
The Violation and Flouting of Cooperative Principles in *the Ellen Degeneres* Talk Show

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Abstract

This study is pragmatic studies. It aimed at investigating the violation and flouting of quantity maxims, quality maxims, relevant maxims, manner maxims were used by male and female participants in the Ellen Degeneres Talkshow. The violations of maxims occur when the maxims are deliberately manipulated so that the speaker misleads the interlocutor. While the flouting of maxims occurs when individuals intentionally do not apply the maxims in order to persuade their listeners to derive the hidden meaning behind what is said, that is, the speakers employ implicature. In obtaining the data, the researcher uses the descriptive qualitative to the utterances of sixteen guests stars which is divided into eight male and eight female. The data is taken from six episodes in the newest edition in 2016. The result reveals that the male participants mostly did the flouting than violating. From the overall of violation and flouting they done, quantity maxim is dominantly flouted by male participants. Based on the analysis it signed that male participants mostly uses exaggerated statement to convey their opinion which is too strong and appears worse than the really they are. They gave more explanations in order the audience satisfied and to confirmed the real information toward the negative thinking of audience at the previous time while the female participants dominantly violate the maxim of relevance. The female participants tend to avoid talking about something. They change the topic of conversation and do not give well responses to the partner.

Keywords: *Cooperative Principles, flouting, talk show, violation*

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Introduction

As social creatures, people interact or communicate with one another in the form of conversation. It aims to keep the good social interaction among them. Besides giving or

getting information, the conversation occurs to show the existence of the human in its surroundings. In conducting the good conversation, the participants involved, in this case the locutor and interlocutor should be active in the interaction. If one of them is not

active, it can be predicted that the dialogue cannot run well. So, in order the communication's process between speaker and hearer become smooth and effectively, both of them have to be cooperative. It means that they have to understand mutually what they are talking the conversation.

In linguistic especially in pragmatic field, there is a theory that explains how people can be cooperative in the conversation. It is cooperative principle. This theory is a principle of conversation that was introduced by philosopher H. Paul Grice in 1975. He stated that the *cooperative principle* is the assumption that participants in a conversation normally attempt to be informative, truthful, relevant, and clear. It means that each participant is expected to give contributions in the conversations as required.

Grice in Cutting (2002:34) proposed four conversational maxims cooperative principles. They are maxims of quality, quantity, relevance and manner. Maxim of quantity means that speakers should be as informative as is required, that they should give neither too little information nor too much. Some speakers like to point to the fact that they know how much information the hearer requires or can be bothered with. People who give too little information risk their hearer not to be able to identify what they are talking about because they are not explicit enough. On the other hand, those who give more information than the hearer needs risk boring them. The effect of this maxim is to present that the statement is the strongest, or most informative, that can be made in the situation.

The second maxim is the maxim of quality, which says that speakers are, expected to be sincere, to be saying something that they believe correspond to

reality. They are assumed not to say anything that they believe to be false or anything for which they lack evidence. Some speakers like to draw their hearer's attention to the fact that they are only saying what they believe to be true, and that they lack adequate evidence.

The third maxim is the maxim of relevance, which says that speakers are assumed to be saying something that is relevant to what has been said before. While the fourth maxim is the maxim of manner, which says that speakers should be brief and orderly, and avoids obscurity and ambiguity.

In communicating with others, sometimes people do interaction which is not accordance with the maxims. They do not follow the principles and break the rule of maxims to communicate their ideas for some reasons. In this case, the speakers violate and flout the maxims for achieving some purposes.

The violation of maxim is the condition in which the speakers do not purposefully fulfill or obey the four sub-maxims. Speakers can be said to violate a maxim when they know that the hearer will not know the truth and will only understand the surface meaning of the words. They intentionally generate a misleading implicature (Thomas 1995: 73); maxim violation is unostentatiously, quietly deceiving. The speaker deliberately supplies insufficient information, says something that is insincere, irrelevant or ambiguous, and the hearer wrongly assumes that they are cooperating.

While breaking the rules of cooperative principle or Grice's maxims is called flouting. Usually, we can find some flouting in the form of tautology, metaphor, overstatement, understatement, rhetorical question, and irony. According to Grundy (2000: 78), flouting maxim is a particularly silent way of

getting an addressee to draw inference and hence recover an implicature. Moreover, Cutting (2002:37) states that when the speaker does not seem to hold on the maxims but expect the hearers to get the meaning implied, it is called flouting the maxims. On some occasion speakers flout the cooperative principle and intend their hearer to understand this; that is, they purposely do not observe the maxim, and intend their hearer to be aware of this.

Some studies have been investigated by several researchers that focus on violating and flouting of cooperative principles. Riyanti and Sofwan (2016) conducted a research in her *World Magazine Advertisements* by analysing the speech act and Grice's maxims non observance. Both of researcher found that among the four maxims of quality, quantity, manner, and relevance, the one which is most flouted is the maxim of quality.

Another study was done by Wei & Wenfeng in 2015. They conducted a research in *Conan Television show*. Both of researchers investigated the violation of cooperative principles. Their studies examine the utterances of TV talk shows on the structural level. It means they can not explain why the participants choose to say something ambiguous, irrelevant or even something they believe to be false, why they violate the Cooperative Principles unconsciously or intentionally, and what conversational implications are generated by these violations. Hence, how the participants' utterances purposefully employ these pragmatic strategies to achieve the desired effects may be identified.

However, this current study is different from those other previous studies of violation and flouting of the cooperative principles. The current study identifies the

purposes of violation and flouting made by the speakers in the talk show of *Ellen DeGeneres*. This study interest to (1) explain the way of the male and female participants violate and flout the quantity maxims, (2) explain the way of the male and female participants violate and flout quality maxims, (3) explain the way of the male and female participants violate and flout relevant maxims, (4) explain the way of the male and female participants violate and flout manner maxims, and (5) explain how the application of analysis results towards the English spoken teaching.

Methodology

In this study, the researcher uses descriptive qualitative as research design. It investigates the utterances used by male and female participants in the *Ellen DeGeneres Talkshow*. In obtaining the data, the researcher chooses 6 episodes in the newest edition in 2016. They are 16 guests stars which consist of 8 male and 8 female. The data are about the violation and flouting of cooperative principles which resulted conversational implicature uttered by the participants.

The steps in collecting data are started with downloading the videos from youtube. After getting the video, the researcher transcribes the video into dialogue list. Then, observing every utterance which are violated and flouted by guest stars. After the data had been collected, the researcher analyzed the data through the following steps; (1) identifying the violated and flouted maxim based on the Grice's cooperative principles used by male and female participants. (2) Classifying the violation and flouting maxims based on their maxim. (3) Analyzing deeply the violation and flouting, the function of violation and flouting, and the way to violate

and flout of cooperative principles in the Ellen DeGeneres Talk show. She gave the context of situation and also the dialogue which consist of the participants' utterances in the Ellen DeGeneres talk show to make the reader easy to understand.

Triangulation is the concept of using a multi approach method in collecting data, information or evidence (Wellington, 2015). Although in its nature, triangulation consists of four types, namely, methodological triangulation, data triangulation, investigator triangulation, and theory triangulation but this study only uses one of them. It is investigator triangulation. Investigator triangulation requires more than one person examines the same situation for the reability of the method. Through investigator triangulation, the researcher asks an expert, who is an English Lecturer majoring linguistics in IKIP Gunungsitoli. The collaborator who reanalyzed the data of this research is the lecturer majoring research and development and having taught at the faculty for several years and had many experiences in teaching English. The data analysis is needed both to avoid subjectivity in determining the results of data analysis and to ensure the data results reliability.

Results and Discussions

The violation and flouting of quantity maxims used by participants in the Ellen DegeneresTalkshow

Violation maxims of quantity:

Ellen: What has changed for you in your life? I mean, I can imagine what, but what is the hardest thing to deal with all this fame?

Adele: I think just having to be guarded sometimes, I'm so mouthy. I never really hold back how I feel or when I say it, or who I say it to. And I feel

that sometimes is now when I walk into everyone shuts out to hear what I have to say even if I'm not saying something to them or might be that whispering something about what happened the night before and they're just that, but it's kind a it's a very small price to pay really. I don't really mind. I mean, there was a period when I have my kid where I didn't leave my house for a while and then I asked a fellow musician. He sorts of said, how are you feeling? You're not becoming a recluse are you? I was like no, but maybe. He's like, if you're gonna becomes a recluse, you need a big enough house to be a recluse in. And that was when I was no. [INAUDIBLE] and I'm out, I was fine after that.

In this conversation, Ellen asked Adelle what make her life changed. Perhaps this question is ambiguous so Ellen turned her question by saying " I mean, I can imagine what, but what is the hardest thing to deal with all this fame?". The main question of Ellen is what the hardest thing to deal with all her fame is. And Adelle replied it too long and much. She used overstatement expression by saying "I'm so mouthy. I never really hold back how I feel or when I say it,...". Moreover, she violated maxim of quantity because she gave more informations than was required. Actually, it was enough for Adelle to say "it is to be guarded every time". So, the purpose of violating maxim of quantity that was done by Adelle is to

Flouting the maxim of quantity:

Ellen: You'd never gone to Disneyland before?

Adele: I've never been and my father always wanted to take me. He died when I was 10 and he planned to take me when I was about 11 or 12, and he died before he took me. So when I arrived at the castle, I was like full on welled up. I was really emotional and just the whole thing, him believing. And me believing, that they were all real like it was the innocence of it all was what was so magical. It was really, I cried when I met Belle, because I was talking to my kid and then she started talking and I was like my God. She sounded just like the character from the film and it freaked me out and I burst into tears. And he met Anna and Elsa, who he loves and stuff like that.

Ellen: That's great.

In this part Adelle flout the maxim of quantity. Ellen and Adelle talked about Adele family's first trip to Disneyland. Ellen wanted to make sure whether Adelle never gone to Disneyland before. Adelle answered that she had never been there by adding much information after that, and this information was more than required. She did circumlocution. She explained that her father wanted to take her before but he died when she was 10.

The violation and flouting of quality maxims used by in the Ellen DegeneresTalkshow

The Violation maxim of quality

Ellen: so here would you like to take that?

Slater: what do you think yeah

Ellen: yeah you want it I level

Slater: no. look at that i mean it's it's the great i live about, you know six blocks away from there right there in the city

I it's it's one of the greatest jobs ever.. I i love her. she's amazing. so yeah Kelly yeah a little break before next season that would be great.

In this dialogue, Slater did not answer the teasing question from Ellen. He even gave re-question to Ellen. Previously, Ellen asked Slater to be her co-host in her show but Slater replied by asking Ellen's opinion. And Ellen said that Slater wanted it. Quickly, Slater responded "No, look at that I mean it's... it's the great I live about, you know six blocks away from there right there in the city I it's it's one of the greatest jobs ever.. I I love her. She's amazing. So yeah Kelly yeah a little breaks before next season that would be great." From his argument, Slater tried to deny that he wanted that job. He violated the maxim of quality. He explained the disorts information.

The flouting maxim of quality

Ellen: Wow. And now you're doing this Vegas residency, which is--when do you start and how long does it go?

Jenifer: Yeah. It starts soon, which is scary to me a little bit, but we've been rehearsing every day since I did the AMAs, I think. We've been just like in there every day, like, creating the show and creating-- it was being created before I got there, while I was doing "Shades of Blue." I was, you know, kind of working on the music and all that. And now we're just rehearsing every single day, and it's on January 20th. January 20th. Are you going to come?

In this dialogue, Jenifer flouted the maxim of quality. When Ellen asked the time she would begin do her Vegas residency,

Jenifer answered that it will start soon. This response did not have adequate evidence. She was not sure when it would be started. She did not tell the time exactly. And also from explanation she distorted her explanation. Ellen only asked her the time, but she explained that she had been rehearsing every day.

The violation and flouting of relevance maxims used participants in the Ellen DegeneresTalkshow

The violation maxim of relevance:

Ellen : so here would you like to take that?

Slater: what do you think yeah

(Appendix 3, utterance 152-153)

In this excerpt, Ellen and Slater still told about Anderson who had taken over Slater position in CNN. By that time Ellen tried to tease Slater by asking “so here would you like to take that?” It meant that Slater came in Ellen show to be Co-host for Ellen. Slater directly replied by giving question “what do you think?” In this dialogue, Slater avoids to answer the question from Ellen. Intentionally, Slater violated the maxim of relevant because he changed the topic of question abruptly.

The flouting maxim of relevance:

Ellen : of all time please welcome the one and only Celine Dion yeah. hahhhaha

Celine: it's impossible to come here and not dance

Ellen : you have to dance when you come here

Celine: that's right

Ellen : you must dance

Celine: Seven years?

Ellen : yeah it's been seven years. I don't know how that is it doesn't seem like that long

In this excerpt, Ellen welcomed Celine. Ellen said that Celine must dance when she came at her show. But, unintentionally Celine responded with another topic by asking a question “Seven years?”. Asking this question made Celine flouted maxim of relevant because she changed the conversation topic abruptly.

The violation and flouting of manner maxims used by participants in the Ellen Degeneres Talkshow

The violation of manner maxim:

Ellen : you and Jessica both have one

Timberlake: what? yes she has to generate once we have... he is amazing oh yeah

Previously, Ellen asked Timberlake his little boy stylist. And this excerpt, Ellen wanted to ensure whether he and Jessica (Timberlake's wife) had one kid. In responding Ellen's utterance, Timberlake was pretended to be startled. He said “what?” As if, he did not know. And then he kept on his statement that she has to generate once they had... in this utterance he stopped. It meant that Timberlake statement was obscurity. He did not give the clear explanation. And his next statement, he said that he was amazing. We don't know who is “he”. In this case, Timberlake violate the maxim of manner because he did not give the brief answer. He gave the convoluted responses. From Timberlake's maxim violation it implied that he just kept the warm conversation. By pretending to forget something, it caused the funny situation, the audience laughed.

The flouting maxim of manner:

Ellen : but what if there was a witch 3 would they be

Justin: I'd probably say mmmm

Ellen : what do you mean?

Justin: yyyya

Ellen : Sorry?

Justin: Sorry a little bit

Ellen : and then?

Justin: and then one mark my words

In the conversation, Justin violate the maxim of manner. His answer was obscurity. When Ellen said what if there was a witch, would they be the theme of his song? Simply Justin answered that he would probably say mmmm. Ellen did not understand, she confirmed what Justin meant. Justin replied yayayya. His voice was not too loud enough.

The application of Analysis Result in Spoken English Teaching.

Speaking is one of the skills in English teaching and learning that is very necessary in expressing someone's idea and opinion. Through speaking, people can communicate and interact with each other. Hornby (1994: 398) said that speaking is expressing ideas or feelings using language. Furthermore, Brown (1994: 116) stated that speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information. Regarding the opinion above it can be summed up that speaking is an activity in communicating someone's thought, ideas, or feeling which is done in an interactive process that presupposes the ability to process information and language.

In applying this research result in teaching speaking, teacher may use some of the utterances which were violated and

flouted by participants as the examples for teaching speaking, especially for the beginner of English Department students. In this case, the teacher can show and explain that in a real conversation or dialogue, speakers and hearers do not have to co-operate each other all the time. By doing violation and flouting, it can help locutor and interlocutor to extend the topic and to avoid the awkwardness. This thing is very important to train the students in using English to speak.

Beside that the teacher can use the excerpt of the talk show conversation as teaching speaking materials. In this case, the teacher can ask the students to read the dialoguetranscript to practice their pronunciation.

Other things, talk show could be implemented as an instructional strategy in teaching skill in the classroom. In this case, the students are those who are interested to know everything meaning that the students and talk show are correlated to each other. Talk show is believed to maximize the potential skill among audience through formal and informal words distributed in the certain program about their daily issues. Talk show has some typical characteristics such as using universal and general casual language that discusses about important trend issues or news. In the program, the audience could attract and collaborate to know everythings, therefore the audience would participate comprehensively without worrying about how and what things are communicated. As a result, talkshow could improve their participation through their own languages.

Additonally, the program could stimulate and motivates everyone to participate. In addition, this research topic has ever been also conducted by Wulandari (2009). Her research showed there is

significant correlation between talkshow and students' achievement. It means that her study proved significant influence of talkshow on the student's achievement. It meant that talkshow could be implemented to every school.

Regarding to the research question, the researcher wanted to explain the way of the male and female participants violated and flouted the fourth of the maxims. Based on the analysis, it found that male and participants violate the maxim of quantity when they conveyed their idea more than required by Ellen (Host of Ellen DeGeneres Talk Show). Sometimes they answered the question not to the point, they did circumlocution and their responds were uninformative. Mostly, they did the violation because they wanted to safe thier face, to keep the hearer's feeling not to be hurted and to satisfying the audience.

Then, the male and female participants violate the maxim of quality when they delivered their opinion, as if they denied the topic even they tended to be lied and some of them distorted the topic. In this case thier violation aimed to make the audience laugh or to cheer the hearer and also they wanted to hide the truth.

For the violation of maxim of relevance, the male and female participants done it when they answered the question from Ellen, they intentionally changed the topic abruptly. Even, they avoided to discuss the question. It purposed to built their selves confidence.

And the last, in violating the maxim of manner, male and female violated the maxim of manner when they gave the obscurity statement. They did not convey the clear and brief answer. Even they gave the confusing response. And from this violation,

they gave the implied meaning that they only kept the warm conversation. By pretending to forget something, it caused the funny situation, the audience laughed.

Another case, in flouting the maxim of quantity, the male and female participants did it when they spoke too much and they did circumlocution unintentionally. They tried to give much information more than required. The maxim of quantity is also flouted when the speaker produces the utterance in the form of overstatement. In this case, the speakers use exaggerated statement to convey their opinion which is too strong and appears worse than the really they are. Therefore, the information becomes more or too informative than is required. Another purpose to flout this maxim was to build their self confidence. They gave more explanation in order the audience satisfied and to comfirm the real information toward the negative thinking of audience at the previous time.

Moreover, the maxim of quality was also flouted when the speaker produces the utterance in the form of rhetorical question. In this case, the speaker signified that it was not a sincere question. It meant that the speaker asked a question without expecting any answer and it tended to break a sincere condition on question, namely that the speaker wanted the hearer to provide him with the indicate information.

Besides, the maxim of relevance also can be flouted when the speaker produced the utterance that was not relevance with the topic of what the speaker told about. However, the maxim of manner was also flouted when the speaker produced the utterance indirectly, ambiguously, and excessively. In this case the speaker intended to inform to the hearer about something but the speaker used indirect statement that implies for something.

Comparing with some studies that have been carried out, some of them aimed to investigate the overall concept that the violation or flouting of cooperative principles can create humor, this study also found that result in generally. For example, Khosravizade and Sadevandi (2011) focused on the fact that the less the social status, the more the flouting or violation of the maxim of quantity would occur by a character. The present study is in line with this study in that they both investigate violation and flouting and they both came to the conclusion that such violations and floutings contribute to humor creation. Though, what was not considered in the present study was the social status of its characters and that is because of the nature of this program, since all are friends and are nearly of the same rank and social position.

The present study emphasized the four maxims which were more or less violated or flouted by all the characters mainly for creating laughter. This is of course done in delicate situations like when characters wanted to show they are idiots or pretending they are ignorant, as well as to create a kind of irony or sarcasm in their speech. This is what Kalliomaki (2005) has confirmed in his study when he concludes that language plays and language misuses are done by characters where they flout the maxims of quality and manner and this consequently gives rise to some language using techniques like repartee, insults, sarcasm, lies and absurdity.

Further, Huda in his research entitled *Conversational Implicature found in dialogue of Euro Trip Movie* concluded that the speaker and listener often flout conversational maxim informal communication. The occurrence of flouting maxim often happens because the speaker and participants do not

prior to the regulations of communication, but they tend to be more prior on how speaker's meaning can be understood by the listener. In this research, the writer concludes that although the flouting of the maxims often occurs in formal communication, but it can express in neither polite nor impolite way.

Conclusion

From sixteen participants' utterances in the *Ellen DeGeneres talk show* that have been investigated, it revealed that the total of violation and flouting of cooperative principles used by male and female are 51. Where the total of violation and flouting were done by male was 27, in which 10 violation and 17 flouting. While the total violation and flouting were done by female was 24, in which 13 violations and 11 flouting.

Based on the analysis, the male mostly did the flouting than violating. From the overall of violation and flouting they done, quantity maxim was dominantly flouted by male participants. It occurs 10 times. This finding signed that male participants mostly use exaggerated statement to convey their opinion which is too strong and appears worse than the really they are. Therefore, the informations become more or too informative than is required. Another purpose to flout this maxim is to build their self confidence. They gave more explanations in order the audience satisfied and to confirm the real information toward the negative thinking of audience at the previous time.

Besides, in female utterances' analysis, it found that they violate the maxim of relevance dominantly. They tend to avoid talking about something. They change the topic of conversation and do not give well responses to the partner. This thing happen because they are in talk show, there are many the audiences. Not only that, their discussion

also will be published in American Television. That is why they have to be careful in giving comments by violating the maxim of relevance.

Suggestion

At the end of this study, the researcher gives some ideas for the next language researchers who are interested in investigating such topic:

1. Based on the findings of this research, the researcher suggests that this study will be the one of additional references in the field of pragmatic and discourse studies. The researcher also suggests the next

researchers to use the Grice's theory to do a research in the same field and to use other relevance theories to investigate different topics in the same area of the research

2. It is expected to the next researchers who interested about gender implicature, to have more concern in participants' psychological factors.
3. The focus of the study can also be investigated to the other ways of non-observance of the maxims such suspending the maxims, opting out the maxims, or infringing the maxims.

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