



## Translation Techniques and Accuracy in Rendering Mock Politeness in the Fan-Subtitled Movie *Freedom Writers*

Abdussalam Jabaruddin Yamjirin <sup>1\*</sup>, Mangatur Nababan <sup>1</sup>, Henry Yustanto <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia

[yamjirin.a.j@gmail.com](mailto:yamjirin.a.j@gmail.com)\*

### Abstract

Sarcasm, as a weaponised form of politeness, poses one of the most intricate challenges in translation, its meaning concealed beneath civility, its intent barbed with social critique. This study investigates the rendering of such utterances, specifically mock politeness or off-record impoliteness, in the Indonesian fan-subtitled version of the movie *Freedom Writers*. Drawing on Culpeper's impoliteness theory, the research identifies 42 instances of mock politeness and examines the translation techniques used, following Molina and Albir's taxonomy. Translation accuracy is evaluated using Nababan et al.'s assessment framework. The findings indicate a strong reliance on Established Equivalence (65.5%) and Variation (18.3%), reflecting the translators' preference for natural target-language expressions. Out of the 42 utterances, 40 translations (95.2%) were deemed accurate, with one less accurate and one inaccurate instance, both involving a loss of pragmatic force. These results demonstrate that most sarcastic utterances were successfully transferred across languages and cultures, though certain subtleties, particularly tone and speaker intent, remained vulnerable to distortion. The study offers fresh insight into the complexities of pragmatic translation within non-professional audiovisual contexts and underscores the importance of sensitivity to sociocultural nuance in rendering indirect impoliteness effectively. The research illustrates how fan translators navigate fidelity and naturalness in the presence of covert impoliteness and demonstrates that in non-professional settings, high accuracy is possible when there is an intuitive preservation of pragmatic intent, providing evidence for the need for pragmatic awareness in audiovisual translation.

**Keywords:** Pragmatic Translation, Impoliteness Strategies, Fan Subtitling, Mock Politeness

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### INTRODUCTION

Translation, as defined by Newmark (1988, p. 5), is "rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text," which underscores the notion that translation involves not merely the transposition of words but the faithful conveyance of meaning as envisioned by the original author within its native context. This definition accentuates that translation is not a mechanical but an interpretive process, requiring the translator to comprehend the intended meaning in its entirety before rearticulating it in the target language. To facilitate this complex process, translation techniques emerge as vital tools that bridge the linguistic, cultural, and socio-pragmatic gaps between the source and target languages. These techniques ensure that the intended meaning is delivered in a manner that is accurate, natural, and communicative in the target language. Karyani (2023) defines translation techniques as

methods used to analyse and classify translations to ensure their equivalence with the source text. Operating at the micro level, namely, at the level of clauses or phrases, these techniques aim to maintain a balance between linguistic form and contextual meaning. Furthermore, Molina and Albir (2002) identify eighteen translation techniques, including: addition, adaptation, borrowing, calque, compensation, description, transposition, modulation, generalisation, particularisation, reduction, substitution, discursive creation, established equivalence, linguistic amplification, linguistic compression, literal translation, and variation. However, such techniques must be substantiated by evaluating the quality of the translation itself to determine whether the technique used is correct. Nababan et al. (2012) formulated an assessment model that centres on three principal aspects: accuracy, readability, and acceptability. This model of quality assessment proves invaluable in determining whether a translation meets the required standard or needs a revision of the techniques employed.

In the domain of pragmatic utterances, translation encounters more intricate challenges due to the non-literal nature of meaning, which heavily depends on situational context, speaker intent, and the relational dynamics among communicative participants. Hatim and Mason (1997) observe that “translation involves not just the replacement of lexical and grammatical items between languages but also the translation of discourse and the communicative purpose of the text.” This implies that translation demands sensitivity not only to the linguistic structure but also to the communicative function of language, particularly in the realm of implicature, so that the translator can select the most appropriate techniques. These include speech acts, presuppositions, and politeness strategies. Hence, translators must go beyond grammatical understanding and be capable of interpreting the speaker’s communicative intentions and reconstructing them in a manner that aligns with the pragmatic and cultural norms of the target language.

This is particularly relevant to the translation of dialogue in the movie *Freedom Writers* (2007), which is replete with pragmatic utterances that involve verbal confrontations, social critiques, and emotional expressions that reflect interethnic tensions. *Freedom Writers* (2007) is an American biographical drama and is adapted from *The Freedom Writers Diary* (1999), a compilation of journal entries written by Erin Gruwell’s students at Woodrow Wilson Classical High School in Long Beach, California. These entries reflect their real-life struggles with violence, identity, and marginalisation. The title alludes to the “Freedom Riders” (civil rights activists who challenged segregation laws in 1961) highlighting the film’s underlying themes of resistance and social justice. Drawing inspiration from the DC-based *City at Peace* programme, the movie captures the transformative power of education and empathy in a racially divided classroom. *Freedom Writers* holds a rating of 7.6 on IMDb, indicating a strong reception from global audiences. The movie is not merely a narrative on educational struggle but also a representation of a complex multicultural social landscape, encompassing racial discrimination, identity conflict, and collective trauma. Therefore, translating its characters’ dialogues demands precision in capturing implied meaning, emotional intensity, and communicative intent. Appropriate application of translation techniques is crucial in preserving the pragmatic substance of the original dialogue, thereby enabling cross-cultural audiences to comprehend the sociocultural conflict and experience the narrative’s impact as originally intended. Conversely, failure to address pragmatic elements in translation risks diminishing the social and psychological nuances embedded in the utterances, thus compromising the target audience’s reception and the overall translation accuracy.

In addition to analysing the movie *Freedom Writers*, this study also focuses on its Indonesian fan-subtitled version, sourced from the website *my-sub.s.co*. This platform was selected because it is widely recognised as one of the largest repositories of freely accessible fan-made subtitles, attracting thousands of users. Consequently, the subtitle texts from this site represent common, non-professional translation practices that are

widely accessed and consumed by the general public. Examining these fan-generated subtitles is crucial, as they often bypass the quality control processes of professional translation, potentially resulting in technique variations or mismanagement of pragmatic content. Thus, an analysis of these subtitles offers a realistic portrayal of the challenges of pragmatic translation in digital spaces, while also revealing how specific translation techniques are employed to transfer culturally and contextually rich meanings to multilingual audiences.

Several studies have extensively explored audiovisual translation (AVT) from a pragmatic perspective (Martínez, 2015; Gambier, 2020; Guillot, 2016; Bruti & Díaz Cintas, 2019; Bonsignori et al., 2015; Hatim & Mason, 2015; Locher, 2020; Mubenga, 2016; Sidiropoulou, 2021; Tiedemann & Scherrer, 2017), answering aspects like politeness strategies, speech act adaptation, and also cultural mediation in subtitling and/or dubbing. But this research was not yet addressing the techniques and accuracy of translating Mock Politeness (e.g., sarcasm, backhanded compliments, and ironic praise) in movies depicting social conflict and emotionally charged intergroup exchanges. These utterances are very important to be examined from translation perspective because they carry implicit social functions and culturally embedded meanings that require deeper examination. Other previous studies have also addressed translation through a pragmatic lens (Witasari, 2015; Pietasari, 2024; Agustina & Pentury, 2018; Fitriana, 2015; Yuda et al., 2020; Hapsari et al., 2016; Darmawan, 2024; Arvianti, 2016; Nugraha, 2019; Pratiwi et al., 2017; Nisa & Kholis, 2024; Rizqy & Ardi, 2020; Apriasanti & Hasyim, 2023; Anindiyastuti & Basari, 2022; Agista & Oktoviandry, 2024; Setyaji, 2021; Wiguna et al., 2022; Aziez et al., 2024; Santika et al., 2020) and they succeeded in identifying translation techniques and, to some extent, assessing translation quality. However, they often discuss general speech acts, both directive and expressive, without delving into the specific strategies employed. A more granular exploration of such strategies is essential for understanding how translation techniques operate within nuanced contexts such as verbal conflict. Additionally, other previous studies have also examined audiovisual translation (AVT) through a pragmatic lens (Lesmana et al., 2022; Istiqomah et al., 2020; Chaume, 2013/2018–2021; Asterina & Nur Ali, 2022; Purwanto, 2021), successfully identifying key translation techniques such as compression, paraphrasing, and directive speech act adaptation, while also assessing their impact on meaning transfer. However, these studies predominantly only focus on general speech acts (directive, expressive, commissive) without delving deeply into the techniques choices employed in translating nuanced pragmatic phenomena, particularly in high-tension verbal exchanges where tone, sarcasm, and implied meaning play a critical role. A more detailed exploration of these strategies is crucial for understanding how translation techniques function in socially charged and conflict-driven dialogues. But, some other studies have examined politeness strategies and their translation in literary texts (Budiman & Febrian, 2023; Karomah, 2018; Chairunnisa et al., 2016), while others have looked at the translation of impoliteness (Waluyo, 2023; Sari, 2024) in crime fiction novels. Nevertheless, few studies have investigated the translation of impoliteness in movies situated within socially charged settings, especially those that depict gang conflict and ethnic discrimination through sarcasm-laden exchanges that mirror real-life social tensions. These utterances are pragmatically dense and require precise translation strategies to preserve their emotional and contextual impact.

Ultimately, this review reveals that translation studies within the pragmatic domain remain limited, particularly in terms of research that addresses the techniques and accuracy of translating Mock Politeness in films depicting social conflict and emotionally charged intergroup exchanges. These utterances hold implicit social functions and culturally embedded meanings that deserve closer examination. Specifically, this research addresses the following gaps:

1. The scarcity of analytical studies on the translation of Mock Politeness (sarcasm) in films that portray social and multicultural conflict, discrimination, and verbal tension within the last decade.
2. The lack of comprehensive studies linking translation techniques with translation accuracy in pragmatic impoliteness within non-professional fan-subtitled versions of socially critical films, subtitles that are, in fact, widely accessed and rival official versions, within the last decade.

Accordingly, this study seeks to address that gap by analysing the translation techniques and accuracy quality of fan-subtitled impolite utterances in *Freedom Writers*, with particular attention to the strategy of Mock Politeness, commonly associated with sarcasm. Jonathan Culpeper (1996) expanded on Brown and Levinson's politeness theory to develop the concept of impoliteness strategies, which highlight how speakers intentionally threaten the face of their interlocutors through direct or indirect verbal attacks. Culpeper identifies five types of impoliteness strategies: bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm or mock politeness (sarcasm/off-record impoliteness), and withholding politeness. This study focuses specifically on mock politeness (sarcasm) as a framework for examining translation techniques and accuracy in the Indonesian fan-subtitled version of *Freedom Writers*. Although off-record impoliteness utterances may appear superficially polite, they in fact convey pointed criticisms or ridicule. Translating such utterances demands a heightened sensitivity to pragmatic meaning that diverges from surface structure.

This study also aims to uncover how translation techniques are applied in transferring sarcastic utterances (mock politeness) in the Indonesian fan-subtitled version of *Freedom Writers* and to evaluate the accuracy of such translations. Translation accuracy itself refers to the degree of equivalence between the source text and the target text. The concept of equivalence, as defined by Nababan et al. (2012), pertains to the extent to which the content or message of both texts corresponds meaningfully and faithfully. Translation accuracy will be assessed on a three-point scale: accurate (score 3), less accurate (score 2), and inaccurate (score 1), as formulated by Nababan et al. (2012), this scoring system provides a structured framework for evaluating how faithfully the translated content of the source text is transferred into the target language. A translation is considered accurate when the meaning of the source text is conveyed precisely without distortion. Less accurate translations preserve most of the original meaning but may contain minor distortions or omissions that reduce clarity. Inaccurate translations fail to convey the intended message due to significant mistranslation or deletion of meaning. In doing so, the study aspires to contribute meaningfully to the development of pragmatic translation studies, particularly within the audiovisual narrative genre that authentically reflects multicultural realities and social conflict. The objective research involve:

1. To identify and categorise selected utterances from *Freedom Writers* as instances of mock politeness (sarcasm) based on Culpeper's impoliteness framework.
2. To analyse the translation techniques used to render mock politeness utterances in the Indonesian fan-subtitled version of *Freedom Writers* based on Molina and Albir's translation techniques.
3. To evaluate the accuracy of the fan-subtitled translations in conveying the pragmatic meaning of mock politeness/sarcastic utterances from the source text based on Nababan et al.'s translation quality assessment formula.

## **METHOD**

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach, as the researcher seeks to comprehensively describe and interpret the translation techniques and accuracy involved in rendering mock politeness (sarcasm) within the Indonesian fan-subtitled version of the movie *Freedom Writers*. As Moleong (2005) explains, data in descriptive qualitative

research may derive from various sources, including interview transcripts, visual and audio documentation, personal records, field notes, and official documents. Accordingly, this methodological approach was chosen to enable an in-depth examination of movie dialogues containing sarcasm and verbal impoliteness, the translation techniques applied to render these elements into Indonesian subtitles, and the extent to which these techniques preserve the pragmatic meaning and communicative intent of the source text.

This research utilises source triangulation, collecting data from multiple varied sources to ensure the reliability and validity of findings (Sutopo, 2006, Simanjuntak et al., 2023). The primary data sources comprise the movie *Freedom Writers* as the source language (SL) text and its Indonesian fan-made subtitles, retrieved from *my-sub.co*, as the target language (TL) text. These subtitles are categorised as non-professional translations (fansubs) and are deemed representative of translation practices widely accessed by the general public. The secondary data source consists of three expert raters, specialists in linguistics and translation, who also serve as informants within a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) forum. These raters not only evaluate the translation accuracy of the subtitles but also contribute to the deeper analysis of linguistic data and the identification of applied translation techniques.

In addition, the study incorporates methodological triangulation, involving two primary data collection techniques: document analysis and FGDs. The document analysis was carried out through a meticulous process of observation and annotation. Meanwhile, the FGDs functioned to both gather and validate data related to impoliteness strategies, translation techniques, and translation accuracy. Triangulating data collection methods in this manner enhances the study's analytical depth and ensures a more comprehensive understanding of the data.

The data were analysed using qualitative and inductive analysis techniques. The qualitative analysis involved careful listening/reading, comprehension, organisation, classification, categorical correlation, and contextual interpretation of the data, without reducing the findings into statistical generalisations. However, quantitative indicators (e.g., frequencies or ranks) were used where appropriate to support clarity. Inductive analysis was conducted simultaneously with data collection; each time new data emerged, immediate analysis followed (Santosa, 2021, p. 75). This dynamic process allowed for emergent patterns to be identified naturally within their context, preserving the richness and complexity of the pragmatic features under study.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents findings aligned with the research objectives: (1) identifying and categorising mock politeness utterances in *Freedom Writers* using Culpeper's impoliteness framework; (2) analysing the translation techniques employed in the Indonesian fansub; and (3) evaluating the accuracy of these translations using Nababan et al.'s assessment model.

### **Identification and Categorisation of Mock Politeness (Sarcasm)**

A total of 42 utterances were identified as instances of mock politeness (sarcasm) in the movie *Freedom Writers* (2007), based on Culpeper's impoliteness framework. These utterances typically exhibit the mock politeness (sarcasm) where compliments, rhetorical questions, or polite expressions hide disdain, criticism, or even threats. The sarcastic remarks often target the addressee's social standing, professional credibility, or competence, particularly within school-related and peer interactions.

These utterances not only mirror the complex interpersonal dynamics between characters but also illustrate how subtle shades of pragmatic meaning are rendered into Indonesian. This finding demonstrates the prevalence and pragmatic significance of mock

politeness in the character dynamics and narrative progression of the film. Selected utterances were then used for further translation analysis.

- **Example 1**

**Ms. Campbell:** "*Erin, I think you're a lovely, intelligent woman, but you're a first-time teacher.*" (00:05:47–00:05:56)

This utterance is delivered by Ms. Campbell, one of the senior staff members at Woodrow Wilson High School, as a veiled critique of Ms. Gruwell's inexperience as a new teacher. The criticism is not expressed baldly or directly; rather, it is framed with compliments and seemingly supportive language. However, the subsequent clause introduces a negative evaluation, thereby revealing the utterance as an instance of *mock politeness*, as conceptualised by Culpeper (1996). Here, a face-threatening act (FTA) is executed under the guise of politeness, yet the praise is insincere, functioning merely as a rhetorical strategy to soften or mask the underlying criticism. Ms. Campbell's surface-level admiration serves primarily to undermine Ms. Gruwell's credibility, whether in front of others or in her own perception, thus facilitating the delivery of a critical judgment regarding her professional competency.

- **Example 2**

**Mr. Gruwell:** "*How much are you making? \$27,000 before taxes?*" (00:17:28–00:17:32)

This question is posed by Mr. Gruwell, the father of Ms. Gruwell, during a conversation with his daughter and her husband, Mr. Scott. While structurally a question, the utterance is not intended to elicit information, but rather to disparage Mr. Scott's profession and earning capacity, which Mr. Gruwell implicitly deems unimpressive or inadequate. This is a quintessential example of *mock politeness*, as defined by Culpeper (1996), wherein the speaker employs ostensibly polite or concerned language to enact an FTA with insincere intent. The superficial concern masks an underlying critique, aimed at diminishing Mr. Scott's social standing and professional worth, thereby undermining his face within the interaction.

- **Example 3**

**Mr. Gruwell:** "*With your brains, you could run a major corporation.*" (00:17:36–00:17:39)

In this utterance, Mr. Gruwell offers what appears to be a compliment directed at his daughter, Ms. Gruwell. However, the true intent is to belittle her career choice, becoming a teacher, implying that such a profession is beneath her intellectual capacity. The flattery is disingenuous, serving as a rhetorical device to convey disapproval and condescension. This constitutes another clear case of *mock politeness*, as per Culpeper's (1996) framework, wherein the FTA is veiled through ostensibly positive language. Mr. Gruwell's remark ultimately functions to delegitimise Ms. Gruwell's vocational aspirations and to assert a preference for more prestigious, financially rewarding careers.

- **Example 4**

**Ms. Gruwell:** "*So, everybody happy with the new borders?*" (00:22:35–00:22:36)

This question is uttered by Ms. Gruwell following a disciplinary measure in which she rearranges the classroom seating to disrupt self-segregation along ethnic lines. Her rhetorical question is not a genuine inquiry into the students' comfort, but rather a sarcastic remark intended to underscore the consequences of their disruptive behaviour. This is an instance of *mock politeness* in which politeness strategies are employed disingenuously, masking a corrective or critical intent. As

Culpeper (1996) observes, such utterances may appear to uphold social niceties, yet are in fact vehicles for implicit criticism or chastisement.

- **Example 5**

**Mr. Scott:** "I think what you're doing is noble. And it's good. And I'm proud of you." (01:39:13–01:39:22)

This utterance occurs during a pivotal moment in the film, as the marriage between Ms. Gruwell and Mr. Scott begins to deteriorate. Though Mr. Scott appears to praise Ms. Gruwell's dedication to her students, his tone and context suggest that the statement is laced with underlying resentment. His words ostensibly convey support, but the subtext reveals frustration with Ms. Gruwell's work-life imbalance and perceived neglect of their relationship. This constitutes *mock politeness*, as defined by Culpeper (1996), where the FTA is strategically cloaked in deferential or admiring language. Mr. Scott's utterance, while superficially positive, operates as a veiled criticism of his wife's professional priorities and emotional distance.

### Translation Techniques Used in Rendering Mock Politeness

In the process of translating these utterances, a range of translation techniques was employed, with the data revealing a clear quantitative preference for certain strategies. From the 42 identified utterances, a total of 235 translation techniques were found in the Indonesian fansub using Molina and Albir (2002)'s translation techniques. The most frequently applied technique was Established Equivalence (EE), which appeared 154 times (65.5%). This indicates a strong tendency on the part of the translator to rely on conventional or common expressions in the target language that align with everyday usage. The second most dominant technique was Variation (Var), occurring 43 times (18.3%), suggesting efforts to adjust tone or register to suit the context. Borrowing (Bor) was applied in 10 instances (4.3%), reflecting occasions where source language terms were retained, likely due to their cultural or referential significance. Less frequent techniques included Explicitation (Exp) (3.0%), Transposition (Trans) (2.1%), Modulation (Mod) (1.7%), Literal Translation (Lit) and Paraphrase (Par) (each 1.3%), and Reduction (Red), Discursive Kreation (DC), and Implication (Imp) (each 0.9%).

Table 1. Distribution of Translation Techniques Applied to Mock Politeness in the Fansub of *Freedom Writers* (2007)

No	Translation Techniques	Frequency	Percentage
1	Established Equivalent (EE)	154	65.5%
2	Variation (Var)	43	18.3%
3	Borrowing (Bor)	10	4.3%
4	Explicitation (Exp)	7	3.0%
5	Transposition (Trans)	5	2.1%
6	Modulation (Mod)	4	1.7%
7	Literal Translation (Lit)	3	1.3%
8	Paraphrase (Par)	3	1.3%
9	Reduction (Red)	2	0.9%
10	Discursive Kreation (DC)	2	0.9%
11	Implication (Imp)	2	0.9%
	$\Sigma$	235	100%

The dominance of established equivalents indicates that the translator frequently employed conventional, familiar phrases in Indonesian to express sarcasm or politeness, potentially aiding naturalness and readability. Less frequent techniques such as Reduction, Paraphrase, Explicitation, and Discursive Creation were selectively used, especially when

grappling with cultural or pragmatic shifts in meaning. Below, the researcher will present three examples of the most frequently used translation techniques found in the Indonesian fansub of the movie *Freedom Writers* (2007).

- **Established Equivalent (EE)**

This technique is the most frequently employed in translating instances of mock politeness in the movie *Freedom Writers* (2007), with a total of 154 occurrences, accounting for 65.5% of all translation techniques identified in the analysis of the Indonesian fansub of the film. The following are representative examples:

ST

*Erin, I think you're a lovely, intelligent woman, but you're a first-time teacher.* (FW / D4 / 00:05:47-00:05:56)

TT

*Erin kupikir anda adalah seorang perempuan cerdas. Tapi ini adalah pertama kalinya anda seorang guru.* (FW / D4 / 00:05:47-00:05:56)

In this example, the phrase "I think" is translated as "kupikir", and the word "are" becomes "adalah", both of which are established and conventional equivalents in Indonesian. Likewise, the phrase "intelligent woman" is rendered as "perempuan cerdas", a commonly accepted and semantically accurate equivalent in the target language.

- **Variation (Var)**

This technique is the second most frequently used, following *Established Equivalent*, in translating mock politeness in *Freedom Writers* (2007). It appears 43 times, comprising 18.3% of the total translation techniques identified in the Indonesian fansub. The following are illustrative examples:

ST

*You gonna look at my face now, right?* (00:11:40-00:11:42)

TT

*Kau lihat wajahku sekarang kan?* (00:11:40-00:11:42)

In this instance, "you" is translated as "kau", and "my" as "-ku", reflecting a shift in formality and emotional proximity between interlocutors. The use of "kau" and "-ku" is not neutral or standardised; rather, it conveys familiarity, informality, and a confrontational tone, aligning with the context of a heated exchange between teenagers. Therefore, this choice is categorised as the *variation* technique, as the translator adjusts the register to reflect emotional intensity and social dynamics within the target language context.

- **Borrowing (Bor)**

This technique is the third most frequently used, after *Established Equivalent* and *Variation*, in translating mock politeness in *Freedom Writers* (2007), with 10 instances, representing 4.3% of the total techniques identified in the analysis of the Indonesian fansub. Representative examples are provided below:

ST

*Erin, I think you're a lovely, intelligent woman, but you're a first-time teacher.* (FW / D4 / 00:05:47-00:05:56)

TT

*Erin kupikir anda adalah seorang perempuan cerdas. Tapi ini adalah pertama kalinya anda seorang guru.* (FW / D4 / 00:05:47-00:05:56)

The name "Erin" is categorised under the *Borrowing* technique, as it is not translated into Indonesian but retained in its original form. *Borrowing* involves the direct adoption of a lexical item from the source language without modification, typically used for proper names, cultural terms, or items with no established equivalent in the target language.

### Accuracy of Translations in Conveying Mock Politeness

Out of the 42 instances of mock politeness and the 235 translation techniques identified in the Indonesian fan-subtitled version, 40 translations (95.2%) were assessed as accurate, 1 translation (2.4%) as less accurate, and 1 translation (2.4%) as inaccurate using Nababan et al.'s (2012) translation quality model. This indicates that the vast majority of the mock politeness/sarcastic utterances were rendered with a high degree of fidelity. These translations effectively conveyed the original meaning, speaker intention, and pragmatic nuance from the source language to the target language without significant semantic or contextual loss. However, the presence of one less accurate and one inaccurate translation suggests isolated failures to preserve essential aspects of the original utterance, potentially arising from a misinterpretation of tone, pragmatic force, or culturally embedded references.

Table 2. Accuracy Assessment of Mock Politeness Translation in the Fansub of *Freedom Writers* (2007)

No	Accuracy Quality	Data Number	Frequency	Score	Average Score
		1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42	40	3	$\frac{(40 \times 3) + (1 \times 2) + (1 \times 1)}{42}$
1	Accurate				$= \frac{(120 + 2 + 1)}{42}$
2	Less-Accurate	3	1	2	
3	Innaccurate	4	1	1	$= 2.92$

The following demonstrates how specific utterances attain their corresponding accuracy ratings based on the translation techniques applied.

Table 3. Representative 1: Accurate Translation

Source Language	Target Language	Translation Techniques	Accuracy Score
Erin, I think you're a lovely, intelligent woman, but you're a first-time teacher. (FW / D4 / 00:05:47-00:05:56)	Erin kupikir anda adalah seorang perempuan cerdas. Tapi ini adalah pertama kalinya anda seorang guru. (FW / D4 / 00:05:47-00:05:56)	(Transposition) Erin (Bor) ku (Var) pikir (EE) anda (Var) adalah (EE) seorang perempuan cerdas (EE) lovely (Red). Tapi ini adalah	3

pertama  
kalinya anda  
seorang guru  
(Par)

- **Data analysis:** The Indonesian translation, "*Erin, kupikir Anda adalah seorang perempuan cerdas. Tapi ini adalah pertama kalinya Anda seorang guru*", employs several techniques: transposition, borrowing, established equivalent, variation, reduction, and paraphrase. *Erin* is retained via borrowing. *I think* becomes *kupikir*, combining variation through the possessive *-ku* and established equivalent through *pikir*. *Lovely* is omitted through reduction, while *intelligent woman* is accurately conveyed via established equivalent. The phrase "*this is your first time being a teacher*" is rendered clearly and acceptably in Indonesian. Overall, the translation maintains strong fidelity to the source meaning and preserves the critical undertone, earning a score of 3 in terms of accuracy.

Table 4. Representative 2: Less-Accurate Translation

Source Language	Target Language	Translation Techniques	Accuracy Score
I don't know why you keep wasting your time coming to practice with them two-year-old Nikes on your feet! (FW / D3 / 00:11:12-00:11:17)	Aku tak tahu kenapa kau buang-buang waktumu. Datang untuk berlatih dengan mereka dua tahun lalu Nike di kakimu! (FW / D3 / 00:11:12-00:11:17)	(Transposition) Aku (Var) tak tahu (EE) kenapa (EE) kau (Var) buang-buang (EE) waktu (EE) mu (Var) Datang (EE) untuk berlatih (EE) dengan mereka dua tahun lalu Nike di kakimu (Lit)	2

- **Data analysis:** The translation "*Aku tak tahu kenapa kau buang-buang waktumu. Datang untuk berlatih dengan mereka dua tahun lalu Nike di kakimu!*" employs a combination of variation, established equivalent, literal translation, and transposition. The first clause, "*Aku tak tahu kenapa kau buang-buang waktumu*", is rendered with reasonable accuracy, utilising variation (e.g. *aku/kau*) and established equivalent. However, the second clause, "*dengan mereka dua tahun lalu Nike di kakimu*", suffers from diminished naturalness due to the use of literal translation, resulting in awkward phrasing and semantic ambiguity. Consequently, the sarcastic nuance, central to the mock politeness, is obscured. This lack of clarity reduces the translation's accuracy, and thus the rater assigned it a score of 2.

Table 5. Representative 3: Inaccurate Translation

Source Language	Target Language	Translation Techniques	Accuracy Score
Those are lovely pearls, I wouldn't wear them to class.	Mereka adalah mutiara yang indah. Aku tak kan	(Transposition) Mereka (EE)	1

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(FW / D5 / 00:06:22-00:06:40)	mengajar mereka di ruang kelas. (FW / D5 / 00:06:22-00:06:40)	adalah (EE) mutiara yang indah (EE). Aku tak kan mengajar mereka di ruang kelas (DC)
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- **Data analysis:** The first clause, “*Those are lovely pearls*”, is translated using an established equivalent as “*mutiara yang indah*”, which successfully preserves both the semantic content and the surface-level flattery. However, the second clause presents a significant issue: “*I wouldn’t wear them to class*” is rendered as “*Aku tak kan mengajar mereka di ruang kelas*”, a case of discursive creation. This rephrasing shifts the tone from subtle sarcasm to a neutral, even incoherent statement, ultimately erasing the implied criticism essential to mock politeness. As a result, the sarcastic nuance is lost, and the rater assigned the translation an accuracy score of 1.

## DISCUSSION

The main finding of this study reveals that Indonesian fansub translators have been remarkably successful in preserving the pragmatic nuances of mock politeness (sarcasm) in the movie *Freedom Writers*, achieving a very high level of accuracy at 95.2%. Of the 42 sarcastic utterances analysed, the most frequently employed translation techniques were *Established Equivalence* (65.5%) and *Variation* (18.3%), reflecting a strong tendency among translators to select expressions that are both natural and contextually appropriate in the target language. While the majority of translations effectively conveyed the speaker’s intended meaning and context, two instances of inaccuracy were identified, arising from the loss of pragmatic force due to misinterpretation of tone or cultural references. These findings indicate that, even within a non-professional context, fansubs can achieve high translation accuracy provided the translators demonstrate sufficient pragmatic sensitivity and contextual awareness.

The principal findings of this research diverge from those of previous studies by explicitly linking mock politeness, translation technique selection, and accuracy within the context of non-professional subtitling, a field that remains relatively underexplored. Unlike the studies conducted by Witasari (2015), Agustina and Pentury (2018), and Fitriana (2015), which focused primarily on general speech acts such as directives and expressives, this study specifically examines sarcastic utterances as a form of covert impoliteness. Although works such as Lesmana et al. (2022) and Istiqomah et al. (2020) have investigated speech act translation, they did not explicitly assess translation accuracy through the lens of impoliteness strategies. Similarly, research by Budiman and Febrian (2023) as well as Waluyo (2023) has addressed (im)politeness, but without systematically connecting translation techniques to quality outcomes. Consequently, this study is significant in that it integrates Culpeper’s (1996) impoliteness framework, Molina and Albir’s (2002) translation techniques, and Nababan et al.’s (2012) accuracy assessment model within a unified analytical approach.

This research carries two main implications. First, it challenges the widespread assumption that fan-produced subtitles are inherently careless or inaccurate, demonstrating instead that they can deliver pragmatically aware and culturally sensitive translations. Second, it underscores the importance of considering pragmatic aspects in translation studies, especially in audiovisual texts that depict social conflict, identity critique, and power dynamics. By foregrounding mock politeness as a significant

phenomenon in movie dialogue, this study broadens our understanding of how translation mediates representations of resistance, social critique, and irony in cross-cultural narratives.

This study contributes to the growing body of research in pragmatic translation studies, particularly within the realm of audiovisual and non-professional translation. It demonstrates that effective rendering of mock politeness requires not only linguistic competence but also acute sensitivity to speaker intent, narrative tone, and cultural nuance. In an age where fan-subtitles are widely circulated and consumed alongside or even in place of official versions, this research calls for greater attention to the subtleties of pragmatics in translation practices, especially those involving sarcasm, irony, and face-threatening acts.

Despite its valuable contributions, this study is not without limitations. Its focus on a single movie and a single subtitle source (my-sub.s.co) restricts the generalisability of the findings. Furthermore, although translation assessments were conducted through focused group discussions (FGDs) with experts, the study did not incorporate audience reception data or back translation analysis to test broader pragmatic comprehension. The accuracy evaluation also carries an inherent risk of subjectivity, particularly when interpreting sarcastic tone and implicature. Lastly, multimodal factors such as facial expressions, intonation, and other visual cues were not incorporated into the analysis, even though such elements may significantly influence the perception of sarcasm in translation.

Future studies are encouraged to broaden the scope of analysis by comparing professional and fan-made subtitle versions across multiple films from diverse genres, particularly those featuring social conflict and inter-character sarcasm. Audience reception studies involving native viewers would also provide valuable insight into how well sarcastic utterances are understood. Additionally, it would be worthwhile to explore the performance of machine translation tools in handling pragmatic phenomena such as irony or sarcasm, which require high levels of contextual sensitivity. Adopting a multimodal approach, integrating visual and auditory elements with textual analysis, would further enhance understanding of how off-record impoliteness strategies can be effectively translated.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study has examined how sarcastic utterances, specifically those classified as mock politeness (sarcasm/off-record impoliteness) within Culpeper's framework, are rendered in the Indonesian fan-subtitled version of the movie *Freedom Writers*. Guided by qualitative descriptive methodology, and drawing upon triangulated data from movie transcripts, fan-made subtitles, and expert evaluations, the study identified 42 utterances of mock politeness and analysed the techniques used to translate them, as well as the degree of their accuracy. The findings reveal a strong tendency towards the use of Established Equivalence (65.5%) and Variation (18.3%) in transferring the nuanced pragmatic content of sarcastic utterances, suggesting that fan translators generally prioritise naturalness and contextual appropriateness. While the overwhelming majority of translations (95.2%) were deemed accurate, successfully preserving the speaker's intent, tone, and contextual meaning, isolated instances of less accurate and inaccurate renderings underscore the challenges inherent in capturing sarcasm's indirect and culturally embedded nature. These missteps were primarily attributed to the loss of pragmatic force, tone misalignment, or the dilution of sociocultural subtext.

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