

VIOLATION OF CONVERSATIONAL MAXIMS IN THE AVENGERS MOVIE

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ABSTRACT

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The study deals with the types of maxims violation in *The Avengers* movie's script. The objectives of the study were to discover the types of maxims violation, the most dominant maxim violation, and to explain the implication of the most dominant maxim violation in *The Avengers* movie. The source of the data was the conversations in *The Avengers* movie. The data was the script of *The Avengers* movie. There were 55 maxim violations in this research. The descriptive qualitative design was used to analyze the data. Descriptive qualitative research is a research method which describes the condition, events or situations. This study was conducted by using descriptive qualitative method because the intention of this study was to describe how the maxims are violated. The results showed that all types of maxim were violated; 39 utterances (70.90%) maxim violation of relation, 8 utterances (14.54%) maxim violation of quality, 5 utterances (9.09 %) maxim violation of quantity, 3 utterances (5.45%) maxim violation of manner. The most dominant type of maxim violation was the maxim violation of relation. The implication of maxim violation of relation as the dominant type of maxims in the script of *The Avengers* movie was a strategy from the speakers to hide something, to hide the truth, and to create humor by giving irrelevant answer or changing the topic.

Keywords: *pragmatics, cooperative principle, maxims violation, movie.*

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INTRODUCTION

People express their intentions to others by communication. In communication, conversation is the most common. Conversation is the most basic form of the activities did by humans in communicating information between two or more persons involved. In phenomenon of pragmatics, it always works.

Successful conversation depends upon the various speakers' approach to interaction. The way to make successful conversations is called the cooperative principle which is stated by Grice (1975). Philosopher Grice (1975) proposes four conversational maxims that involve in the pragmatics of natural language. The maxims are based on his cooperative principle, which states, 'Make your conversational contribution such as it is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged'. The principle describes how effective communication in conversation is achieved in common social situations and is further broken down into the four maxims, namely Maxim of Quality, Quantity, Relevance and Manner (Grice in Yule 1996:37).

The reason why the writer chooses conversational maxims was because the writer also finds the same situations in a movie titled *The Avengers* (2012) with the explanation above. This movie caught the writer intention while some of their conversations on the movie showed conversations that needed a context understanding to get the meaning of the conversations. The pragmatics concept is cooperative principle proposed by Paul Grice (1975). This movie has many interesting conversations to analyze in the scope of pragmatics study especially in conversational maxims.

The previous researcher related to the Conversational Maxim Violation has been done by Suci Retno Utami (2014). In her research, she analyzed maxim violation in a movie titled "Violated Maxim in Oz: The Great and Powerful Movie". This research discovered the kinds of maxims and the dominant maxim and explained the implication of the dominant maxim. She has found four types maxim violated by Oscar Diggs in "Oz: The Great and Powerful Movie" movie.

They are Maxim of quantity, Maxim of quality, Maxim of relation and Maxim of manner. Maxim of Quantity is violated dominantly.

Therefore, based on the explanation, reason and previous researches that support this study, the writer decided to analyze one of box office movie, an action superhero movie in 2012 *The Avengers*. There are three questions that should be answered in this study, namely: What maxims are violated in the conversations of *The Avengers* movie?, What maxims are dominantly violated in the conversations of *The Avengers* movie?, What is the implication of the dominant maxim which is violated in the conversations of *The Avengers* movie?. The explanation above makes the writer curious to discover whether the phenomena of conversational maxims occur in *The Avengers* movie.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Definition of Pragmatics

Many experts of pragmatics define the term pragmatics differently. Yule (1993:3) classifies the meaning of pragmatics into four kinds as follows: (1) pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning, (2) pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning, (3) pragmatics is the study of more get communicated than is said, (4) pragmatics is the study of the expression of relative distance. Pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader) (Yule, 1996:3).

Conversational Maxims

The Cooperative Principles is four basic maxims of conversation that specify what the participants have to do in order to converse in maximally efficient, rational, cooperative way where they should speak sincerely, relevantly, orderly, informatively, and clearly, while providing sufficient information (Levinson 1983:102). Maxim is a principle that must be adhered to by the participants of interaction. The rule must be obeyed by the speaker in order to make the conversation fluently and clearly.

Maxim Violation

Maxim violation can be defined as a way to disobey maxim. The term ‘violation’ is used when the maxim are disobeyed unconsciously or unavoidably.

For example, when people are telling lies for they are being interrogated for information they hide, they violate the maxim deliberately with an intention that their listeners still believe in what they said because they are trying to deceive or mislead the others to keep true information. There are some reasons why people violate the maxim, such as to keep a secret, to show respect, to change a topic that is being discussed, and to create humor (Cook 1989:31).

Types of Maxim and Its Violation

a. Maxim of Quantity

It related to the participant's contribution that is informative as the questioners ask about and do not make the contribution more informative than is required. Grundy (2000: 74) stated that maxim of quantity as one of the cooperative principles is concerned in giving the information as it is required and is not giving the information more than it is required. The speakers just say the information needed, it should not be less informative or more informative.

The following are the examples of obeying and disobeying the principles.

The example of obeying maxim of quantity:

*A: How did Harry fare in court the other day?
B: Oh he got a fine.
(Levinson 1983:106)*

If it later be known that Harry got a live sentence too, then 'B' would certainly be guilty of misleading 'A', for he had failed to provide the example, 'B' gives enough information that 'A' needs.

The example of disobeying maxim of quantity:

*A: Where is your sister?
B: She is either in the house or at the market.*

B's answer violated the maxim of quantity because 'B' became too informative and showed that she didn't surely know where she is. She only said that her sister was in on of the place.

b. Maxim of Quality

It related to the participant's contribution that should be based on evidences and truthful. In a conversation, each participant must say the truth, he

will not say what he believes to be false, and will not say something that he has no adequate evidence.

The following are the examples of obeying and disobeying the principles.

The example of obeying maxim of quality (Leech, 1983:91):

Susan : Does his wife know it?

Steven : Of course she does. The woman he is meeting is his wife.

In this case, Steven violates the maxim of quality in using relatively uninformative expression (a woman) in preference to a much more informative one (his wife) without breaking the maxim of quality.

The example of disobeying maxim of quality:

A: I heard from someone that Frank is fired from his job, right?

B: They said that's because he always come late.

‘A’ and ‘B’ violated the maxim of quality. ‘A’ used words “I heard from someone” and ‘B’ used “they said”. These words show uncertainty of giving the truth or based on evidence information. The information is just gossip.

c. Maxim of Relation

It related to the participant’s contribution should be relevant to the object of the conversation. Cutting (2002:35) state that speakers are expected to give information about something that is relevant to what has been said before. Maxim of relation is used when the participants just convey the relevant information (stay on topic).

The example of obeying maxim of relation (Leech 1983:94):

A: Where is my box of chocolates?

B: it is in your room.

B’s remark is relevant to A’s question since ‘B’ knows the answer and his answer relates to the question, not talking about something else.

The example of disobeying maxim of relation:

A: Could you help me to show where Sudirman Street is?

B: Sudirman Street? You know, Sudirman is a patriot name. Every city in Indonesia used this name as their street’s name and I don’t know why.

'A' is asked to describe the direction to Sudirman street, but 'B' does not answer the question. B's answer is not relevant. 'B' just told about his opinion about why the patriot Sudirman became the name of street in every city in Indonesia. In this way, 'B' violated the maxim of relation.

d. Maxim of Manner

Maxim of manner means that the participants have to be perspicuous and also they have to avoid obscurity of expression and avoid ambiguity. The utterances of the participant produces are brief and orderly. This maxim is related to the form of speech we use. Speaker should not use the words they know but the listeners do not understand or say things. They speaker also should not state something in a long drawn out way if they could say it in a simple manner.

The example of obeying maxim of manner (Levinson 1983: 108):

Friend : where was Alfred yesterday?

Mother : Alfred went to the store and bought some whisky.

The mother answer obeys the manner maxim 'be orderly' since she gives a clear explanation where Alfred was.

The example of disobeying maxim of manner:

A: Do you know how to use this thing?

B: Yes, you just use it like this.

B's answer does not respond clearly to A's question. 'A' just said 'like this'. This statement is obscure and unclear. In this way, 'B' violated the maxim of manner.

METHODOLOGY

The design of this research was descriptive research by using qualitative approach. Descriptive qualitative research is a research method which describes the condition, events or situations. This study was conducted by using descriptive qualitative method, because the intention of this study was to describe how the maxims are violated. The data of this study were in form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences which contain maxim violation in the script of *The Avengers (2012)* movie.

RESULT

The Data

The data were collected from *The Avengers* script movie and limited in the utterances which are done by the superheroes; they are Iron Man (Tony Stark), Thor, Captain America (Steve), Hulk (Banner), Hawkeye (Barton) and Black Widow (Natasha Romanoff), and the enemy; namely Loki.

Research Finding

The Percentage Overview of Maxim Violations in *The Avengers* Movie

No.	Types of Maxims Violation	Frequency	$X = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$
1.	Relation	39	70.90 %
2.	Quality	8	14.54 %
3.	Quantity	5	9.09 %
4.	Manner	3	5.45 %
Total (N)		55	100 %

The table above shows that there were 55 utterances of maxim violations which used in *The Avengers* movie. There were 39 utterances (70.90%) maxim violation of relation. It was the most dominant maxim which violated in the movie and became the highest number or percentage. The speakers violated this maxim by changing the topic or giving irrelevant answers.

Then, the maxim violation which followed the number of relation which is shown in the table 4.1 above was the maxim of quality. There were 8 utterances (14.54%) maxim violation of quality. Maxim of quality related to the participant's contribution that should be based on evidences and truthful. The speakers violated the maxim of quality by saying something which is untrue or lack adequate evidence.

Meanwhile in third position was maxim of quantity. There were 5 utterances (9.09 %) maxim violation of quantity. Maxim of quantity makes the speakers always provide the suitable amount of information. Intentionally, the speakers violated the maxim of quantity by saying more or less information than being required, or giving extra information before they go to the point.

Then, the least number of using maxim violation was maxim of manner. There were 3 utterances (5.45%) maxim violation of manner. The speakers violated the maxim by giving obscurity expression which is not easy to understand, not in orderly or unclear information in doing the maxim of manner in this movie.

Here were some examples of conversations which violated each maxim.

a. Maxim Violation of Relation

The speaker violated the maxim of relation by giving the irrelevant information with the topic talked about.

Setting: Somewhere out in the European mountains, Thor throws Loki into the side of the mountain. He raises the mighty hammer, Mjölnir. He looks down at his brother, who he thought to be dead and is angry to see him alive in this fashion.

Thor: Where is the Tesseract?

Loki: (laughs) I missed you too.

From the dialogue above it can be seen Loki did not give a relevant response to Thor question about where the Tesseract was. He instead of laughing and saying “I miss you too”. It means that Loki did not want to show Thor the Teserract. He violated the maxim of relation by changing the topic and giving the irrelevant response or answer to Thor. Loki’s missing in not apparently relevant to the discussion about where the Teserract is.

b. Maxim Violation of Quality

The speaker violated the maxim of quality by giving information that lack adequate evidence.

Setting : Tony was at the empty cell container in the fly ship called Helicarrier. He stood not saying a word. Then, Captain America walked in.

Captain America:

Was he (referring to Agent Coulson) married?

Iron Man :

No, There was a cellist, I think.

Iron Man’s utterance has violated the maxim of quality in this conversation. He gave an answer that actually lack adequate evidence. It was proved by the words “I think”. It means that Iron Man did not really know

whether he (Coulson) was married. Iron Man also did not really know whether there was a cellist or not. Therefore, Iron Man statement can not be proved about the truth.

c. Maxim Violation of Quantity

The speaker violated the maxim of quantity by giving less information than it was needed.

Setting : Iron Man, Captain America, and Loki were on the jet plane. Thunder and lightning nearly hit the jet, making it shake violently. Thunder rumbles overhead. Loki stares out the window intently.

Steve (Captain America):

What's the matter? Scared of a little lightning?

Loki :

I'm not overly fond of what follows.

From the conversation above, it can be seen that Loki's utterance has violated the maxim of quantity because he talked by giving less information than needed. Steve asked him whether he scared of a little lightning but he did not give the required answer. His answer was too little and it did not answer Steve question. Loki just said that he was actually not overly fond of what follows. In other word he scared of what happened after the lightning. So, Loki's information was not enough to answered Steve question.

d. Maxim Violation of Manner

The speaker violated the maxim by giving unperspicuous words.

Setting : Iron Man and Captain America were in a fly ship called Helicarrier. They were trying to fix the rotor of the plane caused by the bomb hit by the enemy. They were in discussion of how to fixed the rotor of the Helicarrier.

Tony Stark (Iron Man):

Then stay in the control unit and reverse polarity long enough to disengage mag...

Captain America:

Speak english!

Tony Stark (Iron Man):

See that red lever? It'll slow the rotors down long enough for me to get out. Stand by it, wait for my word.

Tony Stark's utterance made the Captain hard to understand what Tony meant to do. Iron Man talked too technically and it caused ambiguity words for Captain America. It caused that Captain America said "speak English" because he did not understand what the meaning of Tony's words. Tony Stark then explained his utterance again in easy words so that Captain could understand what Tony asked him to do. Tony's utterance has violated the maxim of manner by giving unperspicuous words.

CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing the data based on the theories, it is concluded that there were four types maxims violation in *The Avengers (2012)* movie. There were 39 utterances (70.90%) maxim violation of relation, 8 utterances (14.54%) maxim violation of quality, 5 utterances (9.09 %) maxim violation of quantity, 3 utterances (5.45%) maxim violation of manner. The result showed that the most dominant type of maxims which was violated in *The Avengers* movie was the maxim violation of relation. The implication of maxim violation of relation as the dominant type of maxims in the script of *The Avengers* movie was a strategy from the speakers to hide something, to hide the truth, and to create humor by giving irrelevant answer or changing the topic.

SUGGESTIONS

Grounded on the results of analysis, this study is intended to suggest the readers to understand the cooperative principle with its maxims, especially the four types of maxim violation in order to avoid misundertaning among the participants and to get the speaker's intention through his utterances on the conversation. Breaking the maxim or violating the maxim can make the wrong perception for the listener. It is suggested to other researchers and the students of English and Literature who are taking pragmatics, start to analyzing and understanding further research in order to master the maxim violation deeply. It is suggested for the readers should have a good knowledge of the use of maxim, and avoid the maxim violation because not every person knows the implication of the maxim violation.

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