

# THE VIOLATING MAXIMS OF MAIN CHARACTERS IN *THE HANGOVER* MOVIE'S SCRIPT

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## ABSTRACT

The study deals with the types of maxims violation in *The Hangover* movie's script used by the main characters. The objectives of study were to describe the violation of maxim, to describe the dominant type of maxim violation and to elaborate the reason for the maxim violation. The data were the dialogue of main characters in *The Hangover* movie. This research was conducted by using descriptive qualitative and limited on the main characters. The data analysis findings show that there are 22 violation of maxim of quality, 2 violation of maxim of quantity, 9 violation of maxim of relation, and 8 violation of maxim of manner. The reason of the violations are to give the lack of evidence, to lying to other speaker in hiding the truth, to save face the embarrassment, to present the strongest information, to represent what is in the speaker's mind, or to trick audience or listener for making a joke or not.

**Keyword** : *cooperative principle, violation of maxim, movie.*

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## INTRODUCTION

In conversation it is sometimes found that the conversation uttered are not complete and clearly, thus it is difficult for listener to get the meaning of our utterances in order to get an effective communication, the speaker should give the complete and clear sentence to the listener(s). So, that the listener(s) can get the meaning of our utterances and understand the exact information that the speaker intends to say. The cooperative principle is the principles of communication to control the speaker and the listeners are add to conduct a good conversation when they perform a talk exchange. Grice (1975), argues, “make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged”, (Yule, 2000, page 37). According to the philosopher H.P. Grice there are four conversational maxims; maxim of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of relation, and maxim of manner. In the daily life, the speaker usually break the rule of cooperative principle, with no exception in a conversation in movie. The speakers or the main characters consciously or unconsciously may violate the rule to reach a certain goal such as try to hide the truth of any information, give incorrect information or just entertain.

The research questions was formulated as follows; what types of maxims are violated in *The Hangover* movie’s script?, which maxim is dominantly violated in the movie’s script? And in what context does the violation occur?

### Cooperative Principles

The message in a communication will be successfully delivered by a speaker to the hearer if they can build a cooperation one and another. So communication needs the effectiveness and efficiency of delivering contribution of information that is easier for the speaker and the hearer. The speaker often means more than what he/she literally say and it is not easy to comprehend by the hearer. That is way Grice (1975) proposed the theory and offered to use theory of Cooperative Principle to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation between the speaker and the hearer. In order to make a conversation go on successfully and smoothly, the speakers both and hearer should hold a cooperative attitude. As Grice (1975:45) stated that make your conversational contribution such as is requires, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose

or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. Based on that explanation about cooperative principles, it means that when people speak they need to cooperate with ideas and the message, so there will be no miss communication between the speaker and the hearer. For example the conversation among the main characters in a movie. In this case the main characters can accept th utterances produced by the supporting characters. It means that there cooperative principles occur, and it is responded by seriousness, laugh, angry, worry and curios expression.

### **Maxim and Its Types**

#### *Maxim*

Maxim as a part of cooperative principle is a field of Pragmatics. Maxim is the concept which goes towards making a speaker's contribution to the conversation. The concept of maxim is based on the philosopher's Grice's (1975) pragmatic account of communication. As Levinson (1983:101) asserts that Grice identifies as guidelines of this sort four basic maxim of conversation or general principle underlying the efficient co-operative use of language.

#### *Types of Maxim*

Maxim of conversation is general principle underlying the efficient co-operative use of language which jointly expresses a general cooperative principle. According to Grice (1975) quoted from Yule (1996:37), there are four maxims of cooperative principles:

##### 1. Maxim of Quantity

Maxim of quantity is a maxim which leads to make the contribution in conversation as informative as required. It is subdivided into two sub maxims, which Grice (1975) expresses as follows: "Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange) and do not make your contribution more informative than is required."

##### 2. Maxim of Quality

This maxim focused on the quality of information that is given by the speaker. The speaker should try to make the contribution be true. Grice suggested two sub maxims: "Do not say what you believe to be false and do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence (Yule, 1996: 37).

### 3. Maxim of Relation

Speakers' contribution should relate clearly to the purpose of the exchange, it should be relevant. The maxim of relation requires being relevant to the context and situation in which the utterance occurs (Thomas, 1995:70)

### 4. Maxim of Manner

This maxim states that in order to achieve efficient communication, we should be "perspicuous" and specifically (1) avoid obscurity, (2) avoid ambiguity, (3) be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity), and (4) be orderly.

According to this maxim, speakers and hearers have to be obvious in giving contribution in a communication exchange. They also have to complete their performance with reasonable dispatch.

## **Violation of Maxim**

People are not always truthful and cooperative in a conversation. Each conversation may contain the purpose of the speakers. These purposes can be good or bad both for the speakers and the hearers. According to Peccei (1999:27), violations are 'quiet' in the sense that it is obvious at the time of the utterance that the speaker has deliberately lied, supplied insufficient information, or been ambiguous, irrelevant or hard to understand. (AnnekeH, et al, 2008:63). Cook (1989:31-32) stated that there are five purposes that can be achieved by violated maxims, namely: to show respect to the hearer, to create hyperbole and irony, to change a topic, to keep secret and to create humor.

## **Movie**

Movie, also known as film, are a type of visual communication which use moving pictures and sound to tell stories or inform (help people to learn). People in every part of the world watch movies as a type of entertainment, a way to have fun. Fun for some people can mean laughing, while for others it can mean crying, or feeling afraid. Most movies are made so that they can be shown on big screens at cinemas or movie theatres. A movie also defined as a motion picture that simply a series of still pictures shown quickly so they simulate motion. But a movie can be so much more than that. It can tell a story, inform people of news, or educate. A movie can shock, provoke, and stimulate the imagination (<http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Movie>).

### **Why *The Hangover* Movie?**

This movie has gained a critical and commercial success, it became the tenth-highest-grossing film of 2009, with a worldwide gross of over \$467 million. Co-produced and directed by Todd Phillips and written by Jon Lucas and Scott Moore, the film won the Golden Globe Award for Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy, and received multiple other accolades. *The Hangover* stars Bradley Cooper, Ed Helms, Zach Galifianakis, Heather Graham, Justin Bartha, and Jeffrey Tambor. This movie has a good story that combined into a comedy movie. This movie also has a moral lesson for not telling a lie to other people. Because it will not make a condition be better, but make the condition become worst. And this movie teach us to keep the friendship till the end.

### **Methodology**

This study was a descriptive qualitative in which the data were the dialogue of main characters in *The Hangover* movie's script. There are four main characters in this movie, they are Phil Wenneck, Alan Garner, Stu Price, and Doug Billings.

The data were collected by identifying the conversations that contained violation of maxims based on theory that is suggested by Grice (1975), classifying the violation of maxims into each type of maxims, counting and percentaging the violation of maxims, finding the most dominant type that are violated by the main characters, finally finding the reason why the most dominant of maxim is violated by the main characters.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

The analysis showed that violation of maxim in cooperative principle can be occurred in comedy movie as *The Hangover*. All of the main characters in *The Hangover* movie violated all the types of maxims.

**Table 1. The Percentage overview of violated maxim in *The Hangover* Movie's Script**

No.	Violation of maxim of	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Quantity	2	4,9%
2.	Quality	22	53,7%
3.	Relation	9	21,9%
4.	Manner	8	19,5%
<b>Total</b>		<b>41</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1.shows that the main characters in *The Hangover* movie violated all the types of maxims. They dominantly violated maxim of quality (22 utterances, 53,7%), because the main characters gave untrue information and hiding the truth to the other's question and save the face embarrassment. Then it is followed by violation of maxim of relation (9 utterances, 21,9%), manner (8 utterances, 19,5%) and quantity (2 utterances, 4,9%).

The main characters have done those dominant violated maxim because they tend to lie by giving untrue information and hiding the truth. Violating maxim of quality has function to hiding the truth and save the face embarrassment.They gave the untrue information to make other characters believe in them and didn't angry with them. They hiding the truth about the real condition that happened to them in Las Vegas. It indicates that people often lying to other people to safe their face embarrassment by hiding the truth. It also functioned to keep secret in which the information is hidden by the speakers.

*Violation of Maxim of Quality in The Hangover Movie's Script*

The main characters in this movie might violate maxim of quality because they tell the untrue information and hiding the truth. It happened because the main characters may want to save their face embarrassed and make other people didn't angry with them. The first example the main character gave the untrue information to the listener. The data was taken from the 00:07:49 minutes of movie.

### Example 1

**MELISSA:** I hope you're not gonna go to some strip club when you're up there.

**STU:** **Melissa, we're going to Napa Valley. I don't even think they have strip clubs in wine country.**

Stu has violated the maxim of quality in this conversation. He gave untrue information to Melissa about his trip. When Melissa worried about Stu, Stu tried to avoid that and hide the truth information by saying “**Melissa, we're going to Napa Valley. I don't even think they have strip clubs in wine country**”. This utterance contained untrue information and it violated the maxim of quality. He said that he was going to Napa Valley, infact he was going to Vegas. He said like that because he was trying to make Melissa believe in him, he didn't want to make Melissa suspicious with him and get angry. He knows that Melissa is a jealous person, so he lied to her.

The next example was taken from the same movie. In the following example, the speakers were lying or giving untrue information.

### Example 2

**MELISSA :** Is that a baby?

**STU:** **Why would there be a baby?**

**We're at a winery. That's a goat.**

In this utterance, Stu has lied to Melissa about the baby. He answered Melissa's question by saying “**Why would there be a baby? We're at a winery. That's a goat.**” Infact, he was in the car and that sound is a baby's crying. This fact proved that Stu hide the truth about the baby to Melissa.

### *Violation of Maxim of Quantity in The Hangover Movie's Script*

The main characters may violate maxim of quantity because they say too much or too less information than the listeners need. Theexample of violation of quantity is available in the following utterance which was taken the 00:31:54 minutes of the movie.

### Example 3

**PHIL:** Can't you see the fun part in anything?

**STU:Yeah, we're stuck in trafficin a stolen police car.....with a missing childin the back seat.Which part of this is fun?**

In this example, Stu has violated the maxim of quantity because he talked too much than needed. Phil only asked did Stu see the fun part in their situation. Stu has answered the information by gave too much information than Phil need, but he didn't gave exactly information that Phil need. He didn't gave information about did he see the fun part of their situation or not. When Stu said that **“Yeah, we're stuck in traffic in a stolen police car.....with a missing child in the back seat. Which part of this is fun?”**, it showed that he add the extra information in his utterances and didn't get to the point. And it makes Phil confuse about Stu's answer.

*Violation of Maxim of Relation in The Hangover Movie's Script*

The main characters may not give the appropriate information to the topic of conversation or change the topic in doing the violation of relation in this movie because they may hide and avoid talking about something. This data illustrated as the example of violation of maxim of relation, the main character gave unrelated statement to respond the listener's statement.

Example 4

**STU:** Oh, my God. Oh, my God.

You just nailed the baby.

**ALAN:** **Are my glasses okay?**

Alan has violated the maxim of relation by saying the irrelevant comment. In this situation, Stu said that Alan just nailed the baby but Alan gave another comment. He did not respond about the baby but he respond about his glasses which used by the baby and saying **“Are my glasses okay?”**. He may be avoided responding Stu's statement because he did not care of the baby and prefer took his attention of his glasses. Beside, this violation may give the humor side among the conversation.

*Violation of Maxim of Manner in The Hangover Movie's Script*

The main characters give obscurity expression which is not easy to understand, prolixity, not in orderly or unclear information in doing the violation of maxim of manner in this movie. This may happen because the main character tried to trick the listener(s), to keep secret, or to create humor. This data illustrated as the example of



violation of maxim of manner with gave obscurity answer, taken from 00:46:47 minutes of the movie.

Example 5

**PHIL:** Sir...if I may, um..

I'm assuming that that squad car belongs to one of you.

**POLICE OFFICER :** Yeah.

**PHIL : Look, I'm not a cop.I'm no hero. I'm a schoolteacher.But if one of my kids went missingon a field trip...that would look really bad on me.**

**POLICE OFFICER:** What are you getting at?

In this conversation, Phil has violated the maxim of manner because he did not give clear statement. He gave a prolixity statement that made the police officer hard to understand his utterance. He said **“Look, I'm not a cop.I'm no hero. I'm a schoolteacher.But if one of my kids went missingon a field trip...that would look really bad on me”** it seemed that he tried to trick the police officer through his utterance to make the police officer gave the remission of their punishment because of stole the police car. But the police officer did not get the meaning and confuse with Phil's utterance. So, Phil has to explain it clearly.

### **Discussion**

The data of this study were obtained from the conversation of the main characters in *The Hangover* movie. This study found that there were 41 utterances containing the violation of maxim. The main characters in this movie violated all types of maxims, they are: violation of maxim of quality, violation of maxim of quantity, violation of maxim of relation, and violation of maxim of manner.

## CONCLUSSION AND SUGGESTION

### Conclusion

After analyzing the data, it can be concluded as follows: Firstly, there are four types of maxims which are violated by the main characters in *The Hangover* movie's script i.e. maxims of quality, quantity, relation, and manner in responding the question given by other characters. It is caused by some factors such as the using of hyperbole words, the utterances which have lack evidences, more or less information are given than required, make unrelated respond with the topic and an obscurity expression are often expressed. Secondly, the maxim which is dominantly violated in *The Hangover* movie's script is maxim of quality (22 utterances, 53,7%) because all of the main characters give untrue information to hide the truth about the real information, then it followed by maxim of relation (9 utterances, 21,9%), manner (8 utterances, 19,5%) and quantity (2 utterances, 4,9%). And thirdly, the context of the violation of maxim occur is when the main character give the untrue information to hide the truth in their answer or comment.

### Suggestion

It is beneficial for the student of English Departmen to choose the violation of maxims as the object of research, because there are many interesting aspects which can be analyzed especially in the drama comedy movie. Some people do not know how important and crucial to learn violation of cooperative principle to achive the successful and ideal communication.

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## **Declaration**

Except where appropriately acknowledged, this thesis is my own work, has been expressed in my own words and has not previously been submitted for assessment.

I understand that this thesis may be screened electronically or otherwise for plagiarism.

## **Author Biography**

Nanda's research used categorize and descriptive qualitative technique. She hold a S.S from State University of Medan. This Journal is partial fulfillment of the requirement for degree of Sarjana Sastra