

## Sarcastic Expressions in *The Simpsons Movie*

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### ABSTRACT

This research identifies the sarcastic utterances found in *The Simpsons Movie*. It allocates the utterances said by the characters into four categories proposed by Camp (2011): propositional, lexical, like-prefixed, and illocutionary sarcasm. After that, the categorized utterances are identified based on their illocutionary functions by using Leech's theory (1983): collaborative, convivial, competitive, and conflictive function. The result shows that there are 20 sarcastic utterances found in the movie, 85% of which belongs to illocutionary sarcasm, and the 15% belongs to propositional sarcasm. However, the lexical sarcasm and like-prefixed sarcasm are not used by the characters in expressing sarcasm. Meanwhile, there are only three types of functions that are found in this research; collaborative, conflictive, and convivial. This research also displays evidence that sarcasm is used to protect the speaker from the unwanted consequences that might come from the hearer's reaction. In addition to context and common ground, the hearer's response is also necessary to detect an utterance as sarcastic expression.

**Keywords:** *illocutionary functions, sarcasm, sarcastic expression.*

### INTRODUCTION

Communication can reach its goal if the hearer recognizes the message through the speaker's utterances. There are two different techniques that are usually used by the speaker to convey the message. Yule (1996) explains two different types of speech that are related to the techniques, which are direct and indirect speech (p. 55). First, a statement can be categorized as direct speech when some speakers can be clear and direct about what they are going to say. In this case, the statement's intention is delivered clearly, so the hearer does not need to interpret the message. Secondly, there are also speakers who use hidden meaning in delivering their message which is known as indirect speech.

Through hidden meanings, the statement said by the speaker becomes the hearer's responsibility to interpret. Gibbs (1986) points out that sarcasm is a technique in communication that has a hidden meaning method. Some of the main reasons why people are using sarcasm because they want to be humorous, convey attitude and strengthen bonds in a relationship (Dews & Winner, 1995). On the other hand, a sarcastic expression is also used as a way of mean and it has been shown to be victimizing, offensive, and anger-provoking to its targets (Mounts, 2012). Sarcasm is offensive in the situation where the speaker is being friendly to the hearer, but there is a negative message hiding behind the friendly situation. Because negative sarcasm itself is defined as a friendly way of being offensive (Leech,

1983, p.144). On the other hand, sarcasm is positive when the speaker uses an offensive way, but actually, he/she is trying to be friendly. Shortly, it can be concluded that sarcasm has both positive and negative functions. Camp (2011) states that sarcasm is the opposite meaning of what the speaker's said. It also can be described as a speech in which it is understood oppositely of what is actually said. It means that sarcasm can cause misunderstanding between the speaker and the hearer because the meaning in the utterances is hiding under the uttered sentence. The meaning of sarcasm or verbal irony is more about the inversion of meaning (Camp 2011). Sarcasm and irony are closely-related and quite hard to be distinguished. Haiman (1988) said that "situations may be ironic, but only people can be sarcastic". The important part of sarcasm is "it states irony intentionally by the speaker as a form of verbal aggression".

This research discusses the sarcastic remarks used by the characters in an American animation movie entitled *The Simpsons Movie*. This movie was released in 2007 and has humor as its content. In addition, it is also known as a movie with a lot of characters who have the temperamental trait. However, *The Simpsons Movie* is not quite popular in Indonesia because this animation movie is actually not suitable for children since the characters often use offensive expressions. The most important of all, this movie is popular because of the sarcastic expression that is often used by the characters. Through the sarcasm itself, *The Simpsons Movie* is also trying to give social criticism towards American society through humor. The focus of this study is on the classification and the function of sarcasm said by all the characters in the movie. It is interesting to be studied further on how the characters convey the message by using sarcastic expressions. In this movie, sarcasm is also portrayed as the way the characters give social criticism towards American society. These make this research different from the one conducted by Prabowo (2013), which focuses on the sarcastic remarks said by the main characters in the British movie *The Guard*. Meanwhile, Wulandari (2017) identifies sarcastic expression uttered only by Charlie Wyman, a British character in the movie *Letters to Juliet*, and the last is Bachtiar (2018) which focuses on the group of friends as the main characters in the movie

*Fantastic Four* and its sequel, *Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer*. However, in classifying sarcasm, these researches use the same theory proposed by Camp (2011) on four classifications of sarcasm.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Speech Acts

Language is a primary source of communication that cannot be separated from society. It is the way people share their ideas and thoughts. It can be understood that language is a medium that is used by people to share messages through utterances. The way people express messages through utterances is defined as speech act. Austin (1962) defines speech act as the actions performed in a statement said by the speaker. In the subfield of pragmatic, speech act theory deals with an idea that words are used not only to give information, but also to perform actions.

Cutting (2002, p. 16) points out that the action performed when the statement is produced can be analyzed on three different levels. They are Locutionary act, Illocutionary force, and Perlocutionary effect. For better understanding, the further explanation will be presented in the illustration below.

- (1) Sgt Lou : Listen, kid, nobody likes wearing clothes in public, but, you know, it's the law.  
Bart : You can't just leave me out here.

Sgt Lou: Don't worry, we found a friend for you to play with.

From the dialogue above the first level that can be analyzed is the words themselves: "Listen, kid, nobody likes wearing clothes...", "You can't just leave me out here", "Don't worry, we found a friend...". These words are what are called as Locutionary act. The second level, which is known as Illocutionary force is actually what the speakers are doing with their words. From the illustration above, Sergeant Lou is giving 'command', and Bart is 'requesting'. These are the intentions of their own actions or what is done in uttering the words. Illocutionary force is also about the function of the words and the exact purpose that the speakers have in mind. The other examples are 'inviting',

'ordering', 'excusing', 'apologizing', and 'promising'. After that, the last level of analysis is called as Perlocutionary act which can be understood as the result that we achieve in uttering words. For example, Bart is persuading Sergeant Lou that he just cannot leave him out, and Bart wants to be freed. This act is Bart's reaction to Sergeant Lou's command or it can be said that it is the hearer's reaction. Perlocutionary act is also understood as the actual effect from a speech act that is affecting the hearer. In the illustration, the sarcastic response uttered by Sergeant Lou is also considered as the effect of Bart's statement. This effect which is shown by the hearer because of the speaker's speech act is also known as Perlocutionary effect.

Yule (1996) believes that there are two kinds of speech acts, known as direct and indirect speech. When speakers are using a direct speech act, they want to communicate the literal meaning that the words normally express; there is a direct relationship between the form and the function. On the other hand, when speakers are using an indirect speech act, they want to communicate a different meaning from the visible surface meaning, it means that there is another meaning that is lay behind the words, or it can be said that the form and function are not directly related. Sarcasm itself belongs to an indirect speech act because there is always another meaning hides under the words stated. McDonald (1999) explains that "sarcasm is an indirect form of speech in which its social function is to heighten the dramatic effect on the listener" (p. 486). To make it easier to understand, below are some examples taken from Yule (1996, p. 55).

- (2a) Move out of the way!
- (2b) Do you have to stand in front of the TV?
- (2c) You are standing in front of the TV.
- (2d) Thank you, I can see the TV crystal clear.

The sentence in (2a) is the most direct compares to the others. The speaker's intention is clear which is asking the hearer to get out of the way. Meanwhile, in (2b) is an interrogative sentence and it is considered as indirect speech act. The reason is that the utterance is not used to ask a question. Lastly, both (2c) and (2d) belong to indirect speech act. Basically, all of the sentences have the same goal which wants the hearer to move

out, but they are said in a different way. The last is it is clear that in (2d) the speaker uses sarcastic expression because the speaker is using verbal aggression in evaluating the hearer (Haiman, p.20). The important point is sarcasm happens because there is an intention from the speaker.

### **Context**

Context can be described as a situation, circumstances, or specific setting in which an event occurs. It is an important aspect of communication that should be included when studying the meaning of words. Yule (1996, p. 3) also explains that "pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning, and context influences what is said by the speaker". Therefore, a context is crucial to understand to know the meaning of the speaker's utterances in a broader way. It is clear that in this research context is necessary to decide whether an utterance can be classified as sarcasm or not.

Cutting (2002) divides context into three types: situational, background knowledge and co-textual context.

#### ***Situational Context***

This type is about what speakers know about what they can see around them. The situational context is the immediate physical co- presence, the situation where the interaction is taking place at the moment of speaking.

#### ***Background Knowledge Context***

This type refers to what the interlocutors know about each other and the world. This can be either cultural or interpersonal. Cultural context refers to the general knowledge that most people carry with them in minds and about areas of life while interpersonal context is related to private knowledge of their own history.

#### ***Co-textual Context***

This type of context is about what the speaker and the hearer know about what they have been saying. It is the context of the text itself, known as the co-text. It deals with grammatical and lexical cohesion.

## Sarcasm

In the simplest form, sarcasm can be defined as an expression that clearly means the opposite of what the intended meaning is. This definition is similar to the traditional theories in which sarcasm is treated as a situation of speakers' meaning the opposite of what they say (Camp 2011, p. 1). Since it belongs to an indirect form of speech, it has a function to convey messages indirectly. Sperber & Wilson (as cited in Tsoory et al., 2005) explains that sarcasm is usually applied to communicate unspoken criticism about the listener or the situation. It is also frequently used in situations provoking negative effect and is followed by disapproval, contempt, and scorn.

In defining sarcasm, it is certainly true that verbal irony cannot be separated from it. Bull (2010, p. 16) states that "ironic effect is expressing a phrase opposite to the situation". Tsoory et al. (2005) also say that sarcasm is a part of irony. It cannot be denied that sarcasm and irony are closely related and hard to be distinguished. However, Haiman (1998) points out that there are two differences between sarcasm and irony:

First, situations may be ironic, but only people can be sarcastic. Second, people may be unintentionally ironic, but sarcasm requires intention. What is essential to sarcasm is that it is overt irony intentionally used by the speakers as a form of verbal aggression, and it may thus be contrasted with other aggressive speech acts, among them the put-on, direct insults, curses, vituperation, nagging, and condescension. (p. 20)

For better understanding, below is a dialogue taken from *The Simpsons Movie* that shows a clear explanation about the difference between sarcasm and irony:

(3) Marge: Why are you dressed like that?

Moe: Well, I don't like to brag, but I am now the emperor of Springfield.

A citizen : No, you're not!

Moe : Yes, I am!

A citizen : **Okay. Hail, emperor.**

The reason why the conversation above is recognized as ironic is because Moe is sure that he has

already dressed like an emperor, but he actually looks like a homeless and crazy person. He even declares himself as an emperor of Springfield town. Marge's question and the citizen's denial on him are showing confusion and disagreement regarding Moe's odd clothes. However, the citizen's sarcastic response aims to mock him, because it is clear that Moe does not need to be praised in his stupid costume.

Camp (2011) believes that sarcasm is more about the inversion of meaning. Further, she proposes a theory in which sarcasm can be observed from two different perspectives, they are *semanticism* and *expressivism*:

*Semanticism* argues that sarcasm is semantically encoded at the level of logical form by an operator which 'inverts' the literal meaning of the word or clause to which it applies. Meanwhile, *expressivism* denies that sarcasm or verbal irony is a matter of meaning at all, arguing instead that it serves to draw attention to a disparity between how things are and how they should be, and thereby expresses a "dissociative attitude" about some aspect of this disparity. (p. 2)

According to the explanation above, sarcasm is treated in two different positions. Meanwhile, in classifying sarcastic remarks can be supported by using semanticism point of view (Camp 2011). In her research, Camp uses this method to support the four classifications of sarcasm. So that, this paper also applies the semanticism point of view since this research discusses the sarcasm's classification as well.

However, Leech (1983) believes that if there is an existence of principle that sarcasm has a negative meaning, there also exists a principle that has the opposite effect, known as banter principle (p.144). From the previous explanation, it can be said that negative sarcasm is a friendly way of being offensive, meanwhile positive sarcasm has an offensive way of being friendly, known as 'banter'. Leech (1983, p. 144) provides examples of banter principle as in,

(4) What a mean cowardly trick!

(5) Here comes trouble!

In example (4) is an expression that is said in a situation where the speaker and hearer are in a game of chess. The utterance said is recognized as impolite and it is clear that the statement is untrue because it actually refers to a particular clever gambit. In other words, the expression is actually a compliment said jokingly by the speaker in an impolite way. Meanwhile, it is also true in the example (5) which means that in the current situation, there might be two friends who greet one another with such a remark. Moreover, Leech (1983) also explains that banter principle might be expressed as follows:

In order to show solidarity with the hearer, the speaker says something which is obviously untrue, and obviously impolite to the hearer. (p. 144)

The intended meaning that underlies in positive sarcasm does not express a mocking, scornful, or contemptuous attitude. Meanwhile, banter must be clearly recognizable as unserious. It actually depends on how close the relationship between the speaker and hearer to recognize an expression as banter. The reason is that the more intimate the relationship, the less important it is to be polite. Since banter is always said in a very impolite way, it needs the hearer's understanding in recognizing banter as a positive expression.

### Types of Sarcasm

According to Camp (2011), the classification of sarcasm is divided into four, which are Propositional sarcasm, Lexical sarcasm, Like-prefixed sarcasm, and Illocutionary sarcasm. The further explanation of each type is presented below:

#### *Propositional Sarcasm*

This type of sarcasm is believed to be the most straightforward compared to the other types. In this case, the sarcasm's field is pointed into some proposition to which a sincere utterance would have said. Camp argues that "propositional sarcasm functions most like the traditional model, delivering an implicature that is the contrary of a proposition that would have been expressed by a sincere utterance" (Camp, 2011, p. 2). Shortly, it can be understood that propositional sarcasm is the direct

opposite of what is supposed to be sincere. In order to make it clear, some examples of propositional sarcasm provided by Camp (2011) are presented below:

- (6) He's a fine friend.
- (7) James must be a real hit with the ladies. (p. 21)

In sentence (6) the speaker attempts to insert a proposition by saying that his friend is a fine friend. When the sentence above is uttered as sarcasm, it should be understood oppositely. In this case, the use of adjective 'fine' that is actually put up to give an evaluative attitude towards the friend's behavior. Meanwhile, in sentence (7) is sarcastically implied that James is actually not really good in dealing with the ladies. By pretending to assert the proposition, the speaker involves the contrary of the proposition itself with an evaluative attitude.

Camp (2011) considered this type of sarcasm as the most straightforward. As she stated that the proposition *P* said by the speaker is actually the contrary, *Q*. The *Q* itself is understood as *P*'s negation. Furthermore, the use of adjective in propositional sarcasm has a function to mark a clear scale of the proposition.

#### *Lexical Sarcasm*

In the case of lexical sarcasm, Camp (2011) gives an explanation by providing an example, as in

- (8) Because George has turned out to be such a diplomat, we've decided to transfer him to Payroll, where he'll do less damage. (p. 25)

The speaker in the sentence above remarks that George is being transferred to Payroll. The reason can be seen from the context in the last clause that George has a bad performance in his workplace or maybe he is not doing well. The speaker attempts a speech act whose illocutionary force is delivered in such a normal way without inverting from what it supposed to mean. However, the word 'diplomat' contradicts with the whole illocutionary force which makes the utterance sarcastic. This is the explanation of lexical sarcasm in which Camp had argued that "lexical sarcasm targets just a single expression or phrase within the uttered sentence" (p. 2) and "it delivers an inverted compositional value for a single expression or phrase" (p. 20). In lexical

sarcasm, it is not really necessary to invert the whole illocutionary force, because it just targets a single expression which makes the utterance sarcastic.

### *Like-prefixed Sarcasm*

Unlike lexical sarcasm, 'Like'-prefixed sarcasm cannot target a single expression (2011, p.27). This type has a similarity with the propositional sarcasm which targets the whole proposition. Based on Oxford Dictionary online, proposition "is a statement or assertion that expresses a judgement or opinion". What makes this sarcasm is different from the propositional sarcasm is the use of prefix 'Like' in front of the sentence. The prefix 'Like' itself has a function to deny the content in which the sentence is embedded. Camp (2011) explains that "utterances prefixed with sarcastic 'Like' actively commit the speaker to deny that content, in a way that robustly undermines deniability". Besides, 'Like' prefixed sarcasm is only felicitous when it combines with declarative sentences (p. 27). Some examples are given below.

(9) Like I've talked to George in weeks.

(10) Like that's a good idea. (Camp, 2011, p.28)

The speaker in sentence (9) cannot assume that his/her intended meaning is in fact spoken to George lately. Otherwise, it can be reported that the speaker has denied talking to George lately. The prefix 'Like' also has the same function in sentence (10), that the addition of 'Like' as a start of the utterance intends to oppose what the speaker has said. Hence, the statement said has a meaning that the idea is not good. In other words, it can be said that it is false that the idea is good. In addition to the prefix 'Like', this type of sarcasm also works with the words 'As if' at the beginning of the sentence. As long as it employs a sneering tone it can be included in this type of sarcasm, as in

(11) {Like/As if} I was going to give him any money. (p. 16)

The example above is similar to sentences in (9) and (10) which are showing the opposite meaning. The primary point is "sentences containing sarcastic 'Like' do commit the speaker to some determinate content, which is in a clear sense the opposite of what

a sincere utterance of the embedded sentence would have meant" (Camp 17).

### *Illocutionary Sarcasm*

The last type of sarcasm mentioned by Camp is known as Illocutionary sarcasm. Different from the others, "the sarcasm's scope of this type covers not just some element within the uttered sentence or some proposition associated with the utterance, but the entire illocutionary act that a sincere utterance of the relevant sentence would have undertaken" (p. 32). Based on Collins Dictionary, *Illocutionary act* "is an act performed by a speaker by virtue of uttering certain words, as for example the acts of promising or of threatening". Camp (2011) also declared that "illocutionary sarcasm targets speech act with an illocutionary force other than assertion", the examples are shown below:

(12) Thanks for holding the door.

(13) How old did you say you were?

(14) You sure know a lot. (Camp, 2011, p. 32)

Those utterances are categorized as sarcastic expressions because they were uttered in the opposite situation where the utterances would be appropriate. For example, in sentence (12) the speaker feigns to carry out an utterance which would be appropriate if the addressee actually has held the door. It is clear that in this situation, door-holding ranks high on a scale of politeness. However, there is a disparity between an evoked situation and the actual one. In this case, the speaker is trying to evaluate the addressee's rude behavior for not holding the door. Similarly, in sentence (13), the speaker pretends to ask a question that would be appropriate in a situation where the hearer is behaving maturely for his age. By paying attention to the difference between this situation and the actual one, the speaker is actually expressing evaluation towards the hearer's behavior as immature. Moreover, in sentence (14) the speaker is trying to give a compliment, but it actually implicates that the addressee is foolish for exposing the capability which is unnecessary. It results that the pretended compliment is inverted into scorn.

Illocutionary sarcasm is about a meaning inversion of what an illocutionary act would mean. Camp (2011) also adds that "the insight that

illocutionary acts other than assertion lack well-defined opposites, but can be used sarcastically undermines the traditional model of sarcasm as inverting propositional content". Additionally, in understanding this type of sarcasm, we have to understand the meaning in a broader scope.

### Illocutionary Functions

As mentioned before, this research also discusses the function of sarcastic remarks said by the characters in *The Simpsons Movie*. The function will be examined by using the theory of illocutionary act proposed by Leech (1983).

According to Leech (1983, 104), the types of illocutionary act can be classified based on its function. It is according on how they relate to the social goal in establishing and maintaining politeness. There are four categories which are presented below:

#### *Competitive*

The use of this function is to decrease the underlying discourtesy of the goal. It deals with the competition between what the speaker wants to achieve, and what is 'good manners'. It aims to compete with social purposes, such as ordering, asking, demanding, begging, etc.

#### *Convivial*

The politeness in this function takes more positive form of seeking opportunities for comity (p. 105). The purpose of convivial function is in compliance with social goals, for example: offering, inviting, greeting, thanking, congratulating, etc.

#### *Collaborative*

The politeness in this function is largely irrelevant in which the illocutionary function is ignoring social goals. The examples are asserting, reporting, announcing, instructing, etc.

#### *Conflictive*

This function is the most impolite compared to the others because it is naturally designed to cause an offence. It uses to conflict against social goals such as threatening, accusing, and reprimanding. This

type of illocutionary function is created to cause a violation.

## METHODS

This part presents the methods of research. It provides the data source, data, methods of data collection, and data analysis.

### Data Source and Data

*The Simpsons* is popularly known as a TV program that contains scathing critiques of American. There are a lot of issues that raised such as educational system, religious beliefs, American political structures, etc., that are packaged in humor and contains sarcastic critiques of American life (Tingleff, 1998). Moreover, *The Simpsons Movie* itself is an animation movie in which the purpose is to give social criticism toward American society through humor. Simpsons family also represents an American nuclear family in the personages of Homer, Marge, and their kids (Allen, 2000). Based on *Oxford Dictionary*, "nuclear family is a family that consists of father, mother, and children, when it is thought as a unit in society". Furthermore, the characters in the movie are known as having the temperamental trait, so that they often express their feeling through sarcastic expressions when they talk to each other.

The data analyzed in this research are the dialogues uttered by the characters in *The Simpsons Movie* which contain sarcasm only. The dialogues were taken from the English subtitle which was downloaded from [www.subscene.com](http://www.subscene.com), and accessed on March 4, 2019. The original DVD of the movie was chosen as the source to watch the film itself, and it was distributed in Indonesia by PT. *Magixtama Etika*.

The *Simpsons Movie*, is an American animated adventure comedy directed by David Silverman. The film was made based on the Fox television series *The Simpsons*, and was published in 2007. The movie itself has 87 minutes long of a duration. The story follows Homer Simpsons who has polluted the Springfield Lake by throwing the silo full of a pig's dung in it. It results the whole Springfield town gets sealed off in a giant glass

dome that is sent by EPA (Environmental Protection Agency). This situation makes the townspeople angry because they find it crazy to be sealed off. They blame The Simpsons family and rallied around Simpsons' house insist to chase them. Because of the unconducive situation, the family finally runaway to Alaska. After several days in Alaska, they find out that Russ Cargill, the head of EPA, is actually trying to destroy Springfield. Homer is closing his eyes towards the fact, but his family members care about the issue and decide to leave him alone in Alaska. Not long after that, Homer realizes that he is responsible for the situation. He is going back to Springfield in order to save the town. Finally, the town is rescued and the townspeople forgive Homer's past deed.

### Method of Data Collection

The data were identified using the theory proposed by Camp (2011) and were collected in three steps. The first step was watching the original DVD played on a personal computer. Because the subtitle that comes with the movie could not be taken and looked in detail, the external subtitle was needed to know the exact time when the dialogue appeared on the screen. The subtitle itself was downloaded from [www.subscene.com](http://www.subscene.com). After that, the subtitle was opened through Notepad software. The second step was listening to the characters' dialogues carefully to make sure that the utterances matched with the external subtitle accurately. The third was copying the dialogues from the external subtitle which appeared as sarcasm statements and after that pasting the copied subtitle in Microsoft Word software. The name of the character was given, and the complete conversation was added if it was crucial. The context was also included to give more explanation about the situation that happened in the conversation. Lastly, the timestamp was also added as the exact time when the dialogue appeared in the movie.

### Method of Data Analysis

All the sarcastic remarks collected were classified into four classifications proposed by Camp (2011); Propositional sarcasm, Lexical sarcasm, Like-prefixed sarcasm, and Illocutionary sarcasm. The data categorized were analyzed according to the

theory of four classifications conducted by Camp (2011). The number of frequency was also added to know which one of the category frequently appeared in the movie. Then, the results were discussed and some explanations were given. Lastly, the function was examined by using the theory of illocutionary function proposed by Leech (1983); competitive, convivial, collaborative, and conflictive by looking at the illocutionary act and considering the context.

Below is the example of how the data are presented in this research.

(15) 00:12:50,541—00:13:06,135 (Illo.Col.)

*Context: Bart is arrested by polices because they have seen him skateboarding around the town in a naked body. After that, Sergeant Lou sends him a leader of the school bullies, Nelson. Instead of being a friend to play with, he laughs at Bart.*

Lou: Listen, kid, nobody likes wearing clothes in public, but, you know, it's the law.

Chief Wiggum: Lunchtime!

Bart: You can't just leave me out here.

Sgt Lou: **Don't worry, we found a friend for you to play with.**

As can be seen in the example above, 00:12:50,541—00:13:06,135 indicates the timestamp when the dialogue appears on the screen. After that, the code 'Illo' stands for illocutionary sarcasm and Col for collaborative function.

However, because sarcasm itself is believed as having both negative and positive functions, this research also identifies sarcastic expression in which it is uttered as a positive sarcasm, known as 'banter'. The example of datum that is recognized as banter is presented as follow.

(16) 00:14:05,270—00:14:00,273 (Prop.

BP. Col.)

*Context: Bart is finally released by the police after he was being punished with his hands tied to the electricity pole. He was punished because of his dad who had asked him to ride a skateboard around the town naked. Bart is telling his dad that the day is the worst day of his life.*



Bart: This is the worst day of my life.

Homer: **The worst day of your life so far.**

In this example, The abbreviation BP stands for Banter Principle. This code is added to positive sarcasm.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Classifications of Sarcasm

There are 20 sarcastic expressions that are found in *The Simpsons Movie*. However, none of the data belong to lexical sarcasm and like-prefixed sarcasm. The table below shows the frequency and distribution of the data.

Table 1. The Frequency and Allocation of Sarcasm

No.	Categories of Sarcasm	Number	%
1.	Illocutionary	17	85
2.	Propositional	3	15
3.	Lexical	0	0
4.	Like-Prefixed	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

Illocutionary sarcasm is the most frequently used strategy in the movie. It has the highest number of occurrences, which is 17 (85%). In the second position, it is followed by propositional sarcasm with 3 occurrences (15%). However, the result of the classification of sarcasm in this research shows that there are none of the sarcastic expressions belong to lexical and like-prefixed sarcasm.

The detail explanations of the findings on illocutionary sarcasm and propositional sarcasm are presented below.

### *Illocutionary Sarcasm*

Camp (2011) mentioned that the highlight of illocutionary sarcasm is it uses speech act as a pretense to express sarcasm (p. 32). This type of sarcasm not only target a certain proposition, adjective, or a single expression, but the whole illocutionary act in the uttered sentence. Therefore, in illocutionary sarcasm, the meaning in a sentence should be understood broadly before it is inverted

into a sincere one (p. 33). This type of sarcasm is the most frequently used by the characters with 17 occurrences (85%). Therefore, it can be concluded that the characters in the movie find it more effective to put sarcasm in their illocutionary act. Below is the example of the usage of illocutionary sarcasm.

(17) 00:08:10,316—00:07:59,099

*Bart and Homer are fixing their roof. Suddenly, Homer gets his eyes knocked by the hammer. Bart finds it funny and he laughs at his dad.*

Homer: Why, you little...! I'll teach you to laugh at something that's funny!

Bart: You know, we are on the roof. **We could have some fun.**

Homer: What kind of fun?

The dialogue above shows that Bart is convincing his dad that they actually can have some fun. In truth, his utterance is not appropriate at all to be spoken in the current situation because his dad just got knocked by the hammer. It is definitely not a situation that is funny to laugh at because Homer is in a painful condition. The sentence uttered is evaluating Homer's attitude for not allowing him to laugh. However, it turns into a mockery to Homer who considers his son's behaviour as rude. Therefore, the utterance becomes sarcastic because it will be appropriate if it is spoken in the opposite situation.

The discussion above is identifying the sarcastic remarks that have the negative meaning underlies behind a statement, or in other words, it can be recognized as negative sarcasm. However, this research also found that there are sarcastic expressions which also have positive meaning, known as positive sarcasm. Unlike negative sarcasm, positive sarcasm works oppositely, in which the intended meaning in an utterance that the speaker tries to hide is actually has the positive value. Leech (1983) describes the positive sarcasm as "the type of verbal behaviour known as 'banter' which means an offensive way of being friendly (mock-impoliteness)." (p.144). However, from 17 sarcastic expressions that belong to the type of illocutionary sarcasm, four of them are parts of banter. The dialogue below shows the usage of positive sarcasm.

(18) 01:15:22,529—01:15:17,784 (Illo. BP. Col.)

*After Homer and Bart destroy the dome successfully, Springfield is finally saved. Suddenly, Rus Cargill, the head of EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), who has sealed the town, appears before Homer and Bart with his hand holding a gun. He is pointing on Homer's head and ready to release the bullet, but Maggie appears from his back and throws a big rock on him.*

Homer: (to Maggie) **Maggie! What a great little accident you turned out to be.**

In the dialogue above, Homer is actually expressing his gratefulness to Maggie in a very impolite way by saying that she is a great little accident. Actually, the utterance belongs to positive sarcasm because while saying the expression, Homer also smiles and laughs at Maggie. It is Homer's way to express his love to his daughter because she has saved both Homer's and Bart's life. It can be clearly seen in the context that Rus Cargill is trying to kill Homer and Bart at the same time, and they already give up with the unbearable situation. After that, Maggie's appearance there is beyond their expectation because they have already thought about death. Therefore, the utterance can be recognized as positive sarcasm because the intended meaning in the uttered sentence said by Homer is actually containing positive values although the expression is said in a form of mockery.

In recognizing positive sarcasm, the relationship between the speaker and the hearer is important to be noted. As can be seen in the context, Maggie is Homer's daughter that means both of them are already familiar to each other. However, Leech (1983) argues that

the more intimate the relationship, the less important it is to be polite. Hence, lack of politeness in itself can become a sign of intimacy: and hence, the ability to be impolite to someone, in jest helps to establish and maintain such a familiar relationship. (p.144)

The explanation above is the situation where the banter principle works as the positive sarcasm. Because banter itself should be understood as an expression where "what speaker says is impolite to

hearer and is clearly untrue. Therefore, what speaker really means is polite to hearer and true" (p.144). In conclusion, the expression in example (21) has banter principle because it is said as impolite as possible by Homer to his own daughter to bond the intimacy between dad and his child.

### ***Propositional Sarcasm***

In propositional sarcasm, the sarcastic utterance said by the speaker means the opposite of what is supposed to be sincere. Camp (2011) states that this type of sarcasm is the most straightforward and has more narrowly focus compared to the others. It only targets a certain proposition, and then the speaker makes a negation of it to say in the opposite way. The most important point is it often uses adjective as a straightforward proposition. There are 3 utterances found in the movie that can be categorized as propositional sarcasm. Two of the expressions belong to negative sarcasm, and the other one is the positive sarcasm. Since there are only three, the examples altogether with the explanation of the use of propositional sarcasm are given below. The dialogues presented are taken from the movie.

(19) 00:43:38,693—00:43:32,237 (Prop. Conv)

*Simpsons family are in a festival. There, Homer finds a game booth called 'The Ball of Death' where he should ride a motorcycle in one full rotation inside a spherical steel cage. He has three chances to conquer the ball, but he fails. Actually, He wants to give up because of all the pain he feels when he falls three times in a row, but the game's owner gives him one more chance for free.*

Game's owner : Here's what I'll do, because I like seeing you hurt yourself, I'll give you one on the house.

Homer: **You're the best.**

The conversation in the second line shows that Homer seems like to give a compliment to the Game's owner because of the chance he gives. Actually, his remark can be recognized either as positive or negative. It is true that the adjective 'best' is basically known has a very positive value. However, propositional sarcasm deals with the meaning inversion which targets a certain

proposition. It means that the sentence should be understood oppositely. In truth, the adjective 'best' in Homer's utterance is inserted to evaluate the Game's owner because of his attitude. It can be said that the Game's owner is being rude for he likes to see Homer hurting himself. So, in the conversation above, Homer is trying to express his feeling straightforwardly in sarcastic way. When he knows that someone is being excited for him because of the bad accident that happens multiple times, it is impossible to call this person as the best one, unless it means otherwise. Moreover, it should be noted that sarcasm is also recognized when the hearer understands the intended meaning said by the speaker. In the example, the reaction that comes from the hearer is the smiling expression in his face which is shown by the Game's owner. It means that he has already predicted the sarcastic remark said by Homer. The reason is because in this context, the Game's owner doesn't take it seriously when he offers another chance to Homer.

Moving to this section, there is also positive sarcasms that can be found in the movie which belongs to propositional sarcasm. As mentioned before, positive sarcasm works oppositely because the sincere meaning that underlies behind positive sarcasm has the positive value.

Below is an example of positive sarcasm that belongs to propositional sarcasm.

(20) 01:10:58,283—01:10:50,699 (Prop.BP.Col.)

*Homer rides a motorcycle while holding a bomb which is going to explode soon. He insists to reach the hole on the top of the dome and will throw the bomb outside the dome through the hole.*

Grampa: Homer? What the hell are you doing now?

Homer: **Risking my life to save people I hate for reasons I don't quite understand. Gotta go!**

The second line in the dialogue above shows that Homer seems like to convince Grampa that he is willing to risk his life only to save people he hates. Actually, in Homer's utterance, there is one adjective inserted which makes the expression belongs to positive sarcasm, which is the word 'hate'. It is impossible for someone to risk his/her life and save someone's life if they only hate the

person. However, in (20) the expression that Homer tries to deliver is actually expressing his love and care that he has, especially for Grampa since he is the one who asks the question to Homer. While expressing the utterance, Homer is also smiling and showing his happy face although he tells Grampa that he hates the people. It can be simply inverted that in fact, Homer loves the people, so that he is willing to risk himself in order to save other people's life. Moreover, Grampa also understands the sentence as sarcastic because he is not trying to stop Homer because he knows that Homer is actually trying to save the people he loves.

### The Functions of Sarcasm

The function of each sarcastic utterances is identified using the theory of illocutionary functions proposed by Leech (1983). The functions are classified into four types based on 'how they relate to the social goal of establishing and maintaining comity' (p. 104). They are Collaborative, Convivial, Competitive, and Conflictive. The distribution of the functions is presented in the table of frequency below.

Table 2. The Frequency of Illocutionary Functions

No.	Functions	Frequency	(%)
1.	Collaborative	13	65
2.	Conflictive	4	20
3.	Convivial	3	15
4.	Competitive	0	0
Total		20	100

Based on the table above, the most frequently used function to express sarcasm is collaborative, with 13 occurrences (65%). After that, it is followed by conflictive function with 4 occurrences (20%). The next is convivial which is used 3 times, (15%), and there is none of the sarcastic expression uses competitive function to express sarcasm.

It is important to note that sarcastic expression has two primary functions, which means that it can be both positive and negative. However, in this research the illocutionary functions analyzed are mainly in the form of the utterance itself which appears as sarcastic expression. It is being analyzed on which types of illocutionary functions visible in the statement said and used to express sarcasm. The following is the elaborate explanation of each function.

### ***Collaborative Function***

This type is the most frequently used function to express sarcasm with 13 occurrences (65%). However, Leech (1983) argues that politeness in this function is largely irrelevant and the purpose is indifferent to the social goal (p. 104- 105). Therefore, the utterances contain collaborative function are intended to be neither polite nor impolite. The speech acts that usually perform with this function are, asserting, reporting, announcing, and instructing. The example of the use of this function is presented below:

(21) 00:13:06,135 (Illo. Col) 00:12:50,541

*Bart is arrested by polices because they have seen him skateboarding around the town in a naked body. After that, Sergeant Lou sends him a leader of the school bullies, Nelson. Instead of being a friend to play with, he laughs at Bart.*

Sgt Lou: Listen, kid, nobody likes wearing clothes in public, but, you know, it's the law.

Chief Wiggum : Lunchtime!

Bart: You can't just leave me out here.

Sgt Lou: **Don't worry, we found a friend for you to play with.**

Sergeant Lou's utterance is an assertion that can be considered as neither polite nor impolite. He has asked Bart to stand alone outside with his hand locked on an electricity pole. After that, he pretends to calm Bart down by saying 'don't worry' and sending him a friend on purpose to accompany him to play. He does this kind of action as if he feels sorry for Bart because of the punishment. Meanwhile, in truth Sergeant Lou's actual intention is to make him embarrassed because he has done something that cannot be tolerated. So, Sergeant Lou tries to say the sentence as neutral as possible, but still it can be recognized as a verbal aggression.

### ***Conflictive Function***

Unlike the previous functions, this type of illocutionary function is the most impolite compared to the others. It is because the politeness in this context contradicts with the illocutionary goal, which is to conflict with the social purpose. Leech (1983) mentioned that "politeness is out of the

question because conflictive illocutions are naturally designed to cause offence". The speech acts that are performed with this function are threatening, accusing, cursing, and reprimanding.

However, there are four positive sarcasms found in the movie which use conflictive function to deliver the positive meaning in the uttered sentence. It should be noted first that sarcasm is an expression which means the opposite of what the speaker said. It means that the sentence should be understood oppositely. Therefore, the sarcastic expressions which use conflictive function should be understood oppositely as well.

The example below is the explanation of how this function is used in a sarcastic utterance, especially in a positive sarcasm.

(22) 01:15:22,529—01:15:17,784 (Illo. P.Conf.)

*After Homer and Bart destroy the dome successfully, Springfield is finally saved. Suddenly, Rus Cargill, the head of EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), who has sealed the town, appears before Homer and Bart with his hand holding a gun. He is pointing on Homer's head and ready to release the bullet, but Maggie appears and throws him a big rock.*

Homer: (to Maggie) **Maggie! What a great little accident you turned out to be.**

From the dialogue above shows that Homer is trying to express his hatred towards his daughter that she is only a little accident. His act is already considered as impolite because he does not show the behaviour in which Homer should show as a dad. However, the utterance said by Homer is actually belong to positive sarcasm. It means that if it is understood oppositely, the intended meaning that underlies behind the sentence has a positive meaning. It can be seen that through his impolite utterance which is really rude, he actually intends to show his daughter how much he loves her.

### ***Convivial Function***

The aim of this illocutionary function is compliance with the social purpose, which means politeness takes more positive pattern in searching for comity. Moreover, the speech acts performed with this

function usually use opportunities to express politeness. For example, if a speaker has an opportunity to congratulate hearer on his graduation, speaker should do so, because the goal of convivial function matches with the social goal (Leech, 1983, p. 104-105).

However, this function is actually in the opposite of what negative sarcasm actually means. But, in negative sarcasm, the pattern that is used by the characters to express sarcasm is positive, because the visible utterance is said in some speech acts which are intrinsically courteous such as, offering, inviting, greeting, thanking, and congratulating.

However, the frequency of the use of convivial function is in the third position, which is after conflictive function, with 3 occurrences (15%). It means that the characters also like to take the opportunities to express politeness in delivering sarcasm. It is important to note that although sarcasm is valued as a verbal assault, and it is considered as not polite at all, still they use positive pattern as their verbal aggression. The example below shows the use of convivial function to deliver sarcasm.

(23) 00:44:52,936—00:44:31,626 (Prop. Conv.)

*Moe, who is a bartender, now is watching TV with some customers. The reporter in the breaking news says that people in Springfield now are facing intermittent power failures. Suddenly, the electricity goes off and it makes the room dark. When the lights on, Moe realizes that all the bottles and drinks are stolen. He turns the light off again, and after that turns it on again. He is surprised because now the room is already empty. There are no tables left, and he even lost his pant.*

Moe: (to customers) **Okay, very funny.** I'm gonna turn the lights off again. When they come back on, I want all my booze back the way it was.

The speaker in the dialogue above seems like giving an appreciation to the customers who have play a trick on him. This is an act performed by the speaker as a form of politeness but he actually expresses sarcasm. This act is considered as polite because the speaker takes the opportunity to do the act which coincides with the social goal. However,

based on the context, it can be seen that the customers are not deserve to be complimented because the joke that they think would be funny is actually disadvantages him. In short, it is clear that the customers are receiving a verbal aggression from Moe, who is expressing sarcastic remark courteously by using positive form. In recognizing Moe's utterance as sarcasm, it is shown that the customers take it in an unserious way because they keep playing joke on Moe.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, illocutionary sarcasm is the most preferable type used by the characters in expressing sarcasm. Moreover, an illocutionary sarcasm can be detected when the spoken utterance is not appropriate to be stated in the current situation. Unlike the other types, illocutionary sarcasm is more complex because it should be understood in a broader meaning. Thus, it would be more meaningful and effective to convey the characters' message. Meanwhile, both lexical and like-prefixed sarcasm are not used at all by the characters in The Simpsons Movie in expressing sarcasm.

There are two kinds of sarcastic expressions that are found in the movie, the first is the sarcastic expression which functionates as negative sarcasm, and the other one is the sarcastic expression which functionates as positive sarcasm. In this research, both positive and negative sarcasm found in the movie are analyzed based on the illocutionary functions. It results that the characters in the movie prefer to use the collaborative function in expressing sarcasm.

This research also found that context and common ground are two crucial elements to detect a sarcastic expression. The interlocutor needs to have the same perceptions and shared experiences. If the hearer does not have that common ground, maybe he/she would understand the sentence as it is spoken. This point is important because there is a hidden meaning in utterance that contains sarcasm, and it becomes the hearer's responsibility to understand the implicit intention. Moreover, sometimes context and common ground are not strong enough to detect an expression as sarcasm so

that it also needs the hearer's response in detecting sarcastic expression. In addition, this study also reveals that sarcasm is used to protect the speaker from the unwanted consequences that might come from the hearer's reaction.

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