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# Positive Face Threatening Acts Analysis in "Purple Hearts" Movie

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**Abstract** : This study aims to investigate Positive Face Threatening Actions (FTAs) in the movie Purple Hearts, focusing on how they are directed towards the main character, Cassie. The research is qualitative in nature, presenting the findings in a descriptive analysis. The data consists of key dialogues from the film, which will be transcribed and analyzed. The research will examine how Cassie's autonomy and social identity are challenged throughout the movie. The results show that Cassie often experiences disapproval, criticism, contradictions, and restrictions to her freedom. The findings show that among the positive FTAs, there is 1 instance of disapproval, 6 criticisms, 4 contradictions, 3 dismissals, 5 accusations, 2 complaints, and 1 face-saving. These FTAs shape the dynamics of the characters, highlighting conflict, power struggle, and emotional tension in the narrative. This research contributes to the understanding of pragmatics in cinematic discourse and provides insight into how language reflects interpersonal relationships in movies.

**Keywords**: ***Positive face-threatening acts, speech acts, pragmatics, Purple Hearts, film analysis***.

## INTRODUCTION

Pragmatics is a fundamental field in linguistics that studies how context affects meaning. Unlike semantics, which focuses on the literal meaning of words, pragmatics delves into how language is used in social contexts and how meaning is constructed through interaction. Levinson (1983) defines pragmatics as the study of how speakers use language to communicate effectively, considering the circumstances in which communication occurs. Furthermore, pragmatics is the branch of linguistics concerned with how meaning is influenced by context, including the speaker's intent, the listener's interpretation, and situational factors (Leech, 1983; Yule, 1996). This focus

on real-world usage is critical for understanding not just what is said, but why and how it is said, particularly when analyzing films where character dialogue reflects complex interpersonal dynamics. Furthermore, According to Yule (1996) in Sataruno et al., (2023), pragmatics is the examination of how meaning is conveyed by a speaker (or writer) and understood by a listener or reader. It delves into how meaning is constructed not only by what is said but also by how it is said, who says it, and the surrounding circumstances. This contextual dependence makes pragmatics crucial in understanding interactions in movies, where characters' intentions, social roles, and relationships heavily influence their language choices. Pragmatics is crucial in understanding Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs), as it allows us to interpret how speakers manage social relationships through language.

Closely related to pragmatics is Speech Act Theory, which was initially proposed by Austin (1962) and expanded by Searle (1969). Speech acts are communicative actions performed through language, such as making promises, giving orders, or offering apologies. As Hutajulu (2019) explains, "Speech acts is an utterance to explain how speakers use language to accomplish intended actions and how hearers infer intended meaning from what is said." These acts are categorized into locutionary (the act of saying something), illocutionary (the intention behind saying something), and perlocutionary (the effect the statement has on the listener). Understanding speech acts is key to analyzing how characters in movies, like those in Purple Hearts, perform actions through dialogue. As Searle (1969) notes, "to speak is to act," meaning every utterance carries an intention that may influence relationships, power dynamics, or conflict resolution in a conversation. Searle (1975) classified speech acts into five categories: representatives (assertions), directives (requests, commands), commissives (promises), expressives (apologies, congratulations), and declarations (which change the state of affairs, like firing someone). These categories are particularly relevant in analyzing the dialogues in Purple Hearts, where characters use speech acts to navigate their complex personal and emotional relationships.

Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs) hold a special place because they highlight the social risks involved in communication. An FTA occurs when a speaker says or does something that threatens the face, or social identity, of the listener or the speaker themselves. According to Goffman (1967), face is the positive social value a person claims during interactions, and Brown & Levinson (1987) expanded on this by explaining that every individual has both positive face (the desire to be liked) and negative face (the desire to be free from imposition). FTAs, such as criticism, requests, or refusals, inherently challenge either the hearer's or the speaker's face. Brown and Levinson (1987) outlined strategies to mitigate the impact of FTAs, including politeness strategies like positive politeness (appealing to the hearer's need for approval) and negative politeness (acknowledging the imposition).

A movie is a form of artistic expression that combines moving images and sound to entertain audiences. According to Hornby (2006), movies are a visual art that involves motion and sound, providing enjoyment for people of all ages. In the movie Purple Hearts (2022), the relationship between the protagonists, Cassie and Luke, is fraught with instances of FTAs as they navigate their complicated marriage of convenience. Their conflicting personalities and backgrounds—Cassie being a free-spirited musician and Luke a disciplined soldier—set the stage for multiple face-threatening exchanges. Cassie's directness often threatens Luke's positive face, as she challenges his authority or criticizes his decisions. Conversely, Luke's adherence to military norms imposes on Cassie's negative face, especially when he issues commands or imposes restrictions on her behavior. The frequent use of unmitigated FTAs between these characters highlights the ongoing power struggle and emotional vulnerability in their relationship. By analyzing these interactions, we can uncover deeper insights into how the film portrays themes of identity, autonomy, and trust.

The decision to analyze the positive FTAs in Purple Hearts stems from a desire to explore how language functions in shaping character relationships and social dynamics. The film provides a rich ground for this kind of analysis, as the protagonists'

dialogue is filled with moments where face is constantly at stake. As Brown and Levinson (1987) explain, the weight of an FTA depends on the power relationship, the social distance between speaker and hearer, and the ranking of the imposition in the culture. In Purple Hearts, the protagonists' evolving relationship from strangers to romantic partners creates an ever-shifting dynamic of power and intimacy, with each FTA either bringing them closer together or pushing them further apart. By focusing on FTAs, this research seeks to illuminate how the film uses language to convey complex emotional and social realities, offering a lens through which to understand the pragmatic underpinnings of cinematic dialogue.

The FTA a used in the movie illustrate the complex social dynamics at play, with language serving as both a means of imposing and defending personal autonomy. This analysis provides insight into the broader themes of Purple Hearts, where characters constantly negotiate power, responsibility, and vulnerability through their speech and interactions. Hence, the researcher is interested in analysing the positive FTA in the Purple Hearts movie by Elizabeth Allen.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted by using the pragmatic analysis in the form of qualitative. According to Yule (1996), pragmatic is the study of meaning and there are strong connection both of the utterances of the speakers what they aim and the context. Moreover, according to Ary in Wawondatu, Liando & Lolowang (2024), qualitative is a type of research where the data is analyzed through words instead of numbers. This study used descriptive qualitative approach. Furthermore, in this research, the researcher herself was the main instrument, followed by researcher's laptop, notebook, papers and pen as the secondary instruments.

Descriptive research is designed to obtain precise information concerning the current status of phenomena and to draw valid finding. Descriptive research was able to describe the situation of the phenomena. It means descriptive research gave more

explanation that needed by the researcher which collected the data. While, qualitative research involves looking in depth at non numerical data. Considering data and my aim on this research, the researcher uses qualitative approach.

According to McLeod (2019), Qualitative research is the method that mostly describes the data because the data of this study are the form of words. So, the qualitative research approach is needed to analyzing the data which are in the form of words. Thus, the finding the data will shows in the form of words, phrases, sentences, and also paragraphs.

The data for this research were collected by watching the movie Purple Hearts (Rosenbaum, 2022) multiple times to ensure accuracy in capturing relevant linguistic interactions. The researcher employed a note-taking method to document utterances and dialogues that contained positive Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs). Each instance of FTA was recorded along with its context, speaker, hearer, and situational background to facilitate a more detailed analysis. Additionally, timestamps were noted to maintain precision and allow for cross-referencing with the movie script when available. This systematic approach ensured that the data were comprehensive and aligned with the research objectives.

The researcher used modified FTA data analysis method that was created by Lubabah (2019, p.24). The steps are as follows:

1. Collecting the FTA data

   The researcher watched Purple Hearts carefully, paying close attention to dialogues and interactions that contained potential Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs). A note-taking method was used to record instances of FTAs, ensuring that each relevant utterance, speaker, and context was documented accurately.

2. Classifying the FTA data

   After gathering the data, the researcher classified each instance of positive FTA into categories based on the types previously discussed above. The classification was divided into Positive Face FTAs (e.g., disapproval,

contradiction, criticism) and Negative Face FTAs (e.g., restricting personal freedom, self-humiliation, confessions). This step ensured that each FTA was systematically grouped for further analysis.

3. Describing and analyzing the data

   In this phase, each positive FTA was analyzed in detail. The researcher described the linguistic features of the utterances, including the words, phrases, and sentence structures that contributed to the FTA. Additionally, each instance was examined within its context, focusing on the relationship between characters, their intentions, and the impact of the FTA on the interaction. This step followed the framework of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory to determine how the FTAs affected social dynamics in the movie.

4. Conclusion Drawing

   Finally, the researcher synthesized the findings by summarizing key patterns observed in the data. The conclusions were drawn based on the frequency, types, and effects of positive FTAs within the film. This step ensured that the results aligned with the research objectives, addressing the study's problem statement and contributing to a deeper understanding of FTAs in cinematic discourse.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that Cassie, as the hearer, experiences a variety of positive Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs) throughout Purple Hearts (2022). The positive FTAs analysed are separated into disagreement, criticism, contradiction, dismissal, accusation, complaints, face-saving, doubting, and disapproval. Among these, criticism (6 occurrences) and accusation (5 occurrences) were the most frequent, showing how Cassie's interactions often involve direct or indirect judgment from others. Contradictions (4 occurrences) and dismissals (3 occurrences) also appeared regularly, reflecting instances where Cassie's statements or perspectives

were challenged or disregarded. Additionally, complaints (2 occurrences), face-saving (1 occurrence), and disapproval (1 occurrence) highlight how her opinions and actions were frequently questioned by others in the film.

These positive FTAs played a crucial role in developing Cassie's character arc, illustrating how linguistic conflicts drive emotional and narrative progression in Purple Hearts. Below is the data classification.

| **Positive FTAs** | | |
|---|---|---|
| No. | Types of FTAs | Frequency |
| 1 | Criticism | 6 |
| 2 | Accusation | 5 |
| 3 | Contradiction | 4 |
| 4 | Dismissal | 3 |
| 5 | Complaints | 2 |
| 6 | Disagreement | 1 |
| 7 | Face-Saving | 1 |
| 8 | Disapproval | 1 |
| | Total | |

The researcher elaborated the data in the section below:

*Nora: Look, Cassie, it's your faves.*

*Cassie: Oh, great. Marines. Mild to medium harassment by nine, chaotic evil by ten.*

Context: The conversation took place in a bar after Cassie's performance. Cassie's friend, Nora, playfully directed her attention to a group of Marines, sarcastically calling them her "faves." She then jokingly added that their behavior would escalate from "mild to medium harassment by nine" to "chaotic evil by ten." Cassie responded sarcastically with "Oh, great. Marines."

Analysis: This interaction falls under Positive FTA – Disagreement because Cassie contradicted Nora's assumption that she had a particular stance on the Marines. Disagreement threatens positive face by implying that the speaker (Nora) has made

an incorrect assumption, which could create social tension. However, Cassie mitigated this FTA by using sarcasm rather than outright denial, keeping the exchange lighthearted rather than confrontational.

Nora's utterance threatened Cassie's negative face, as it assumed Cassie had a reaction to the Marines and pressured her to acknowledge or engage in the topic. Negative face referred to the desire for autonomy and freedom from imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987). By bringing up the Marines, Nora indirectly limited Cassie's ability to ignore or disengage from the situation.

Additionally, the phrase "Look, Cassie, it's your faves" contained an implied evaluation of Cassie's stance on the Marines. If Cassie did not fully agree, this could also threaten her positive face, as she might have felt the need to correct or distance herself from the assumption. Positive face related to the need for approval and self-image maintenance (Brown & Levinson, 1987), and since Cassie's views did not align with Nora's, she felt compelled to respond in a way that preserved her own stance.

Cassie responded with "Oh, great. Marines." in a sarcastic tone, indicating disagreement with Nora's framing of the situation. This served as a counter-FTA, as Cassie rejected the assumption that she held a particular opinion about the Marines. By using sarcasm, Cassie subtly asserted her own stance without escalating the interaction into a direct confrontation.

This dialogue represented a mild FTA to Cassie's negative face by imposing an expectation of response and a potential FTA to her positive face by assuming a viewpoint she did not share. However, the use of humor and sarcasm on both sides minimized the threat, keeping the exchange playful rather than confrontational.

*Frankie: Hey!*
*Cassie: Frankie!*
*Frankie: Surprise!*
*Cassie: I missed you, you freak.*
*Frankie: I missed you too, Salazar.*

*Cassie: Oh my God. Look at the buzz. No, I'm not okay with this at all. Uh, Nora, Frankie. Frankie, Nora.*

Context: The conversation took place in the bar after Cassie's performance. Frankie, an old friend of Cassie's, arrived and surprised her. They exchanged greetings, and Cassie jokingly commented on Frankie's new buzzed haircut, saying, "No, I'm not okay with this at all." Cassie then introduced Frankie to Nora, mentioning that they grew up together and that she used to babysit him.

Analysis: Frankie's arrival and enthusiastic greeting were friendly and affectionate. However, Cassie's remark about his haircut—"No, I'm not okay with this at all."—can be interpreted as a mild Face-Threatening Act (FTA) toward Frankie's positive face. Positive face refers to the need for approval and appreciation (Brown & Levinson, 1987), and by jokingly criticizing his haircut, Cassie momentarily threatened that face. However, since it was delivered playfully, it did not result in an actual loss of face for Frankie.

Cassie's introduction of Frankie to Nora also served as a positive politeness strategy, reinforcing group identity and reducing social distance. By explaining their history ("We grew up together, and I was his babysitter"), Cassie built common ground between them. This interaction showed a lighthearted and friendly exchange, where Cassie's mild FTA toward Frankie was balanced by her use of humor and positive politeness to maintain a comfortable atmosphere.

*Luke: You know, we're not all alike.*

*Cassie: Oh, really?*

*Luke: Yeah.*

*Cassie: Because your friend is talking about his right to touch my ass. Which apparently, you also feel entitled to.*

Context: After Cassie was harassed by a Marine and dismissed Luke's attempt to engage with her, Luke responded by saying, "We're not all alike." This statement

was meant to distance himself from his friend's behavior and challenge Cassie's generalization of the Marines.

Analysis: Luke's statement ("We're not all alike") threatened Cassie's positive face because it contradicted her perception of the situation. Positive face refers to an individual's need for validation and respect (Brown & Levinson, 1987). By making this remark, Luke indirectly suggested that Cassie's frustration was misplaced or exaggerated, implying that her judgment of the Marines was unfair. This dismissal of her viewpoint served as an FTA on her positive face, as it made her feel like her reaction was invalid or unjustified.

Furthermore, this statement subtly shifted responsibility away from himself and his fellow Marines, making it seem as though Cassie's reaction was an overgeneralization rather than a valid emotional response to what had just happened. In doing so, Luke's comment imposed on Cassie social pressure to reconsider or justify her stance, further intensifying the face threat.

Luke's statement undermined Cassie's perception of the situation, subtly invalidating her reaction. By contradicting her generalization, he performed a positive FTA that challenged her self-image and forced her to defend or justify her stance. Although he used politeness strategies to soften the contradiction, the face threat remained significant, reinforcing the conflict between them.

*Pharmacist: No, your insurance is not renewed, so I cannot refill it. So, if you wanna do it out of pocket, we can do that.*
*Cassie: And, um... how much is that?*
*Pharmacist: Three hundred for the long-acting, 220 for the short-acting. So, a little over $500. What do you wanna do?*

Context: Cassie went to the pharmacy to refill her insulin prescription. The pharmacist informed her that her insurance would not allow a refill for another four

days. Cassie, clearly distressed, explained that she was out of insulin and that it was dangerous for her to go without it. The pharmacist, however, reiterated that her insurance was not renewed and that the only option was to pay out of pocket, totaling over $500.

Analysis: Cassie explained her critical need for insulin, but the pharmacist did not acknowledge her concern, simply repeating the insurance policy. This threatened Cassie's positive face, as it disregarded the seriousness of her medical condition, making her feel unheard and invalidated. Positive face refers to the need for acknowledgment and respect, and the pharmacist's lack of empathy made Cassie's struggle seem unimportant.

*Marisol: Cass, you didn't pay your rent?*
*Cassie: I said don't open that.*
*Marisol: Your place is falling apart.*

Context: Cassie's mother confronted her about the situation, expressing concern over her living conditions and financial struggles

Analysis: Cassie's mother directly criticized her for not paying her rent on time, saying, "You cannot not pay your rent, Cassie." This statement threatened Cassie's positive face, as it implied, she was irresponsible and incapable of managing her own life. Positive face refers to an individual's need for validation and respect, and being called out for financial struggles likely made Cassie feel inadequate.

Additionally, the comment "Your place is falling apart. How can you live like this?" further threatened Cassie's positive face, as it implied that she was neglecting her well-being. The assumption that Cassie's lifestyle was unacceptable placed her in a defensive position, making her feel judged.

*Marisol: I'm so worried. Why are you laughing? You're not taking this seriously. You could die at any moment.*

*Cassie: Mom! I know.*

Context: As the conversation escalated, her mother continued to express concern over Cassie's health and financial instability, saying, "I'm so worried. Why are you laughing? You could die at any moment."

Analysis: When Cassie tried to explain the stress of balancing multiple jobs and her medical debt, her mother responded with "You're not taking this seriously. You could die at any moment." This statement dismissed Cassie's efforts to survive on her own and framed her struggles as reckless behavior rather than a situation beyond her control. Invalidating Cassie's efforts threatened her positive face, as it made her feel unappreciated and misunderstood.

*Luke: Frankie, this is a common scam. They kick the tires on these things, and if they find out it's not real, it's fraud. Come on, man. I mean, you're better than this.*

Context: When Cassie explained her plan to Frankie, Luke accused her, questioning her morality by preventing Frankie from doing Cassie's plan.

Analysis: Luke's statement "Frankie, this is a common scam. They kick the tires on these things, and if they find out it's not real, it's fraud." directly challenged Cassie's ethics and judgment, making it a positive face threat. Positive face refers to the need for approval and respect, and by labeling her idea as fraudulent, Luke implied that Cassie's actions were deceitful and irresponsible, making her seem untrustworthy in front of Frankie.

*Cassie: Okay, no one asked you, so could you not? And why wouldn't this be a real marriage?*

*Luke: I don't know, because you're not in love?*

Context: Luke confronted Cassie's perspective about getting married to Frankie.

Analysis: When Cassie responded, "Why wouldn't this be a real marriage?", Luke dismissed the idea outright, saying, "I don't know, because you're not in love?" This

threatened Cassie's positive face, as it undermined her reasoning and framed her proposal as invalid. Cassie had already presented her logic—that marriage, in this case, was a partnership rather than a romantic union—but Luke's sarcastic and blunt response reduced her argument to an emotional perspective, rather than acknowledging it as a practical solution to a financial problem.

*Cassie: The government that made my mom pay taxes for ten years before giving her the right to vote? That government?*
*Luke: So your mom was living here illegally then?*
*Cassie: Don't tell me you're a resident of Southern California that does not see how this state was built off the backs of illegal immigrants. Like my mom, who crossed that border, lived here for ten years, worked their asses off for ten years, paying taxes for your government, and were treated like less than citizens. Yeah, I will proudly rip off the government. You got anything else to say, Commando?*

Context: Luke were arguing with Cassie about her plan to get married to Frankie in order to get some extra money.

Analysis: Cassie passionately defended her right to "rip off" the government, citing her mother's struggles as an immigrant. Luke countered with, "So your mom was living here illegally then?" This statement was a direct positive face threat, as it implied that Cassie's mother had broken the law and framed her defense as an excuse for dishonesty. Since Cassie was emotionally invested in her mother's struggles, this remark attacked her personal identity and family history, making it a particularly strong FTA.

*Frankie: I'm sorry. Plus, I don't think my girlfriend's gonna understand me having a wife.*

*Cassie: What? You got back together with Riley? Yeah. Yeah. I'm... I'm all in. I remember when you met her, like, in fifth grade. That's great. Well, that was crazy. I should go. There are tourists to be shuttled and food to be delivered.*

Context: Frankie told Cassie that Riley would not agree with Cassie's plan.

Analysis: Cassie's reaction, "What? You got back together with Riley?", suggested genuine surprise and an attempt to process the situation. However, after Frankie confirmed, she quickly pivoted with "That's great. Well, that was crazy.", laughing to mask any disappointment or frustration. This was a face-saving strategy, as she tried to maintain her composure and avoid appearing vulnerable in front of Frankie.

*Luke: Trust me? Okay. Look, if I can trust a lib who doesn't give a shit about the law or the military, I can sure...*
*Cassie: I have an ethical code that doesn't include blind obedience, and I desperately need this to literally survive. Whereas you could be, I don't know, stockpiling supplies for your bro-militia.*

Context: Luke and Cassie were arguing about their belief in marriage.

Analysis: Luke directly challenged Cassie's values by saying, "If I can trust a lib who doesn't give a shit about the law or the military..." This statement threatened Cassie's positive face, as it framed her as untrustworthy and lacking respect for authority. Positive face refers to the need for social validation and approval, and Luke's political insult directly dismissed her as reckless and irresponsible.

Cassie countered with "I have an ethical code that doesn't include blind obedience." By emphasizing her own moral stance, she defended her positive face, showing that she did, in fact, have strong principles, just not ones that aligned with Luke's.

*Cassie: There's no fluffy virgin white wedding dress in there, Commando.*
*Luke: Stop calling me that.*

Context: Luke wanted Cassie to change to a more appropriate style for the wedding.

Analysis: Cassie countered the face threat by mocking Luke's strict attitude, calling him "Commando." This directly threatened Luke's positive face, as it made fun of his military discipline and control. Positive face refers to the need for validation and respect, and Cassie's sarcastic nickname framed Luke as overly serious and controlling, making him seem rigid and humorless.

*Riley: You know, a-about them leaving so soon? I'm... kind of freaking out. Yeah, it's, um... it's extremely surreal. I'm gonna miss him so much. I know Frankie's nervous. So I'm trying really hard to be brave. But he's my favorite person. That's the problem.*

Context: Riley admitted that she was freaking out and found the situation surreal, expressing how much she would miss Frankie.

Analysis: By saying, "He's my favorite person. That's the problem.", Riley openly admitted her deep emotional reliance on Frankie. This could have subtly threatened Cassie's positive face, as it highlighted the contrast between their emotional investments. Since Cassie was entering a fake marriage with Luke for financial reasons, this level of genuine emotional connection might have unintentionally highlighted her own lack of romantic investment in the situation.

*Armando: This one is to life, love, and hunting down some goddamn Arabs, baby!*
*Cassie: Really? Oh boy.*

Context: In an eatery, Armando made a highly offensive toast, saying, "This one is to life, love, and hunting down some goddamn Arabs, baby!" while banging on the table. Cassie, clearly disturbed, reacted with "Really? Oh boy."

Analysis: Cassie's reaction, "Really? Oh boy.", was an immediate signal of disapproval. By expressing her discomfort and objection to Armando's statement, she directly threatened his positive face by challenging his social behavior and perspective.

*Armando: Yeah! You got a problem with that?*
*Cassie: Yeah, you. It's just... Arab is an ethnicity, and you're making it sound like you're hunting down everyone of a certain ethnicity. Which sounds kind of problematic.*

Context: Cassie argued with Armando after he made offensive toast.

Analysis: When Cassie explained that Arab is an ethnicity and that his statement was problematic, she directly contradicted the ideology behind his words. Contradiction is an FTA that disrupts agreement and challenges the speaker's assumption, making Armando's stance seem uninformed and prejudiced. This data has negative Politeness, hedging Criticism. "Which sounds kind of problematic." softened the directness of her critique.

*Armando: Thank you for the sensitivity training.*

Context: Cassie argued with Armando after he made offensive toast.

Analysis: When Armando sarcastically said, "Thank you for the sensitivity training," he mocked Cassie's stance, implying that she was being overly sensitive rather than making a valid point. This was a positive face-threatening act, as it undermined Cassie's credibility and framed her argument as unnecessary.

*Armando: All right? I'm out here serving my country.*

Context: Cassie argued with Armando after he made offensive toast.

Analysis: Armando escalated the attack in the argument by saying, "I'm out here serving my country. What are you doing?" This statement framed Cassie as unimportant or lacking purpose, threatening her positive face by suggesting that her opinions were invalid because she was not in the military.

*Cassie: You're this mad, really?*
*Luke: Yeah. You know what he meant. Okay, it's all bullshit bravado.*

Context: Cassie and Luke argued after she argued with Armando.

Analysis: Luke's "You know what he meant. It's all bullshit bravado." served as a contradiction to Cassie's position. Instead of acknowledging the real issue of racism, he reframed Armando's words as harmless bravado, indirectly discrediting Cassie's argument and making it seem unreasonable. Contradictions are positive face threats because they imply that the hearer's understanding is incorrect or misguided.

*Cassie: I'm sure I wasn't the one who ruined the night. I'm sure it was your friend shouting, "Kill all Arabs."*
*Luke: What, 'cause you were gonna have the best night if he didn't say that? Sitting at a table full of people you feel superior to.*

Context: Cassie and Luke argued after she argued with Armando.

Analysis: Luke further attacked Cassie's character, saying, "What, 'cause you were gonna have the best night if he didn't say that? Sitting at a table full of people you feel superior to." This was a direct criticism of Cassie's attitude, implying that she felt above everyone else and was condescending toward the group.

*Luke: How do you think those women feel in Iraq? You live in this bubble. I can't stand it.*

Context: Cassie and Luke argued after she argued with Armando.

Analysis: Luke escalated the argument by saying, "You live in this bubble. I can't stand it." This was an accusation that Cassie was detached from reality, further threatening her positive face by framing her as naïve and uninformed.

*Luke: You are so goddamn stubborn, just...*

Context: After Cassie and Luke's heated argument about Armando, they found themselves needing to maintain their fake marriage appearance in public.

Analysis: When Luke said, "You are so goddamn stubborn.", he was directly criticizing Cassie's reluctance to comply with his demand. Criticism threatens positive face because it implies a flaw or undesirable trait in the hearer, in this case, Cassie's resistance.

*Luke: Working through our differences.*

Context: After Cassie and Luke's heated argument about Armando, they found themselves needing to maintain their fake marriage appearance in public.

Analysis: Luke's "Working through our differences." was a sarcastic contradiction to their previous fight. Instead of acknowledging their ideological disagreement, he dismissed it as a trivial couple's quarrel, implying that their serious argument could be reduced to a normal disagreement between lovers. This threatened Cassie's positive face by invalidating her perspective in their earlier debate.

*Luke: All I know is you're a hot mess.*

Context: At an inn, Cassie and Luke had a tense exchange after discovering that their room only had one bed instead of two.

Analysis: Luke's statement "All I know is you're a hot mess." was a direct criticism of Cassie, implying that she was chaotic or difficult to deal with. This threatened Cassie's positive face, as it framed her personality as flawed or unstable.

## DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate that Purple Hearts is rich in Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs) that significantly contribute to its character dynamics and emotional intensity. Cassie, as the hearer, frequently experiences positive face threats, particularly in the forms of contradictions, criticisms, and disagreements. These acts often emerge due to Cassie's direct, assertive, and sometimes confrontational personality, which tends to clash with the more traditional, structured values held by characters like Luke and the other Marines.

Cassie's experiences of positive FTAs reveal a deep interplay between individual agency and social expectations. According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, a positive face refers to a person's desire to be accepted, liked, and respected by others. Threats to this face, such as criticism or contradiction, challenge a person's self-image and can lead to defensive reactions or conflict. In Purple Hearts, Cassie's positive face is frequently challenged, not because she seeks approval, but because her strong-willed identity inherently invites confrontation with contrasting viewpoints.

The study identified 25 instances of positive FTAs, consisting of 2 disagreements, 6 criticisms, 4 contradictions, 3 dismissals, 5 accusations, 3 complaints, 1 face-saving, 1 doubting, and 1 disapproval. These acts primarily occur during moments where Cassie's personal beliefs, such as her views on government policies, military culture, and survival strategies, clash with those of others, especially Luke and Armando. Such moments not only serve as character-defining conflicts but also highlight social tensions surrounding themes like patriotism, independence, and survival.

One notable observation is Cassie's use of sarcasm and humor as politeness strategies to mitigate the severity of these FTAs. Instead of responding with overt

hostility, Cassie often employs witty remarks or ironic comments that soften the blow of criticism while still asserting her stance. This aligns with Brown and Levinson's (1987) positive politeness strategies, where speakers attempt to minimize the threat to the hearer's positive face by maintaining a sense of camaraderie or lightheartedness, even during disagreements. In Cassie's case, however, the sarcasm is double-edged, it maintains her independence while simultaneously distancing her from others emotionally.

Moreover, the frequency of positive FTAs demonstrates that language in the film functions as a tool for power negotiation. Through speech acts like accusations and criticisms, characters attempt to assert dominance, resist oppression, or defend their values. In particular, Cassie's confrontations with Luke often shift the balance of power within their relationship. Early scenes marked by contradictions and criticisms eventually pave the way for mutual understanding and emotional growth, showing that conflict fuelled by FTAs is not merely destructive but also constructive in character development.

Another important point is the emotional layering found in the FTAs directed toward Cassie. Criticisms and accusations, while threatening on the surface, often mask deeper concerns or vulnerabilities from other characters. For example, when Luke criticizes Cassie's behavior, it reflects not only frustration but also genuine worry for her safety and well-being. Similarly, Cassie's dismissal or contradiction of others often serves as a defense mechanism, protecting her from emotional harm in a world where vulnerability could mean survival failure.

The results of this study reinforce the importance of FTAs in shaping both character interactions and narrative development in cinematic discourse. The positive FTAs experienced by Cassie not only create tension and conflict but also drive the emotional arc of the story. They illustrate how characters evolve in response to social and personal challenges, emphasizing the role of language as a means of negotiating identity, relationships, and societal expectations.

Ultimately, the findings highlight that in film narratives, language is rarely neutral, it is an active force that shapes perceptions, emotions, and outcomes. In Purple Hearts, FTAs are used skilfully to depict struggles for respect, love, independence, and belonging, making the characters' journeys more relatable and their transformations more profound.

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