

Students' violation of cooperative principle in thesis exams

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to find out and describe the maxim of conversation most violated by students and the types of maxim violation in thesis exams. This is a kind of descriptive qualitative research. The data are utterances containing maxim violations by the students in thesis exams at the department of English education, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, State Islamic University of Raden Intan Lampung in 2018/2019 academic year. The researcher used a documentation method of the recordings of students' thesis exams, and a note-taking technique in collecting the data. The result of the research shows that among the 13 utterances, quantity maxim was violated most with 5 utterances (38.46%), subsequently followed by relation maxim with 4 utterances (30.76%). Meanwhile both quality and manner maxims placed the third maxims most violated by the students, each with 2 utterances (15.38%) respectively. In addition, maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner are violated by the students in thesis exams, namely quantity, quality, relation, and manner maxims. The violations are in the form of exaggerated information for quantity maxim, untrue information for quality maxim, irrelevant information for relation maxim, and confusing information for manner maxim.

Keywords: *conversation, cooperative principle, maxim violation*

Introduction

communication considered as the swap of information. In communication humans generally collaborate with each other to convey their thoughts as well as the tacit meaning of their expressions. Hence, the attempts toward equivalent talks are considered cooperative efforts based on a common understanding and chasing a shared motive. The Gricean Cooperative Principle, as a set of standards required in conversations, led to the growth of pragmatics as a distinct specialty in linguistics (Hadi, 2013).

Nevertheless, the definition of the Cooperative Principle is occasionally intricate because Grice's technical word "cooperation" is often puzzled with the common sense of the word cooperation.

The central understanding of Grice's concept that should be emphasized here is the notion of rationality and that is why he discusses cooperation. Almost all linguists, on the other hand, are interested in the operation of the Cooperative Principle in language use such as flouts, violations, infringing, and opting out and only a few of them propose the concept of rationality in relation to the Cooperative Principle into their debate. Grice reckons his

maxims as principle's instances, not rules (Waget, 2015).

In general, pragmatics concerns with those facets of meaning that are context-variable. It endeavors to widen the scope of traditional linguistics by housing many issues and aspects that characterize language in use (Ghazal, 2017).

As a means of communication, language must be meaningful. The meaningfulness can be seen from the possession of meanings explicitly and implicitly (Yule, 2016). Specifically the implicit meaning can be drawn from four maxims as the realization of cooperative principles. The maxims are regarded as the prerequisite of making an optimal communication. The maxims are well known as quantity, quality, manner, and relevance (Pan, 2012; Hadi, 2013).

Furthermore, Qassem & Ziabari, (2018) mention that the cooperative principles of Grice govern the "information exchange" in the normal situations. Grice clarifies that the cooperative principles (relevance, quality, manner and quantity) require providing relevant, enough and true information far away from ambiguity. He classifies these principles into four maxims as follows.

Quantity means that a contribution

should be as informative as is required for the conversation proceed. It should be neither too little, nor too much. This can be achieved through making your contribution as informative as is required, and never making your contribution more informative than is required. Quality requires speakers to be truthful. They should not say what they think is false or make statements for which they have no evidence. This can be realized by avoiding saying what you believe to be false, and saying that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Meanwhile, relation refers to a condition that the speakers' contributions should relate clearly to the purpose of the exchange. That is to say that participants should speak out something to be relevant to the topic. Finally, manner demands a situation in which speakers' contributions should be perspicuous. Speakers should avoid obscurity of expression, ambiguity, be brief, and be orderly.

The situation can trigger the maxim violation as speakers disobey the rules of maxim. In communication, it is reasonable that the participant makes violation of the sentence structure or context, rather than merely infringing but they convey certain meanings (Raharja, 2015). In the event of deviation, there are certain implications that the speaker will achieve. The implications include covering something, clarifying information, praising, mocking or transferring the conversation.

Moreover, another reason why the speakers violate the maxims is in order to cause misapprehensions on their partners' part. Some other purposes of violation are, for example to lengthen answers, amuse fellows, elude arguments, avoid distasteful situations, and state opinions (Khosravizadeh & Sadehvandi, 2011).

In fact, the Gricean maxim's violation occurs in all societies and in certain circumstances, for example in the academic sphere of thesis exams at the English education department, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training of State Islamic University of Raden Intan Lampung. Thesis exam is an academic forum to examine and evaluate the students' thesis as a part of requirements of the accomplishment of study. The concept of thesis exam here is inviting and interviewing students to defend the arguments proposed in the thesis. During the exam session, students sometimes make some maxim violations when being interviewed by the examiners.

Examiner : *Why did you conduct the research*

in the school?

Student : *Because I studied there when I was in Junior High School.*

The dialog shows that the student answered the examiner's question by telling the reason that he conducted the research in the school was because he was one of the school alumni. This statement violates the maxim of quality due to the subjective reasoning in choosing the location of the research. Otherwise the student should refer to objective reasoning in line with academic purposes, for example the occurrence of the phenomenon he tried to investigate at the school.

Several studies have previously attempted to discuss maxim violation in some areas of study. The first study focuses on the investigation of maxims violated by the characters in humorous series of *Malam Minggu Miko* (Hidayati & Indarti, 2013). The data are taken from Youtube from the episodes that possess the highest standing in chart. The findings of the research indicate that the maxim relation violation is the most frequent occurrence, discovered 13 times, of all maxims. The production of irrelevant talks towards the context of the talk clearly signifies the violation.

Furthermore, Sobhani & Saghebi (2014) attempts to investigate the violation of maxim in Iranian psychological consultation. This study took data from the talks among a psychotherapist and patients in remedial treatments. The result of the research shows that the recognition of conversational implicature is essential for the understanding of the non-cooperative attitudes of the speakers and their violation of one or more Cooperative Principle maxims.

In addition, it is clear that the message people intend to convey is not wholly contained within the words they use, but it is also dependent on how hearers interpreting the message taking into account context and implicated meaning. Finally, there are instances when the purpose is to intentionally miscommunicate within this sophisticated social context.

Buddharat, Ambele, & Boonsuk, (2017) try to discuss the uncooperativeness in political discourse focusing on the Gricean maxim violation in the US Presidential Debate 2016. The findings of the investigation show the politicians violates the maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner. They do so by way of flouting, violating, clashing and opting out of those maxims. By breaking the maxims that generate conversa-

tional implicature, this study reveals that the obvious way in which the politician's responses generate implicature is by flouting the maxims, especially that of quantity, quality and relevance. The politicians flout the quantity maxim in order to communicate their thoughts to the audience since the goal of the campaign debate was to persuade the people to vote for either of them as next president, even if what they were saying was not related to the question asked.

Another study focuses on cooperative principle violation done by the interviewee in answering the question in *Rosi Talkshow* at Kompas TV using Grice's theory (Rahmi & Wahyuni, 2018). The objectives of study are to discover the type of conversational maxim violation and the reason the interviewee violate the maxims in talk show with the data of utterances between the interviewer and the interviewee taken from internet.

The result of the research discovers four maxims of quantity, quality, relation, manner, violated by the interviewee in responding the query. Quantity maxim is violated most, 18 times, followed by relation, 14 times. Afterward, quality places the third, violated 9 times, succeeded by manner, violated 6 times. The reason why quantity maxim is violated most because the speakers provide clues as much as possible to get it clear and to make good figure with good terms to obtain warmth from viewers.

The aforementioned studies present various violations of maxim occurred in particular situations, as in video, consultation session, presidential debate, and even talk show. Therefore, the investigation of the occurrence of maxim violations during the students' thesis exams, as far as the researcher is concerned, is considered as a new topic because it can give a different perspective from the previous studies. The difference relates to the student's sociopragmatic competence in educational sphere, especially in the students' examination sessions, involving the communication among the examiner and the student as the examinee. The research focuses on investigating and analyzing what maxims violated most by the students in thesis exams and the types of maxim violation conducted by the students in thesis exams.

As mentioned before that violation of cooperative principle is considered as the failure in communication, leading to the misunderstanding between the speaker and hearer. Regarding this, the result of the research can be used as the basic consideration for English Education Department in making code of conduct of examination session, in terms of what should be done or not in the communication during thesis exam session. It

is hoped that by student's obeying the code of conduct, the communication between the examiner and the examinee will run smoothly during examination session and the examination will be successful.

Method

This is a kind of descriptive qualitative research, mainly emphasizing on the verbal data rather than quantification in the data analysis (Sudaryanto, 2015). By employing purposive sampling technique, the data were obtained, namely 13 utterances containing maxims violated by students in thesis exams at the English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training of State Islamic University of Raden Intan Lampung in the even semester of 2018/2019 academic year. In this case, the participants consisted of the researcher as the examiner and 13 students as the examinee in the thesis exams.

In analyzing the data, a reflective-introspective method was employed in order to discover the maxims most violated by the students in thesis exams. Meanwhile in investigating the types of students' violation of maxim in thesis exams, the method of pragmatic identity, the so-called *Padan* method, was employed (Sudaryanto, 2015).

The procedures to collect data were: determining the participants, then determining the language that will be analyzed. Next, recording the conversation of the participants, and then transcribing the data containing the maxim violation in written form. The last step is analyzing the data by dividing the types of maxim violation based on Grice's theory, interpreting the data, and making conclusion.

Findings and Discussion

This part presents the results and discussion of the study. Based on the data analysis, it was found that there were thirteen utterances containing maxim violation done by the students as shown on table below.

Table 1 Summary of Students' Maxim Violation

No	Type of Maxim	F	%
1	Quantity	5	38.46%
2	Quality	2	15.38%
3	Relation	4	30.76%
4	Manner	2	15.38%
	Total	13	100%

Table 1 shows that the total numbers of maxim violated by the students in thesis exams were 13. They comprised 5 violations of quantity maxim, 2 violations of quality maxim, 4 violations of relation maxim, 2 violations of manner maxim.

Among the thirteen utterances, quantity maxim was violated most, subsequently followed by relation maxim. Meanwhile both quality and manner maxims placed the third maxims most violated by the students. The table below presents the finding of types of maxim violated by students in thesis exams.

The first type of violation found is quantity maxim. Quantity maxim requires contribution that is as informative as required. When someone contributes more information than is required, then it can be said that he/she violated quantity maxim. The following example shows violation of quantity maxim that has been done by students during final exams.

Excerpt (1)

Examiner:

Do you bring the students' score recapitulation?

Student:

In my pre-research, I used the students' score recapitulation of writing. The teacher gave me the file and I copied it in copy center, but I forgot the place where I put it, so I lost it.

Based on the data in (1), it can be seen that the examiner only asked whether the student brought the score recapitulation or not. However, the student answered too much than was required and even did not give an answer to the actual question, for example, *No I don't bring it Sir*. He also switched the topic by talking about the process he copied the file and then lost it even though the examiner did not ask about that. From the explanation above we know that the student's utterances violated quantity maxim by answering too much than was required as he talked about the process of losing the file which is irrelevant to the topic.

Excerpt (2)

Examiner:

Why do you still use simple future tense in chapter three?

Student:

Actually I have changed into simple past, but something error happened to my laptop and I lost some data of my thesis including chapter 3. I found the

previous version in simple future as in my proposal and I forgot to edit it before copying.

The violation of quantity maxim can be clearly signaled in (2) in which the examiner only asked why the student still use simple future the chapter three at final exam. However, the student answered too much than was required and even did not answer the actual question for example, *"I forget to edit it into simple past, Sir"*. He also switched the topic by talking about his computer's error which made him lost data of chapter three even though the examiner did not ask about that. Thus it can be understood that the student's utterances violated quantity maxim by answering too much than was required as he talked about the process of losing data of chapter three which is irrelevant to the topic.

Excerpt (3)

Examiner :

Why did you choose the school?

Student:

During my PPL, I practiced teaching speaking. I felt students less motivated in speaking. They keep silent and some of them felt shy in making statements. Most of them had difficulties in choosing words to express. Then I knew that the problem was proven by students' low score of speaking.

Another example of violation of quantity maxim can be seen as in data 3. Here the examiner only asked why the student chose the school as the research place. However, he answered too much than was required and even did not answer the actual question, for example, *"I found the students' problem in speaking skill at the school"*.

In addition, he also switched the topic by talking about the process of on the job training (PPL) and also mentioned the students' difficulties in learning speaking. This statement indicates that the student's utterances violated Quantity maxim by answering too much than was required as he talked about the process of his activity in PPL which is irrelevant to the topic.

The second type of violation found is quality maxim. Utterances that can be said violating quality maxim are the ones that say something that is not true. Quality maxim requires utterances that have enough evidence and are true. Here is one example of the utterance that has violated quality maxim.

Excerpt (4)

Examiner:

Your research on phonological interference of Madurese toward English took place at SMA Al Hikam Bangkalan Madura. Did you go there to collect data?

Student:

I got the data just by sending email to the teacher, and he responded by sending me back the data of students' recording of pronunciation practice of English and Madurese.

When the student said that she collected the data by sending e-mail to the teacher at SMA al Hikam Bangkalan Madura, it can be said that there was a contradictory fact to her field research type. It is commonly known that field research must be supported by direct observation of the researcher to the research object. The violation of quality maxim occurred in the utterance containing information that the student as the researcher did not conduct direct observation. This means that her statement concerning her field research was not supported by the factual evidence, so that it is regarded as something untrue.

Excerpt 5.

Examiner:

I've ever examined the thesis on teaching descriptive text by using Youtube video, and your topic is the same as his, why?

Student:

I think this is a new topic Sir, because there's been no body before using this technique in teaching descriptive text. To prove it, my topic was well accepted by the department.

The violation of quality maxim in (5) is signaled by the student's statement that his topic was new. Even he insisted that his topic had also been accepted by the department. However according to the examiner, the topic concerned had been previously discussed by another student, and He himself had tested the student in the final exam.

Here the student's statement was contrary to the fact that the same topic had been previously discussed before. This means that his statement was not supported by the factual evidence, so that it is regarded as something untrue.

The third type of violation found is relation maxim. Relation maxim requires relevance between the speaker and the hearer. This maxim demands the speakers to be rele-

vant to the topic that is being talked about. Here is the example.

Excerpt (6)

Examiner:

Why did you conducting the research at the school?

Student:

Because it was close to my house.

From the conversation above, we can see that the student's answer is irrelevant to the topic that was being asked. He was asked about reason why he conducted the research at the school, yet his answer sounded subjective, telling that the school was close to his house. The student was supposed to give the answer by giving an academic reasoning of conducting the research for example, *Because I found students' problem in writing descriptive text*, yet he did not do that. It can be said that he violated relation maxim.

Excerpt (7)

Examiner:

Something wrong with your margin? Have you checked the writing guideline?

Student:

Sorry Sir, I just refer to my friend's thesis and copy them with the margin like that.

It can be understood that (7) contains the student's utterance violating relation maxim. Here the student's answer is irrelevant to the topic that was being asked by the examiner. He was asked about the margin error in writing his thesis, yet his answer sounded subjective, stating that he just followed his friend in making the margin. The student was supposed to give the answer by giving an academic reasoning of making thesis margin for example, *"yes Sir, I followed the writing guideline of making margin."*, yet he did not do that. It can be said that he violated Relation maxim.

The last type of violation found is manner maxim. Maxim of manner requires contribution that is clear, brief, orderly, and unambiguous. Speakers are required to say things that avoid ambiguity and obscurity of expression in order to not violate Manner maxim. In the data, Manner maxim is the most violated maxim by the speakers. The violation can be seen from the example below.

Excerpt (8)

Examiner:

What is meant by students' error in using simple present tense?

Student:

In my research, error occurred when students make ungrammatical forms in simple present tense, then can automatically correct them.

The student's utterance in (8) do not show a clear statement. When the student was asked about what was meant by the student's errors in using simple present tense, he said that the students made ungrammatical forms and automatically could correct them. His answer might cause people think of what was the different then to mistakes. According to the theory, when the students made errors and can automatically correct them, they were sad to make mistakes. From his utterance, the student violated manner maxim by talking something unclear and confusing to the readers.

Conclusion

Based on the elaboration on the previous discussion, the researcher may come up with two conclusions as follows. Among the 13 utterances, quantity maxim was violated most with 5 utterances (38.46%), subsequently followed by relation maxim with 4 utterances (30.76%). Meanwhile both quality and manner maxims placed the third maxims most violated by the students, each with 2 utterances (15.38%) respectively. In addition, there are four types of maxim violated by the students in thesis Exams, namely maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner. The violations of maxim are in the form of exaggerated information for quantity maxim, untrue information for quality maxim, irrelevant information for relation maxim, and confusing information for manner maxim.

The research signifies that the students' sociopragmatic competence in using pieces of language in social environment of education, especially during thesis exam session needs to be improved. This is based on the findings showing that many students still violated the cooperative principles in making a good communication. Therefore, it is suggested that the English Education Department may make a code of conduct of thesis exam as the guideline for students in making a good communication during thesis exam.

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