

## **Principle of Cooperation in Human Conversation: Insight of Grice's Prominent Theory**

**Risma Sari**

Universitas Lancang Kuning, Pekanbaru

**Suci Chairunnisa**

SMA Seri Rama YLPI, Riau

**Kristina Gultom**

SMAN 3, Pekanbaru

**Ega Saully Sitio**

SMAN 7, Pekanbaru

### **Abstract**

In communication, each party involved, namely between the speaker and the speech partner, will always try to convey his speech effectively and efficiently. Grice mentioned that a reasonable discourse could occur if the speaker and hearer are compliant with the principle of cooperative communication. This study aims to explain what it is called maxims in human conversation. The data in this qualitative study were taken from 5 prominent articles which explain and review the theory. This research uses a descriptive qualitative form to analyze and describe the words or sentences used in defining the theory proposed by Grice. The results of this study, in brief, mentioned the principle of cooperation in conversation consists of four conversational maxims, namely: Maxim of quantity, Maxim of quality, Maxim of Relevance and Maxim of implementation.

### **Keywords**

cooperation, maxim, quantity, quality

---

### **Corresponding author:**

Risma Sari, Universitas Lancang Kuning, Pekanbaru, Riau 28884, Indonesia

Phone: +6282284498164

Email: rismasari462@gmail.com

## **INTRODUCTION**

The principle of cooperation is one of the principles of conversation in pragmatic science (Bublitz & Norrick, 2011). This principle emphasizes the existence of a cooperative effort that exists between the speaker and the speech partner in a conversation. The collaboration in question is related to the utterances spoken. Therefore, speakers always try to make the speech relevant to the context, clear and easy to understand, compact and concise, and always on the issue.

This is summarized in the maxims contained in the principle of cooperation. The rules in a conversation are known as maxims. Grice in Wijana (1996) said that in order to carry out the principle of cooperation, every speaker must obey four conversational maxim (maxim of quantity), maxim of quality, and maxim of quality, maxim relevance (maxim of relevance) and maxim of implementation (maxim of manner). In each maxim of the conversation, there are rules that are expected to be obeyed by every participant. Maximum quantity expects each participant to contribute as much as needed by the speech partner. Quality maxims expect each participant to contribute according to facts and not make it up. The maxim of relevance expects each participant to contribute in relation to the context of the conversation. The maxim is the way to expect each participant to contribute directly, clearly and unambiguously.

Based on their research, Bardovi-Harlig, Mossman, and Vellenga (2014) found that, in a conversation, the principle of cooperation is expected to be obeyed by each participant. However, non-compliance with the principle of cooperation can also occur. One form of non-compliance is a violation of the principle of cooperation. This violation occurs because of the certain implications that the speaker is trying to achieve.

In a case study conducted by Haryanto, Weda, and Nashruddin (2018) it was indicated that, the implication in question is related to the implication of indirect meaning / implied meaning, which in pragmatics is known as the conversational implicature part of the speech. The implied proposition is called implicature. Implicative or implied meaning expects each participant to understand what is said by the speech partner. Thus, good cooperation between participants is needed so that the conversation between the two runs smoothly.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. The descriptive method in this study collected data in the form of words or sentences (Moleong, 2008). Boopathiraj and Chellamani (2013) argued that descriptive research means decomposing in the form of words or images, not in the form of numbers. The selected data is analyzed and described using words or sentences.

The author used this approach to describe and elaborate the findings which come from the data in several literature studies and other references related to Grice's theory (Limberg, 2015). The use of the descriptive method in this study is in accordance with the object and purpose of this study, namely to explain the 4 principles of maxim cooperation. Explanation conducted in accordance with the basis of understanding.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

In proper communication, it seems that it can be assumed that a speaker articulates the utterance with the intention of communicating something to the speaker, and hopes that the speaker can understand what he is trying to communicate. For this reason, the speaker always tries to make the speech always relevant to the context, clear, easy to understand, concise and concise, and always to the problem (straight forward), so as not to spend the time of the interlocutor.

If there is a deviation in a conversation, there are certain implications that the speaker wants to achieve. If the implication is not there, then the speaker concerned does not carry out cooperation or is not cooperative. So, in a nutshell, it can be assumed that there is a kind of cooperative principle that must be carried out by the speaker and the interlocutor so that the communication process runs smoothly.

Grice believes that in order to carry out the principles of cooperation, every speaker must obey the four conversational maxims, namely the maxim of quantity, the maxim of quality, the maxim of relevance, and maxim of manner.

### **The Maxim of Quantity**

In the quantity maxim, a speaker is expected to be able to provide sufficient, relatively adequate, and as informative information as possible. Such information must not exceed the information actually needed by the speech partner. Speeches containing information that is really needed by the speech partner can be said to violate the quantity maxim in the Grice Cooperation Principle. And vice versa, if the speech contains excessive information it can be said to violate the quantity maxim. Consider the following sample conversation,

Suitable examples:

A: Have you done your assignment?

B: Yes, I have.

Examples that are not applied:

X: Have you done the assignment?

Y: Not yet. Yesterday I was vacationing at grandma's house in Yogya. When I went home, it was late, so I did not have time to do the work.

Conversation (1) in the example above is a clear speech and very informative contents. It can be said so because without having to add another information, the speech can be understood its meaning well and clearly by the speech partner.

Adding information as shown in conversation (2) will actually cause speech to be excessive and too long. In accordance with the outlines of this maxim, speech as in conversation (2) above does not support or even violate the Grice Cooperation Principle.

Such statements in many cases, sometimes cannot be justified. In Indonesian society and culture, especially in Javanese culture, there is an indication that the longer a speech is, the more polite it is. Conversely, the shorter a speech, the less polite it will be (Miller, Wu, & Ott, 2012).

Thus, it can be said that to show the intention of politeness in Indonesian, in certain cases the speaker must violate and not adhere to the Grice Cooperation Principle. Speech (A), (B), and (C) following respectively show differences in the level of politeness of speech as a result of differences in length and length of the speech. Consider the example below:

A: "Take the newspaper to another place!"

B: "Please take the newspaper to another place!"

C: "Please take the newspaper somewhere else first!"

Information:

Speeches A, B, and C, spoken by a Director to his secretary in the room who happened to be scattered with used newspapers on it.

### **The Maxim of Quality**

With a maxim of quality, a speech participant is expected to be able to convey something real and in accordance with the actual facts in speaking. That fact must be supported and based on clear evidence.

Examples:

A: You know, where do you go to college?

B: At UGM.

Examples that are not applied:

A: You know, where do you go to college?

B: He does not study at STKIP like us, but at UGM.

In actual communication, speakers and speech partners are very common to use speech with an unintended purpose and are not accompanied by clear evidence. Speaking too directly and without further ado accompanied by clear and factual evidence will actually make the speech rude and disrespectful. In other words, to speak politely maxims this quality is often not obeyed and not fulfilled. The following speech (X), (Y), and (Z) differ successively in their politeness rank and can be considered to clarify the above statement. Note the following example:

X: "Sir, ask for the money for tomorrow!"

Y: "Father, how about the book tomorrow?"

Z: "Sir, tomorrow I will be at Gramedia, right?"

Information:

Speeches X, Y, and Z, spoken by a child who is asking for money from his father. The utterances are spoken in the context of different speech situations.

### **The Maxim of Relevance**

Try to make your words relevant. In the maxim of relevance, it is stated that in order to establish good cooperation between the speaker and the speech partner, each should be able to make a relevant contribution (in accordance) about the thing being spoken of. Speaking by not making such contributions is considered not to comply with and violate the principle of cooperation.

Examples:

A: Where is my candy box?

B: In your study room.

Examples that are not applied:

A: Where is my candy box?

B: I have to go to college soon

The snippet of conversation in (1) above can be said to obey and keep the maxim of relevance. It is said so because when examined in more depth, the speech delivered by the character (B) namely "In your study room" is a response to the conversation delivered by the character (A) previously spoken, namely "Where is my candy box" With other words, the speech adhere to the maxim of relevance in the Grice Cooperation Principle. In contrast, conversation (2) is an irrelevant conversation or speech and does not comply with the maxim of relevance because it does not correspond to what is intended.

For certain purposes, for example, to show the politeness of speech, the provisions in the maxim are often not met by the speaker. In this regard, speech (3) between a director and his secretary in the following example can be considered.

Director: "Bring here all the files I will sign first!"

Secretary: "Sorry ma'am, what a pity that old lady."

Information:

A Director tells his secretary when they work together in a Director's office. At that time, there was an old grandmother who had waited a long time.

In the excerpt of the conversation above, it appears clearly that the secretary's remarks, namely "sorry ma'am, sorry for that old lady" have no relevance to what the Director ordered, namely "Bring here all the files I will sign!" speech (3) above can be used as evidence that the maxim of relevance in the principle of cooperation is not always fulfilled and obeyed in the actual statement. This can be done, in particular, if the speech is intended to express certain purposes that are specific in nature.

### **The Maxim of Manner**

This implementation maxim requires that participants speak directly, clearly and not blurred. People who speak without considering these things can be said to violate the Grice Cooperation Principle because they do not adhere to the implementation maxims.

Examples:

A: Who is your Footballer friend?

B: CRISTIANO RONALDO

Examples that are not applied:

X: "Come on, hurry up and open!"

Y: "Just a minute, it's still cold."

In conversation (1) it can be said to obey and keep the maxim of the implementation of the Grice Cooperation principle because in the conversation both the speaker and the speech partner deliver the speech directly, clearly and not blurred.

Whereas in the Preview Snippet (2) above the implementation maxim has a low level of clarity. Because it has a low level of clarity, the blurring levels naturally

become very high. The speech of the speaker (X) which reads "Come on, hurry up and open it!" Gives no clarity about what the speech partner is really asking for. The words opened in the above speech contain very high levels of force and opaqueness. Therefore, meaning is very vague. It can be said so because the word is possible to be interpreted in various ways. Likewise, the speech delivered by the speech partner (Y), which is "just a minute, still cold" contains quite high levels of force.

Cold words in the speech can bring many possible interpretations of perception because in the speech, it is not clear what exactly is still cold. Such utterances can be said to violate the principle of cooperation because they do not comply with the implementation of the maxim in the Grice Cooperation Principle.

In real-time speaking activities in the Indonesian language community, obscurity, ambiguity, and unsustainability are natural and very common. For example, in Javanese speech and culture, such speech characteristics can almost always be found in everyday conversations in this speech community. Still, non-continuity is one of the stories of someone's politeness in speaking. Speech (3) can be used as an illustration to clarify this point.

Son: "Ma'am, tomorrow, I will go back to the city."

Mother: "I have prepared that in the desk drawer."

Information:

It was said by a village boy who was still a student to his mother when asking for pocket money to live in a boarding house in the city. The speech happened when they both were in the kitchen cooking together.

From the excerpt above, it appears that the speech spoken by the child, which reads "Ma'am, tomorrow I will go back to the city." Relatively vague meaning.

The real intention of the boy's words, instead of primarily wanting to tell the mother that he will soon return to the city, but more than that, namely that he actually wanted to ask if the mother was ready with the amount of money that had been asked before. As stated earlier, in Javanese speech society, language politeness is often found with obscurity, impermanence, ambiguity and the like. People involved in speech are expected to be able to read the ulterior motives of the speech partner. In other words, the speech participant in a speech must be able to read "sasmita" or the hidden intention of the speaker. Thus, it is clear that in actual communication, the maximal implementation of the Grice Cooperation Principle is often not followed or may even have to be violated.

## CONCLUSION

One of the language rules is that a speaker must always try to make his speech appropriate, and easily understandable, so that the hearer can understand the meaning of the speech. In the science of pragmatics are the principles of cooperation in it, one of these principles is the principle of cooperation Grice, in which each speaker must adhere to the four maxims of conversation, ie the maxim of quantity (*maxim of quantity*), the maxim of quality (*maxim of quality*), the maxim of relevance (*maxim of relevance*), and

*maxim of manner*. Before talking about the four Maxim, you should first understand the meaning of the Maxim itself. Maxim is a language principle in lingual interaction; the rules governing his actions, the use of his language, and his interpretations of the actions and speech of the interlocutor.

Maxim of quantity requires every participant in the contribution to contribute as much or as much as is needed by the interlocutor or the speaker provides sufficient, realistic and informative information. Quality maxim requires each conversation participant to say something real and in accordance with the facts. The contribution of conversation participants should be based on sufficient evidence. The maxim of relevance requires that every participant in the speech can make a relevant contribution (as appropriate) about something being spoken. The implementation maxim requires that each participant in the conversation speak directly, not blurred, not taxed, and not overdoing it, and is coherent.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research was partially supported by U-Raise Academy. We thank you for willing to publish our article in your respected journal. Thank you as well to the anonymous reviewer who contributed to the article.

### REFERENCES

- Bardovi-Harlig, K., Mossman, S., & Vellenga, H. E. (2014). The effect of instruction on pragmatic routines in academic discussion. *Language Teaching Research*, 19(3), 324-350. doi: 10.1177/1362168814541739
- Boopathiraj, C., & Chellamani, K. (2013). Analysis of Test Items on Difficulty Level and Discrimination Index in the Test for Research in Education. *International Journal of Social Science & Interdisciplinary Research*, 2(2), 189-193.
- Bublitz, W., & Norrick, N. (2011). *Foundations of Pragmatics*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co.
- Haryanto, H., Weda, S., & Nashruddin, N. (2018). Politeness principle and its implication in EFL classroom in Indonesia. *XLinguage" european Scientific Language Journal"*, 11(4), 90-112.
- Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. Great Britain: Cambridge University Press.
- Limberg, H. (2015). Teaching how to apologize: EFL textbooks and pragmatic input. *Language Teaching Research*, 20(6), 700-718. doi: 10.1177/1362168815590695
- Mangatur. (2014). *Aliran Linguistik*. Pekanbaru: Mandala Publishing.
- McMahon, A. (1994). *Understanding Language Change*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Miller, C. A., Wu, P., & Ott, T. (2012). Politeness in Teams: Implications for Directive Compliance Behavior and Associated Attitudes. *Journal of Cognitive and Decision Making*, 6(2), 214-242.

Moleong, L. (2008). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: Rosda Karya.

Wijana, I. D. P. (1996). *Pragmatic Basics*. Yogyakarta: Andi Publisher.