

# **Non-Observance Of Grice's Maxims Found In "The Grapevine: Gossip At Work, What Should You Do As A Leader?" Drama Series Script Produced By The Calvin Company**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Misunderstanding and misinterpreting are the main problems in communication. These phenomena are also called as non-observance maxim because the speakers to observe cooperative principle in a conversation. There are four types of maxim in cooperative principle; *maxim of quality*, *maxim of manner*, *maxim of relation*, and *maxim of manner*. Meanwhile, the various of non-observance maxim is divided into *flouting a maxim*, *violating a maxim*, *infringing a maxim*, *opting out a maxim*, and *suspending a maxim*. This study intends to analyze and describe the types of non-observance maxims, the speaker's intention, and the variation of maxims found in "*the Grapevine: Gossip at Work, What Should You Do as A Leader?*" drama script series produced by the Calvin company based on Grice's theory. For this purpose: a descriptive qualitative study was used where the subject is the participants or characters in the drama series. While the object of this study is the types of non-observance maxims, the speaker's intention, and the variation of maxims. The data were collected by using video observation. The video is taken from the youtube of teamwork and leadership channel. The data analysis was done by (1) eliciting the video from the youtube channel, (2) observing the data by watching and listening the drama series, (3) writing down the script, (4) analyzing the types of non observance maxims by marking and noting all the dialogue used by the characters, (5) categorizing all the data of non-observance maxims, and (6) making a conclusion for this study. The findings show that floating and violating a maxim of quality and quantity are the most types of non-observance maxims found in the drama series. In addition, these phenomenon used by the female workers in the drama series to express their feelings in dealing with an issue or rumor happened in their company. They are also used by the head of accounting in the company to give more information, explanations, and clarifications to the female workers about the issue.

**Keywords:** Cooperative principle, non-observance maxim, implicature.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Language is one of the important elements in society to have communication each other. In doing communication especially in conversation, people apply a language to deliver their thoughts, ideas, and

emotions. Every communication produced is usually used to get the same perception about the particular topic. However, a conversation sometimes is a misunderstanding which usually caused by misinterpretation and perplexity among the speaker and hearer. Misunderstandings in communication

need to be minimized by both the speaker and the listener. It can be realized by increasing the ability and skills to interact or communicate and providing the broadest knowledge and abilities as the supporting factors. Without language in a social life, people will have a difficulty to convey their actions whether it is directly through the words which come out in an oral or written way so that there is no misunderstanding in communication.

In carrying out daily activities, people will always meet and interact with the other. They must use language as a medium of their communication. In good communication, every speaker and listener will always try to convey his speech effectively and efficiently. Wijana (1996: 450) said that a speaker will try to make his speech always be relevant to the context, clear and easy to understand, solid and concise, and always focus on the topic so it does not spend the time of the interlocutor. In order to make the speeches can be expressed and acceptable to the interlocutor, the speaker usually considers the variety of pragmatic factors carefully which involved in the communication process. Pragmatic is kind of the linguistic studies taken from the point of view of language in context. There are many points that discussed in its scopes, such as Cooperative Principle, politeness, deixis, and speech act theory which has applied in communication so that misunderstanding can be minimized.

Misunderstanding is one of the main problems in communication, Grice (1975) called it as an implicature phenomenon. Based on Grice (1975, cited in Thomas, 1995), there are two kinds of implicatures namely conventional implicature and conversational implicature. Conventional implicature is a general understanding which explains what is

meant of something in a straightforward and clear manner. While conversational implicature is part of pragmatics problem that arises as a result of violating the principle in a conversation. In order to interpret conversational implicature, Grice (1975, cited in Thomas, 1995) introduced cooperative principle as a rule of conversation. Cooperative Principle consists of four maxims; *maxim of quality*, *maxim of quantity*, *maxim of manner*, and *maxim of relation*.

*Maxim of quality* is concerned on the speaker which must contribute clearly, adequately in a conversation, and not give some excessive pieces of information which are not needed by the listener (Grice, 1975, cited in Thomas, 1995). Something needed in this maxim is the quality of the speaker's contribution to interacting with the listener about the topic. *Maxim of quantity* is a kind of conversational maxim noticed on the quality of information which is given by the speaker to the hearer (1975, cited in Thomas, 1995). In this maxim, the speaker should not give a piece of false information or information that lack of adequate evidence. Meanwhile, *in maxim of manner*, the participants of the discussion are expected to speak directly and do not give obscurity of expression. A speaker must communicate using the words orderly so that the interlocutor is not confused to interpret the speaker's say (1975, cited in Thomas, 1995). The last, *maxim of relation* is concerned on the contribution of participant which should give the relevant conversation based on the situation and condition (1975, cited in Thomas, 1995).

Furthermore, people sometimes do not focus and mean on what they say in a conversation. The speaker often gives a sentence that contains of implicatures which cause the hearer has to think first

about what the speaker means. It sometimes happens blatantly or not and also consciously or unconsciously by the speaker. However, it sometimes leads to the different meaning among the speaker and hearer in a conversation. Grice (1975, cited in Thomas, 1995) called this phenomenon as a failure to observe a maxim. In addition, these failures have several types, namely *flouting a maxim*, *violating a maxim*, *infringing a maxim*, *opting out of a maxim*, and *suspending a maxim*.

First, *flouting a maxim* is a failure in a conversation where the speaker blatantly gives an implicature in providing the information or responding to a topic. The hearer in this phenomena also has understood the meaning of the implicature without having to think first what is meant by the speaker.

*For example:*

*A : What are you doing?*

***B : Reading a book. This book is very interesting. It discusses education on a remote island.***

The conversation above shows the speaker has done flouting a maxim of quantity because she gives more information to the listener. Although the listener just wants to know what the activity is being carried out by the speaker, but the speaker also provides information about the book which being read by her.

Second, in *violating a maxim*, the speaker gives insincere, irrelevant, or ambiguous implicature to the hearer. It is different from flouting a maxim which is done blatantly. This maxim usually makes the hearer confused on the meaning of the implicature given by the speaker. The hearer has to think first to understand what the speaker wants or means in conveying the message. Therefore, this phenomenon often becomes the cause of misinterpretation

in a conversation. The following example will illustrate the phenomenon:

*A : Don't you go to the office?*

***B : I will find a new job.***

*A : What do you mean?*

***B : I'm fine.***

Third, *infringing a maxim* is part of non-observance maxim which happens because of the speaker's utterance disability. Some factors which influence the disability caused by the speaker's conditions such as nervousness, drunkenness or excitement. It also can happen because of the speaker has an imperfect command of the language. Here is a typical example of infringing a maxim:

*A : Did you meet him at the market?*

***B : Uh...No. Ah yeah maybe. I. I. don't know sorry.***

Fourth, *opting out* happens when a speaker is not able to say something because he feels unwilling to say the truth because it will hurt the hearer. The speaker usually hopes to avoid generating a false implicature or appearing uncooperative conversation to the interlocutor. Here is an example:

*A : What happen?*

***B : I'm sorry I can't tell you anything.***

The last is *suspending a maxim*. It is kind of non-observance maxim that usually found in funeral orations and obituaries. This type is used by the speaker to honor the participants in the conversation and guard the feelings of certain participants. There are many studies about non-observance maxim conducted by the researchers previously. One of them is titled "*Non-Observance of Maxims in Facebook Conversation*" by Hanifah (2013). It talked about the differences between man and woman in producing non observance maxim on Facebook. The findings of the discussion described that man users commonly failed to observe maxim of relation by giving irrelevant contribution (53.13%),

while woman users failed to observe maxim of quantity by giving more information (44%). In addition, flouting of maxim is the most frequent non-observance of maxim that was performed by both male and female users in their conversation (96.88% & 92%).

The research conducted by Hanifah (2013) is different with this research because the data of this research in the term of spoken text which is shown in a drama series video "*the Grapevine: Gossip at Work, What Should You Do as A Leader?*". In this video, there is an interesting conversation which appeared some types or variations of non-observance maxim. This drama was talking about the female workers who gossiping a rumor that Sally and Helen as the accounting operator would be moved out to another company or fired from the company. It happened because the head of accounting would buy new computers which would change their desks and positions. Some types of non-observance maxim which appeared in this drama that caused many misunderstanding and misinterpreting. Therefore, the researcher interest to analyze the phenomenon for this study.

## METHOD

The research design used in this study was descriptive qualitative research. It intends to find out and describe the types of non-observance maxims, the speaker's intention, and the variation of maxims found in "*the Grapevine: Gossip at Work, What Should You Do as A Leader?*" drama script series produced by the Calvin company based on the Grice's theory about Cooperative Principle. According to Creswell (2009), a research object is an issue or problem which will be studied and analyzed by the researcher. It will be related to the data which has taken to support the analysis. The object

of this research is non-observance maxims while the subject is the characters in the drama script. The analysis result will be the description of phenomena which is purely taken from the documentation. It is not about a numeral of variable correlations. It will produce the data analysis which is relevant and trusted because there is no manipulation. The data were taken from a video which downloaded from a youtube of teamwork and leadership channel. The data analysis was done with the steps as follow: (1) eliciting the video from the youtube channel, (2) observing the data by watching and listening to the drama series, (3) writing down the script, (4) analyzing the types of non observance maxims by marking and noting all the dialogue used by the characters, (5) categorizing all the data of non-observance maxims, and (6) making a conclusion for this study. In analyzing the data, the researcher used Cooperative Principle from Grice and based on the types of non-observance maxims, speaker's intention, and variation of maxims which occurred in the drama script.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In order to answer the research questions of this study, a descriptive analysis about the types of non-observance maxims, variation of maxims, and the speaker's intention which occurred in "*the Grapevine: Gossip at Work, What Should You Do as A Leader?*" drama script based on Cooperative Principle from Grice (1975). Here the findings and discussions of the data:

### Data 1

Alice : *You think there's really anything to it?*

Helen : *Well Nell says she heard Mr.Cowdery say that the Perkins company Platt in*

***Cleveland can handle the entire load. You can figure it out from there. Everybody's talking about it.***

In the conversation above, Helen is indicated *flouting a maxim of quantity* because Alice just asked: "*there is something happened with their company or not*". However, Helen replied to Alice's question with the exaggerated information that another company (Perkins) can handle the entire load. The implicature that happens in the dialog above shows Helen want to give more information to Alice, who don't know about the rumors that talking over their company which will move out the workers to the other company.

#### **Data 2**

Alice : ***But I was wondering if you could tell me if it's well you see my husband works here in town and we bought a new house so well I'd hate to have to move or look for another job or anything.***

Mr. Stone : *What are you trying to say, Alice?*

Here Alice tried to say to Mr. Stone that she did not want to be laid off or move out from the company. Nevertheless, she made a conversational implicature which made the interlocutor did not understand what is Alice meant. Therefore, Alice has *violated a maxim of manner* because she delivered her utterances extensively and ambiguous, which caused Mr. Stone asked what Alice want to talk about.

#### **Data 3**

Nell : ***I hear they've already ordered one. Yes. Helen and Sally.***

Girl 1 : *Moving them?*

Girl 2 : *Transfer?*

Girl 3 : *Made off?*

Girl 4 : *Fired without notice? Just like that? What did they do?*

Nell has *violated a maxim of quality* because she confused the other girls what Nell is meant about her utterances, which made the girls guessing about the issue talked by her. In addition, Nell also gave a rumor which is not yet clear and lack of adequate evidence that caused the girls supposed something bad would happen to Helen and Sally.

#### **Data 4**

Sally : *Well. You are secretary, Alice. Why don't you ask him?*

Alice : *I wouldn't ask him. I told you how he acts when anybody asking anything about anything it goes on around here.*

Helen : ***Well, before the smoke there's fire. If they're moving our desks out and getting a new automatic machine, they must be getting rid of us too.***

Sally : ***Well, that's the thanks you get four years at the same desk working. Your head off and then in comes to a newfangled machine and out you go.***

From the conversation above, Helen and Sally have seen floating maxim of quantity because she produced many utterances. Helen did the phenomenon to pissed off their resentment to the issue and Mr. Stone's act in responding to the situation. Sally also made the same non-observance maxim in responding to Helen's and Alice's conversation to express her frustration. It is because her position in working for 4 years at the company would be replaced by new computers which were considered would be more efficient.

#### Data 5

Mr. Stone : *Oh, come in and sit down girls. I've got something. I want to talk to you about..*

Helen : *Allright, you don't have to tell it. We know it may interest you to know that we don't care. This is the thanks you get four years of hard work.*

*Maybe we dont want to work for you. The matter of fact I already have*

*another job. I start Monday.*

Mr. Stone : *Wait a minute! Another job? What on earth you talking about?*

Helen has violated maxim of relation in this conversation. She seen very upset then producing some utterances which did not relevant to the topic which would be talked by Mr. Stone. Helen did it because she wants to express her disappointment to Mr. Stone who would move them out to another accompany or fire them. However, Mr. Stone was confused to her because he surprised why Helen said that she has had another job and did not want to work for Mr. Stone again.

#### Data 6

Mr. Stone : *Wait a minute! Another job? What on earth you talking about?*

Helen : *And I've got an interview set up for Sally too. Maybe it's a good thing*

*to change jobs now. And then people get so used to seeing you around*

*after a while they look at you like you're a piece of furniture.*

In this conversation, Helen established a kind of non-observance maxim. She replied to Mr. Stone's question with some utterances that did not relevant anymore. Helen showed off her upset to

Mr. Stone by telling him that she also asked Sally to change her job. She also wreaked her frustration to Mr. Stone who would change her position with computers through the conversational implicature "*And then people get so used to seeing you around after a while they look at you like you're a piece of furniture.*" that confused Mr. Stone with what is Helen meant in her words. It means that Helen has violated maxim of relation.

#### Data 7

Mr. Stone : *What in the name of heaven. Are you talking about?*

Helen : *You needn't pretend Mr. Stone. We've heard all about it already the whole office. Have you think just because you buy a new automatic machine, you can let us go and get an experienced operator for it?*

*Well let me tell you....*

In this dialogue above, Helen expressed her idea about the issue to Mr. Stone by saying "*We've heard all about it already the whole office. Have you think just because you buy a new automatic machine, you can let us go and get an experienced operator for it?*". It showed that Helen has established flouting maxim of quality because she incriminated Mr. Stone without some sufficient evidence. She believed with the rumor which was not necessarily true.

#### Data 8

Helen : *Kyleigh Mr.Stone, oh we thought it..*

Mr. Stone : *Your thought!*

*Well, why didn't you come in to me in the first place instead of listening to all this silly backyard gossip.*

Helen : *Well, I heard that whenever anyone comes in to uou about something. You say it doesn't concern them.*

Mr. Stone : *Look girl!*

*It isn't always possible to tell you everything that management has in*

*mind. You can't understand that but I'll certainly tell you about*

*anything that concerns you directly. in fact, that's why I call you in*

*here to tell you about this change before the equipment arrived.*

In this dialog, Mr. Stone floated maxim of quantity to explain more information to Helen and Sally so that they have been wrong in prejudice him. He also made his contribution more informative than is required in conversation in order to tell the truth . This non-observance maxim also occurs to bring round Sally and Helen that rumor or issue that seminated by the whole workers in the company was wrong.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research is to answer the research questions. There are two conclusions described in this study. First, the most types and variations of non-observance maxim appeared in "the Grapevine: Gossip at Work, What Should You Do as A Leader?" drama script series produced by the Calvin company is floating and violating maxim of quality and quantity. There are no infringing, opting out, and suspending maxim found in the drama series. Second, floating and violating are often occurred in the drama because the series shows about the female workers which was gossiping the head of accounting that would buy new computers. According to the issue, Sally and Helen

was the workers who would be moved out and changed by new operators. Here, floating and violating maxim produced to describe and talk about more information about the issue by the workers. Furthermore, Helen and Sally have used these phenomena to express their disappointment to Mr. Stone who would move out or fire them from the company. In addition, floating and violating maxim are also used by Mr. Stone to tell the truth by giving more explanation or utterances to the workers. So, it means that non-observance maxim effects the misunderstanding and misinterpretation become worse in a conversation especially in an issue or rumor.

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