# Sarcastic Utterances in North Country Film as English Teaching Materials

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## **Abstract**

This aim of the study is to determine sarcastic utterances in North Country film as a teaching material of American Cuture course at the department of English Literature, Lancang Kuning University. This analysis were using pragmatic approach. In collecting data, the researcher used the documentation type, the data were then analyzed through qualitative descriptive technique. The results show that there are three categories of sarcastic uterances found in the film discussed, (1) Propositional sarcasm, where numbers of impolite utterances used by the men workers towards women workers (2) Lexical sarcasm, that there are many positive utterances but have negative effects, and (3) illocutionary sarcasm, where many illocutionary utterances used by the opponents to defeat main character. The sarcastic utterances are used as teaching material in the American culture courseat the English Literature Study Program. The students seem to study with enthusiasm in a pleasant learning atmosphere so that the average learning outcomes they achieved are very satisfying.

Keywords: film, sarcastic utterances, American culture, teaching material

## 1. Introduction

Various issues raised in the American films, one of which is sarcastic utterances. The phenomenon of sarcastic utterances in America has a close relationship with American socio-cultural life. This close relationship can certainly be used as one part of the teaching material in the American Culture course.

Research on sarcastic language has been discussed by previous researchers, including; (Christiani, 2016; Cahyani, 2017; Bakhtiar & Hardjanto, 2018; Sutarman, 2018; Tabacaru, 2018; Dubey et all., 2019; Siagian, 2019; Padmatantri & Sutrisno, 2020; Yang, 2021). Based on these researchs, none has worked on sarcastic utterances in the North Country film and is used as teaching material, especially in the American Culture course.

This study aims to determine the categories and sarcastic intentions in the NC film, and uses it as teaching material for American culture at English literature study program, Faculty of Humanities, Lancang Kuning University. Why is this sarcastic utterance important to be included in the teaching material in the course because sarcastic utterances in NC film set and reveal American culture. The use of sarcastic utterances based on American culture as teaching material will give advantage to improve students' English skills, in particular, American English style. Many research results state the importance of learning English through an innovative culture (Yektiningtyas and Modouw, 2017; Ayusmar & Muhartoyo, 2018; Pontoh et all., 2018).

In American Culture course, students are encouraged to be active, disciplined, and a lot of independent and group work. With the CSL (Students Center Learning) method, it is expected that their level of understanding will be better. Amrullah (2018) explains that "Task-based learning approach is adapting all the concepts of thought that puts learners in the primary position. This approach gives the opportunity: a) using a contextual language; b) exploring the target language through situational activities; and c) learning experience that cannot be duplicated in the classroom". In this case, it is very important for the lecturer to explain the sarcastic phenomenon in detail in every expression found. The role of teachers/lecturers is very important in language learning as explained in various research results, including (Palatova & Nurlybekova, 2019: Ullah et all, 2021).

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## 2. Literature Review

To convey the meaning of a speaker's intention to be delivered, someone uses utterances accompanied by actions, or known as speech acts. Austin (1962) identifies three levelsof a speech act: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary act. In line with this, Yule (1996) and Dmitrievich (2021) emphasized that utterances and contexts were interrelated. In reality, sarcasm is the use of harsh words or utterances to hurt others in the form of mock or harsh ridicule, but it is found and exist in society. "It is traditionally understood as something which means the opposite of what is said. In expressing sarcasm, the speakers hide their true intention by saying the contrary of what they really mean" (Bakhtiar & Hardjanto, 2018; Nezhad & Deihimi, 2021)). Extemely, "sarcasm is a form of irony that is not so friendly and it is usually intended to hurt" (Cutting, 2002:38).

Camp (2011), mentioned four categories of sarcasm: propositional, lexical, like prefixed, and illocutionary sarcasm. 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. Lexical sarcasm delivers an inverted compositional value for a single expression or phrase. 'Like'-prefixed sarcasm commits the speaker to the emphatic epistemic denial of a declarative utterance's focal content, and illocutionary sarcasm expresses an attitude which is the opposite of one that a sincere utterance would have expressed. Lou et all. (2021) writes that detecting sarcastic expressions could promote the understanding of natural language.

## 3. Research Method

This research used qualitative method (Iskandar et all., 2020; Jabean & Munir, 2020). This research's data are utterances sourced fromNorth Country film, 2005, This film was written by Michael Seitzman, produced by Nana Greenwald, and directer by Nick Caro. Apart from lingual data, the researchers also use their intuitive ability to explain the data being studied in more depth. The method used to collect information is the documentation type (Sudaryanto, 2015). The data analysis technique used interactive model Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014). The collected data were then clasified based on the Camp concept (2011): propositional, lexical, like prefixed, and illocutionary sarcasm. Furthermore, to find the purposes of sarcasm, the data were analyzed by using Attardo's theory (2001).

## 4. Findings and Discussion

# 4.1 Sarcastic Utterances

Josey, the main character, works for a mining company in Minesota, America. The purpose of working in the company is to meet the needs of the household. Unfortunately, she and many other female workers always get ridicule from the male workers. None of the female workers dare to fight back, even though they have worked there longer, because they have no other choice. In fact, there is relationship between the condition of mining companies with the condition of male workers working in abusive fields, and existing of work atmosphere that supports the practice of abusive language towards female workers.

This film was produced in 2005, but the implication of sarcastic language has existed in American society. In this film, female workers are subjected to ridicule and sexual harassment. The main character, Josey and her female workers become the object or target of bullying from male friends who work at the mining company.

## 4.1.1 Sarcastic Category

There are different categories found related to the issues discussed depending on the situation when the utterances are uttered. The following describes the categories of sarcasm, namely;

Table 1. Categories of sarcasm

Category of Sarcasm	Quantity
Propositional Sarcasm	18
Lexical Sarcasm	3
Like-Prefix Sarcasm	-
Illocutionary Sarcasm	3
Total	24

From numbers of sarcasm found, the propositional category is the most dominant with 18 data, the other category is lexical sarcasm is 3 data and illocutionary category sarcasmis3 data, while the Like-Prefix Sarcasm category is not found.

# 4.1.1.1 Propositional Sarcasm

Shelldyriani and Munandar (2020) stated that sarcasm targets a particular proposition contrary to what would have been expressed by a sincere utterance. It is known as the most straightforward sarcasm. Numbers of the use of sarcasm in the type of propositional category found in NC film. The fact can be seen when Josey bought popcorn with Mr. White, suddenly a woman came and attacked Josey with the words a rant where there were many people watching them.

(1) Woman: You Josey Aimes?

Josey : Yes

Woman: Stay the hell, away from my husband. Goddamn mining whores. You keep away from Bobby,

you know what's good for you!

Josey : Bobby??

Woman: Bobby Sharp! Tossing your ass and lost your marriage. Don't think, I'm gonna let you mess with

mine. You hear that?

(NC: 2005, Scene 27)

The woman who attacks Josey with harsh words on data (1) above is Bobby Sharp's wife who is jealous of Josey. She thinks that Josey is trying to get close to her husband, because she knows Josey was her husband's ex-girlfriend in high school. Her words are really rude and disrespectful, *Stay the hell, away from my husband. Goddamn mining whores.* After the woman left, Josey was silent remembering the harsh words that kept ringing in her ears.

One day Bobby annoyed Sherry whe she was in the portable toilet to urinate. Bobby and the other male workers saw Sherry entering the toilet, immediately he and the other male workers shook her. It made Sherry fall and her body was dirty.

(2) Bobby: Sherry, Sherry, a quite contrary kisss my ass, it's really hair! Come on, it's really funny guys. What are you doing in the pit? Filling Glorry when she's out just in time to use the new porta-jane! (NC: 2005, Scene 30)

When she was booed with harsh words and mistreated by Bobby and his friends, she couldn't do anything.

## 4.1.1.2 Lexical Sarcasm

This type of sarcastic utterance is often expressed with positive utterances but has a negative effect. This reversal of meaning is also a kind of satire. Camp (2011) states that lexical sarcasm "targets expressions which denote the extreme end or a conventionally.In the NC film, this type of utterance exists, it can be observed in the data below.

(3) Miss. Conlinn: who is Sammy's father?

Josey : I don't know who Sammy's father is

Miss. Conlinn : Is that because you have had so many sexual partners?

(NC: 2005, Scene 6)

Josey sues mining company to court. Miss. Conlinn, the company's lawyer tries to bring down Josey's mentality. She asks *who is Sammy's father*, his first child. She deliberately questions who is Sammy's father?. That's because she already knows about Josey's past. Miss. Conlinn's question seems soft, polite, and showing cares to Josey's son, but indeed, she really expects to bring Josey down.

## 4.1.1.3 Illocutionary Sarcasm

This class of sarcasm is an example of meaning inversion. The speaker expresses the idea which is the opposite of one that is expressed by a sincere utterance. It usually uses illocutionary force rather than assertion and is stated in the contrary to the actual situation (Shelldyriani dan Munandar, 2020). In relation to this type of sarcastic utterance, a number of illocutionary sarcastic statements are found in NC, for example;

(4) Mr. Person : Well, then I suggest you spend less time stir up your female co-workers...and less time in beds for your married male co-workers and move time trying to find ways to improve your jobs performance. Does anyone else have anything to add?

Mr. Pavich: I have say it

(NC: 2005, Scene, 31)

Mr. Pierson and Mr. Pavich remind Josey of the time span of two weeks before a worker resigns from his job, but Josey insists that she does not want to quit, she is only fighting for her rights and her friends. Pragmatically, Mr. Pierson and Mr. Pavics offer peace and ask Josey not to take this case to court.

## 4.1.2. Purpose of Sarcastic Utterances

Sarcastic utterances have certain purposes, as well as sarcastic utterances in the NC have purposes as described in the following table.

Table 2. Purpose of sarcastic utterances in NC film

Sarcasm Purposes	Quantity
Group Afflitiation	7
Sophistication	2
Evaluation	3
Politeness	-
Persuasive Aspects	3
Retract Ability	-
Total	19

From the results of the analysis, it is found that the purpose of the affiliation group is 7 data, sophistication is 2 data, evaluation is 3 data, politeness is 2 data, persuasive aspect is 3 data and retract ability is 2 data, with the following explanation.

# 4.1.2.1 Group Affiliation

The purpose of this expression is to show a custom or ideology that refers to a group or community. In NC, there are several purposes of sarcastic utterances belonging to group affiliation, as can be seen in the following data.

# (5) Miss Conlinn: This wasn't the first time you disappointed your father, was it?

Josey: wan't the first time he disappointed me either.

Miss. Conlinn: how old were you had your first child?

(NC: 2005, Scene 4)

The context of the data (5) is at the time in the court of Miss. Conlinn scoffs at Josey who often disappoints her father. The purpose of the sarcastic expression of Miss. Conlinn is to bring down Josey's concentration, and also to expose Josey's mistakes from various conditions, one of which is Josey's relationship with her family. Miss. Conlinn's question leads to group affiliation, namely it is inappropriate for a child to fight and disappoint her biological father. "This wasn't the first time you disappointed your father, was it?" Miss. Conlinn's next statement "how old were you had your first child?", related to the custom in American society that women marry at 21 years of age and over, but Josey's children are grown, while Josey is still relatively young. Data related to affiliation groups can then be observed in the following statements.

## (6) Josey: Work a soda work?

Men II: That's why women never allow in olympic game

Men I: Why don't we buy the girls another round and test the theory.

Glorry: May be later, okay. You come working up at the mine you gotta ignore that rap.

(NC: 2005, Scene 9)

The context of data (6) above is Josey's conversation with his co-worker. The statement "women never allow in the olympic game" is a statement that demeans women. Thus, in America there is still the fact that women do not play much role in social life.

# 4.1.2.2 Sophistication

The purpose of this type of sarcastic utterance is to express the speaker's emotional level towards the interlocutor literally by using exclamation points. This type of sarcasm is gentle by controlling the speech delivered so it doesn't offend the other person.

(7) Mr. White: yeah, I'm sure you're right, but right is nothing to do with the real world. Look at Anita Hill. Because she's you. You think you're not gunned at the mine, wait till you get to a court room. It's called the "nuts and slut defense". You're either nuts or you imagined it, or a slut and you asked for it. Either way it's not pleasant. Take my advice. Find another job. Start over. (NC: 2005, Scene 37)

The context of the situation in the utterances, data (7) above is Mr. White advises Josey to refrain from suing the company to court. He mentions this because it is not easy to sue the big company, especially since she is only a woman.

## 4.1.2.3 Evaluation

This type of sarcastic utterance aims to evaluate or criticize someone's actions. In NC films can be observed.

(8) Miss. Conlinn: If she gets any other women, they'll get their class and you will lose this case.

Mr. Pierson: Leslie, what do you think I hired you in this case? Because you are the smartest lawyer I could fine? No, I hired you you because **you were the smartest woman lawyer I could find.**But, if you are getting soft, need to know now

Miss. Conlinn: I'm not soft, but I'm pragmatic. Do the Minnesota Viking.

(NC: 2005, scene 44)

Miss. Conlinn is appointed as the company's attorney to fight against Josey who sues the company for sarcastic remarks by male employees and their bad actions towards female workers. They are discussing how to win the case. The type of evaluative sarcasm can be seen in the statement of Mr. Pierson to Miss. Conlinn "you were the smartest woman lawyer I could find. But, if you are getting soft, need to know now". Miss. Conlinn is the best lawyer, but previous statements suggest she seems cautious and gentle. Mr. Pierson isworried about his lawyer's attitude, because he didn't want to lose this case. He expects his smart lawyer to be firm.

# 4.1.2.4 Persuasive Aspect

This form of sarcastic utterance is persuasive statements. The statements are informative and easy to remember. Another goal is to make the other person believes with the truth of the utterances.

(10) Josey: I don't need a beer, I need a lawyer.

Mr. White: look Josey, the illusion is that all your problems are solved in a court room. The reality is that even you win, you don't win

Josey: I know but I'm right

(NC: 2005, Scene, 37)

The data (10) above shows that Josey tries to convince Mr. White to be her lawyer. At the first time Mr. White refuses because to sue the mining company is not an easy thing. "The reality is that even you win, you don't win" is a persuasive utterance to remind Josey that her opponent is giant company. They need extraordinary effort to win the case. Fortunately, after repeatedly convincing Mr. White, he finally agrees to become her lawyer, and manages to win this case.

# 4.2 Learning Based on Sarcasm

Teachers must use teaching materials in accordance with the characteristics of the subject, student development, and relevant to learning objectives (Amri, 2010). The reality of Sarcastic utterances in films can be used as one of the teaching materials for American Culture course. This is based on the role of language which can not be separated from the culture itself. The birth of sarcastic utterances reflects the existence of socio-cultural activities. For Americans, the phenomenon of sarcastic utterances has become something commonplace, but for foreigners who need to study American culture in depth, they must learn the ins and outs of American culture, including the problem of sarcastic speech. How Americans deal with and respond to sarcastic remarks and their implications in American life.

The American Culture course is introduced in the curriculum of the English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Humanities, Lancang Kuning. This course is presented in the fourth semester after previously being presented with the British Culture course in the third semester. The presence of this course is related to the core studies in this study program, namely linguistics, literature, and culture. There are many things to learn, one of which is about everyday language which has to do with American attitudes and behavior, including the use of sarcastic language. The attitudes and behavior of Americans can also be observed through films. One of the films that reveal sarcasm is the 2005 film, North Country (NC), and Nicky Caro as the producer.

# 4.2.1 Planning

Learning planning has a very important role for an educator (Nadzir, 2013; Ernawati, 2018; Ong & Tajuddin, 2021). Furthermore, this American Culture course is designed for 16 meetings (150 minutes per meeting). Sarcasm is *Published by Sciedu Press*61
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placed at the twelfth meeting. This in relation to the socio-cultural phenomena in America and the interrelationships with the earlier topics before discussing sarcasm. Some closed related issues discussed as American Character and Marriage and American Family. This is related to the story content in NC which reveals the problem of the American character represented in the film. Likewise with the issue of Marriage and American Family.

In the lecture contract, the lecturer explains the semester learning plan and explains what students must do during the lecture. Students are also asked to read a lot of books, and resources related to American culture, watch videos and watch American films containing American society and culture. Next, groups are formed to present the topics presented. After the presentation, the participants are encouraged to give comments and questions due to the topic discussed. The lecturer then completes an explanation on each topic discussed. After that, quizzes and exercises will be given at the end of each meeting.

# 4.2.2 Lecture Implementation

This course is designed in the form of lectures, discussions, presentations, group work, doing quizzes, watching videos and films and reading articles about America. Outline of the first lecture: (1) Lecture contract; (2) Course Description; and (3) The history of British immigrants who came to America.

Sarcastic-based teaching materials are used at the twelfth meeting which discussed the phenomenon of language use in America. The discussion is devoted to the phenomenon of dysphemism or sarcastic language. Data were taken from NC film. At this meeting the outline of the discussion, among others (1) introducing the definition of sarcasm; (2) explaining the existence of sarcasm in America; (3) discussing sarcasm in films; and (4) identifying sarcastic utterances in NC film.

Before this material is discussed, all students must firstly have watched the NC film and identified the sarcastic utterances. During class meetings, explanations about sarcasm are presented in powerpoint and watch short videos about sarcastic expressions. The presenter group reveals the existence of sarcasm which is important to discuss because in several aspects of life it appears and is encountered, for example in everyday conversation and also in American films. This film is considered as a representation of their life. Josey is the main character in NC. She works in a mining company to provide for her family.

The discussion of sarcastic expressions is related to the discussion of American Character at the first meeting and Mariage and Family Life at the second meeting. The relationship between sarcasm and American characteristics, namely abusive behavior and language. Likewise, abusive language is related to marriage and family life. The film NC reveals family issues, responsibilities and harsh language faced by Josey and her female working friends.

The lecturer explains the phenomenon of sarcastic language and its relationship to American culture. The sarcastic utterances found in the NC film are: Sexual partners, God to kids with two different fathers already, You wanna be lesbian now?, a mine is shit pit, bitch, discount blow jobs, go fuck yourself, penis, grabs her ass, this stuff toxic as hell, I'm just fucking with you, Bitch is on my crew, goddamn mining whores, tossing your ass and lost your marraige, I'm gonna let you mess with me, quite Contrary to kiss my ass, it's really hairy, damn you, get the hell, out of wedlock, this bitch wants to take every single swinging dick, get the fuck out here!, get your ass home!, shows us your tits, sons of bitches, are you a virgins?.

Sarcastic utterances based learning is made explicit in learning activities. The learning steps are carried out through four stages. These stages consist of: (1) building context, (2) identifying sarcastic utterances, (3) understanding sarcastic utterances, and (4) connecting sarcastic utterances with American culture. At the stage of building the context, the first step taken by the lecturer and students is to focus students' thoughts on the main issues discussed in learning. At the identification stage, students in groups are asked to identify sarcastic utterances based on theory. At the understanding stage, students are asked to interpret the sarcastic utterances that have been identified. At the stage of connecting sarcastic utterances with American culture, students discuss sarcastic utterances obtained from the NC film and relate them to real American life. The discussion is directed to all aspects of language and literature to form a comprehensive discourse. This learning uses a scientific approach, namely observing, asking questions, gathering information, processing information, and communicating.

At the end of the meeting, the lecturer asks students to find other sarcastic utterances not only in films but also American novels and dramas. This learning evaluation is seen when students made presentations and discussions. The students seem eager to learn in a fun learning atmosphere. Student enthusiasm also shows the level of success in learning. The existence of student motivation is important as mentioned by Ziadat & Sakarneh (2021). Lecturers provide opportunities for students to discuss sarcastic utterances outside of lecture hours and provide additional assignments.

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of sarcastic utterances in North Country film as an English teaching material of American Cuture course at the department of English Literature, Lancang Kuning University, there are three categories of sarcastic uterances that can be drawn. Propositional sarcasm, revealing rude utterances of men workers towards women workers. However, lexical sarcasm, showing responsive utterances but hurt listeners, and illocutionary sarcasm is used to defeat main character. Those categories emerge and clearly show the efforts of male workers to look down on female workers. The events that accompany the talk in the film North Country reflect the events of American speech and culture.

Learning English based on sarcasm in films is proven to be effective in increasing student enthusiasm in learning. Learning by using film media is able to provide fun learning and stimulate students to be active in class. Sarcastic utterances found in a film can help students understand the culture of a nation. Students can also be wiser in responding to the culture of a nation and can sort out appropriate and appropriate diction used in communication. The use of these teaching materials needs to be further developed, so that students can achieve the expected competencies.

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