policy.



Based on the construction and the scene shown earlier, the Bald on record action taken by S and his subordinates was an intentional act. They have understood their social position but still, use close distance (D+) as if they are equal. The S behavior should contain a high Rank of Imposition (Rx+). However, in this scene, H and his friends (H1, H2, H3) showed no face threat at all. H showed a flat distance (D=) even though the social position is higher (P+). That is, even though H is facing a threat from S, he and his friends still show Rx-

The correlation between this scene and the previous scene showed that this attitude triggered by the President's policies that were not under S's thoughts, so he wanted to vent his

disagreement on H1, H2, and H3 as representatives of President Obama. However, H and his friends had understood this, so they understood the behavior of S and his men. Therefore, the attitude of H and his friends presented a non-resistance attitude.

On the scenario side, this scene needed to show an attitude from the main actor who contradicted the existing policy, which he thinks is unfair. From the perspective of the plot, this scene was in a 'rising action' position, where the problems begin to roll out. However, these problems have not reached a heated conflict. It means that S's behavior was only to show a satirical behaviour as the polite mockery that not all agree with the president's policy. Bald on record was attached to the S character as the main character served to be 'rebel' as if against the policy on the side of the movie's plot, but provides information about the circumstances that the audience need to know about the pro and contra of the presidential policy.

The realization of politeness, in this case, had not succeeded in fulfilling the element of Weightiness (the power of threatening each other between the speaker and the interlocutor). Because S, who had intentionally threatened face through his behavior, apparently responded flatly by H. H and his friends did not even show offense or taking direct or indirect resistance. The flat response of H served to strengthen the character of S so that the characteristics of the main character at this stage of 'rising action' could be raised and understood easily by the audience.

### Delayed Seriousness

*Leap strategy to minimize the threat of face, but still be able to convey satirical message*

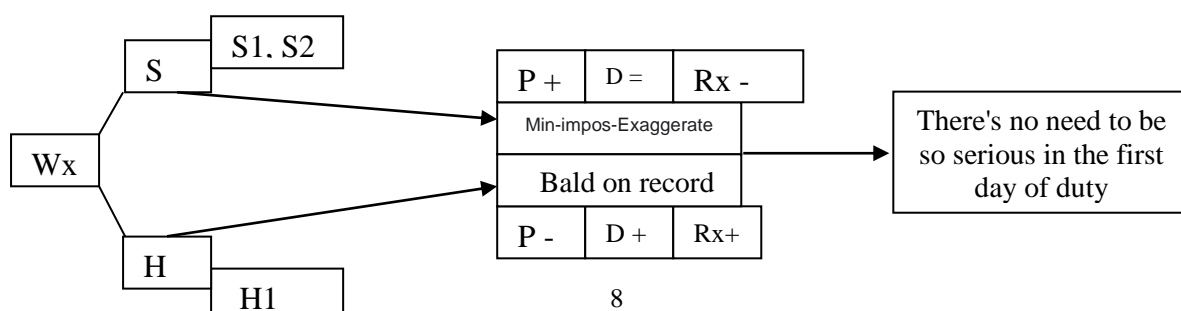
#### Example 2 (Mnt 08.60)

**Context:** General Glen (H) had arrived at Pat's office (S) as an American Ambassador to Afghanistan. Inside that room, there were other ambassadors named Dick (H1) and Ray (H2). The three of them deliberately waited for Glen to give directions and orders on behalf of President Obama.

- PAT : Have you settled in, Glen?  
 GLEN : No, Pat, I haven't. Seems to me that too much settling in might somehow be at the heart of the problem we have here.  
 PAT : Small talk. (laughing) Should've gone with the weather.

H answered very blatantly when asked by S about whether he was comfortable in his new duty or not, even though the question asked by S was only a breaking question at the beginning of a conversation. Responding to that blatant responses, S tried to cool the situation by saying "*Small talk*" as a sign that his question was not serious (although serious). That meant, S presented type 4 negative politeness, namely minimizing the burden on the interlocutor.

Behind the behavior of S in minimizing the threat of H's face contained a satire in the form of the utterance "*(laughing) Should've gone with the weathers*". It meant if S was not allowed to ask questions about whether or not H had been comfortable with his new duty, then to start a conversation, should he ask about the weather?





This construction showed that S, who positionally was higher (P+), presented a relatively flat distance (D=) while still considering H as an equal friend. As a friend, he also tried hard not to make too strong a face threat to S. He realized this strategy by using two stages of politeness strategy, namely; 1). Negative politeness strategy type 4 to minimize the burden of the interlocutor. However, S's laughing expression along with his words showed a sign that he was conveying polite ridicule through a type 2 negative politeness strategy, which is to intensify the listener's attention by dramatizing events or facts. The follow-up strategy was used as a satirical power for S to not be too serious at the beginning of the conversation. The first strategy is an attitude of retreating to the interlocutor to give space to the interlocutor and the second strategy is to attack H's face with parable satire.

Weightiness (Wx) in the realization of this politeness was relatively light because the potential to threaten each other's faces was relatively minimal. The indicator of this Light Weightiness was that S used a very polite way of confronting H, namely by using two strategies carefully, even though H had presented very direct politeness. Even to throw a satire at H, he only verbally intensified S' attentions by dramatizing the facts.

From the aspect of the scenario, this scene provided information for the audience about the sociological character gap between politicians and soldiers. The soldier was described as a figure firm and spoke to the point without considering FTA to his interlocutor. While politicians seemed more polite, refrain from threatening the face of the interlocutor. However, this scene illustrated that assertiveness and directness are goodness (angel) while being unkind, even though polite, is ugliness (devil).

### **Degrading a character anecdotally**

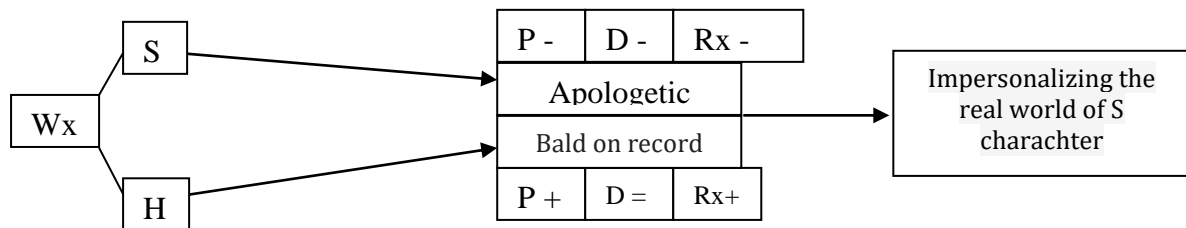
#### ***Impersonalizing the real world of a character***

#### **Example 3 (Mnt. 12.25)**

**Context:** This was a situation where Glen Mac Mahon visits President Karzai's residence to seek support regarding his program at the behest of Pat, Dick, and Ray as President Obama's ambassador to resolve the conflict in Afghanistan. In the palace lobby, he was greeted by President Karzai's bodyguard to his room, and the following conversation took place;

- GLEN : (Coming)  
 KARZAI : Fuck! Fuck it. Ah! General, excuse me. Ah. We are trying to make this Blu-ray player work. Uh, do you know how they function?  
 GLEN : ..uh  
 KARZAI : Normally, you have those wires with the red, the yellow and the white plug. But, uh, this machine seems only to have this wire. I can't find where to plug it into the television.  
 GLEN : I'm sorry, Mr. President. I'm afraid I don't know a whole lot about technology. I'm sure I could have somebody come by and take a look at it for you.  
 KARZAI : Fuck it. Never mind. I think I need a new television. I'm sorry, General. Please, let's sit. Welcome.  
 GLEN : Thank you, Mr. President.  
 KARZAI : Please call me Hamid (sneezing) Excuse me

There was one anecdotal scene, wherein the general perception, a president was full of security protocols, especially in a conflict area like Afghanistan. However, this movie presented a different picture, where a Karzai character was funny and relaxed even to face an American general. In this case, Karzai (H) was the figure who dominated the conversation, although at first, it was Glen Mac Mahon (S) who intended to talk about his lobbying to S. However, H instead invited S to talk about the broken Bluray VCD S cable.



In terms of politeness construction, S and H met the requirements. President Karzai applying P+, D=, and RX+ had fulfilled the fairness of being a President who talks to a General from another country. Even though he tends to be friendly by using fair distance (D=), this behavior could be natural as a gracious president. Meanwhile, H, who knew his position with great respect for a president, should maintain his position by minimizing his strategies while maintaining apologetic manners.

But there are some mockery compositions as a satire delivered uniquely. Mockery was not directly conveyed to the interlocutor but attacked the minds of the audience. The mockery presented by Karzai could not be considered as an act of politeness or impolite. But could be viewed from the perspective of a character that was culturally unusual. In the spectator's imagination, a president welcomed a general from another country in a presidential protocol manner, but this scene presented the opposite. When the general was coming, a president was angry with his man because of the broken video player. He expressed it by saying angrily in American words 'fuck it-fuck it'. Then he was helped by his men to fix the Bluray cable on his TV. H even did Rx+ by enlisting the help of General (S) to help to fix it.

In this case, there was no strong Weightiness. S, as a visitor had minimized all his strategies, both P, D, and Rx. However, in the general view of the audience, there is a strange and skewed perception of the supposedly authoritative president, but in this scene, the storyteller brought out the opposite characteristics. Karzai was described as a president who didn't have many aides, with a very ordinary room arrangement and ridiculous behavior as described earlier.

At this stage could be seen that the silliness and impropriety of S on the P and D sides was an indicator of the intentional element committed by the storyteller. S's blatant attitude by showing Bald on Record's politeness did not represent the general attitude of the President. An indicator of this attitude was to use the American way of angry terms such as "fuck it." It was the way of impersonalizing the character of a President. This impersonalization was characterized by H's attitude which didn't respond with an FTA (Face Threatening Act), instead of being gentle by using an Apologetic strategy. As a result, the S character became more dominant in attracting the audience's attention, and the satirical message was more easily conveyed to the audience.

### **Creating bad public perception**

*Comparing the negative stigmatized figure to the interlocutor*

#### **Example 4 (Mnt. 14.05)**

**Context:** The situation in this scene was a follow-up situation after President Karzai asked for help to fix the Bluray Cable. After acting as described above, President Karzai changed his character to be very polite and formal to General Glen like generally a formal relationship between a President and a General.

KARZAI : Your predecessor, General Whelan, I liked him.  
 I'm not entirely certain he liked me. He didn't visit very often. Why was he dismissed? It seems, uh, one minute he was here... the next minute, not here.

GLEN : Ah. Well, Mr. President, I think our government simply felt it was... time our effort took a new direction.

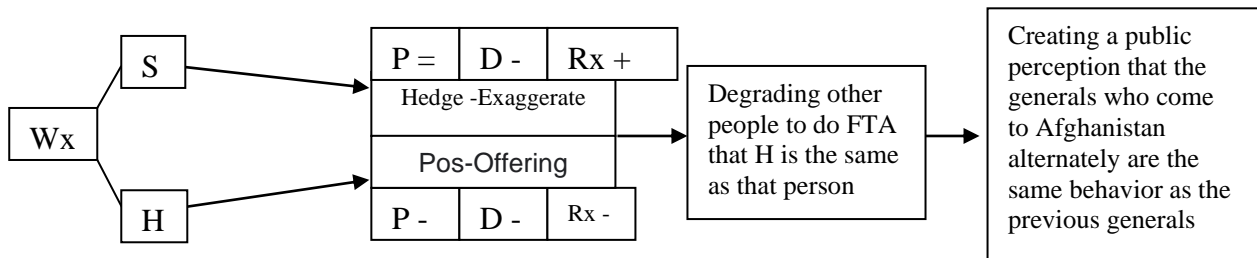
KARZAI : And, uh, what is this new direction?

GLEN : Ah! It is most important to me that we build Afghanistan. Together, we build Afghanistan into a free and prosperous nation. Free from fear and conflict .

KARZAI : I see. I see.

GLEN : Yeah.

The character change in President Karzai (S), who previously was very direct (Bald On Record), considered H as a very close person, so in this conversation, there was a fundamental change where S (President Karzai) showed his manners like a president. In the context of this character change, S used negative politeness (hedge) to keep himself from being deeply involved with H. Hedge was conveyed by showing 'liking' but using a tailed sentence that has a satirical meaning, namely "*I'm not entirely certain he liked me*". *It seems, uh, one minute he was here... the next minute, not here*", which in essence, S liked the previous General (Whelan), but Whelan didn't like S.



S changed his position, which was firstly D+ turned into D- marked by his very formal attitude. It was in the form of the Karzai's respectful attitude toward Glen as generally the relationship of Presidents and General coming from another country. In terms of imposition (Rx), S still presents Rx+, but more subtly, that was vilifying the previous general in Afghanistan. Those done to attack H's face, using the assumption that H was the same as the previous general (General Whelan).

To avoid S's assumption about the poor stigma of the American General that came before, H tried to dodge it by presenting positive politeness in the form of an offer to get together towards a 'new direction.' S questioned about what is the meaning of 'new direction?.' H answered normatively, '*we build Afghanistan Together, we build Afghanistan into a free and prosperous nation. Free from fear and conflict.*' Unexpectedly, S replied very politely, but behind his polite attitude, he presented a highly satirical speech '*Sounds a lot like the old direction*' which indeed threatened H's face.

This scene presented a very strong Weightiness. A hedge delivered by S became an indication that he was not pleased with H's wishes, but to keep H's face, S expressed additional politeness by conveying excessive praise (exaggerate). But, behind the exaggerated



high, because a compliment that contains satire can only be understood when the interlocutor understands the satire.

In this scene, it is shown that H accepts the compliment without absorbing the satire that is being uttered. However, on the audience's side, through S's expression in uttering the satire, it can be understood that "But perhaps you yourself are the new direction" is not actually a compliment, but an insult. The basic reason why this can be called an insult is because S says it excessively or exaggerates "New strong personality, New energy. New commitments". The redundant indicator can be seen from the repetition of praise and the tag of the utterance, which in the end is that S is not willing to join H, accompanied by the expression that is.

It goes deeper that the exaggeration of praise is a satire that H is not really praising but wants to insult in the sense that H is the same as the previous generals. This is based on S's initial speech "Sounds a lot like the old direction" and S's unwillingness to join H which is an indicator that S and H are not finding one thing in common. This insult can be understood from outside the movie frame (from the perspective of the audience), meaning that the satire addressed by S is a satire that is conveyed to the real world, to the world of the audience so that it can be absorbed by certain people who are addressed by the narrator.

## CONCLUSION

Some constructions of politeness strategies are deliberately arranged by the storyteller (in a movie) to convey a satire, both to the interlocutor and the audience. In this War Machine movie, there are several main constructions in conveying satire, including; 1) Satirical attitude, where bald on record act does not function to be disrespectful but to show the opposite attitude or disagreement. 2) Satire that was thrown behind minimizing the face threat of the interlocutor, 3) Bald on record which was used to demean the original figure through anecdotal characters in movies, 4) Hedge by comparing someone with other people who were stigmatized badly. This hedge served to position the interlocutor as bad as the person compared to him, 5) White Lies by appearing to praise the interlocutor in the scene, but seem insulting in the eyes of the audience.

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