



The Realization of Maxim Flouting to Create Humour in *Incredibles 2*

Yullia Ayu Aristyanti✉, Djoko Sutopo, Issy Yuliasri

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

Article Info

Article History:

Received 20
September 2019
Accepted 16 January
2020
Published 15
September 2020

Keywords:

Humour, maxim
flouting, *Incredibles 2*
movie

Abstract

This study focuses on the analysis of humour creations based on the Grice's cooperative maxim flouting. It applies descriptive qualitative study where we examined the utterances in *Incredibles 2* movie were flouted to create humour. The findings of the study showed that (1) There were 7 kinds of humour created from 19 flouting of quality maxims. (2) There were also 7 kinds of humour created from 45 flouting of quantity maxims. (3) There were only 9 kinds of humour created from 57 flouting of manner maxims. (4) On the flouting of relation maxims, all 11 humour categories were fulfilled from 59 flouting of relation maxims. Furthermore, it is suggested that through the occurrence of maxim flouting in the movie especially animation genre which is addressed to the audience gives the knowledge about conversational implicatures. Regarding to the creation of humour, it is suggested that the humour is not only created by Grice's cooperative maxim flouting, but also the realization of speech acts, politeness or other branch of pragmatics. Other theory of pragmatics can also be used to analyze the humour such as, politeness principles and also the acts of speech acts theory.

✉Correspondence Address:

Kampus Pascasarjana UNNES Kelud utara 3 Sampangan Semarang,
Indonesia
E-mail: discoverlasem@gmail.com

p-ISSN 2087-0108
e-ISSN 2502-4566

INTRODUCTION

Humour plays an important role in everyday life. Humour is worth in communication to make conversation more engaging and psychologically deliver happiness. Humour is a tool that can be used to enhance communication and relationship among speakers. People involve humour on their conversation unconsciously as the effect of maxim flouting of Cooperative Principle. The flouting that people involve is to mislead the hearer to deliver the inferred purpose by disobeying the maxim of Cooperative Principle done by the speaker intentionally by giving false or opposite information during conversation. In this way, we conduct the research about humour that is created by maxim flouting because it is important to be understood as part of communication. In teaching and learning process, the learners should be able to understand the maxim flouting to know the inferred meaning implied in communication. The learners will catch one of the goal of communication in a certain situation where maxim flouting involved to create humour.

According to Levinson (1985), "pragmatics is the study of the relation between language and context that are basic to an account of language understanding." (p.21). He also states that "pragmatics is the study of relation between language and context that are grammaticalized or encoded in the structure of a language." (p.9). In studying language, one cannot ignore the situation when the speech is uttered. There is close relation between an utterance and situations. Thus, pragmatics includes the relevant context or situation, instead of the language usage.

Most of people do not aware of what comes the conversation go smoothly and if so, the Cooperative Principle (Grice, 1975) can be observed in order to maintain the conversation smoothly and harmoniously. The linguistics philosopher introduces the concept of Cooperative Principle. It is cooperation between speakers in using the maxim. The cooperative principle makes our 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 we are engaged. Levinson (1985) states that the Gricean cooperative principle is construed as a theory of communication; it has the interesting consequence that it gives an account of how communication might be achieved in the absence of any conventional means for expressing the intended message. Levinson (1983) also summarizes the CP as the specification of "what participants have to do in order to converse in a maximally efficient, rational, co-operative way: they should speak sincerely, relevantly, and clearly, while providing sufficient information." (p.102).

Grice (1975) makes two distinctions between what is said by speaker of a verbal utterance and what is implied. What is implied might be either conventional (largely generated by the standing meaning) or conversational (dependent on the assumption that is speaker obeying the rules of conversation to the best of their ability).

There exist some conditions whereby speakers may not observe these maxim during conversations. For instance, someone who is incapable of speaking clearly or who deliberately chooses to tell a lie. In his study, Thomas (1995) notes that there are five types of non-observance of Grice's (1975) maxim which include; 1) Flouting. The speaker blatantly fail to observe a maxim with no intention of misleading the hearer but with the intention of creating a conventional implicature; 2) Violating. The speaker quietly and purposely fail to observe a maxim with the intention to mislead the hearer; 3) Opting out. The speaker is unwilling to cooperate and withdrawing from the interaction; 4) Infringing. The speaker unintentionally fail to observe a maxim due to limited language capabilities and understanding; and 5) Suspending. It forces speakers not to observe a maxim because of certain circumstances, i.e. cultural specification.

Levinson (1983) finds the flouting of maxim takes place when individuals deliberately cease to apply the maxim to persuade their

listeners to infer the hidden meaning behind the utterances; that is, the speakers employ implicature. In the case of flouting (exploitation) of cooperative maxim, the speaker desires the greatest understanding in his/her recipient because it is expected that the interlocutor is able to uncover the hidden meaning behind the utterances. People may flout the maxim of quality so as to deliver implicitly a sarcastic tone in what they state.

Cutting (2002) gives an example and explains that not telling the true intended purpose in conversation can create humour since the hearer does not expect such utterance is spoken.

From the explanation above, we chose the topic because we want to investigate the maxim flouting of Cooperative Principle that creates humour in the movie. We want to find out the non-observance Cooperative Principle that is flouted where it creates humour to create certain purposes in the movie. We also want to find out the types of humour revealed in the movie.

METHOD

This is a descriptive qualitative study which uses pragmatic approach. We make an interpretation and description of the data. We conduct the study in a natural setting that is analyzing the text of dialogue transcription. The material of the study is Grice's Cooperative Principle maxim (1975), which is found in *Incredibles 2* movie. This study focuses on analyzing the flouting of Grice's Cooperative Principle maxim that creates humour. We downloaded the dialogue transcription of the movie. We then classify the dialogue transcription into four maxims of Grice's Cooperative Principle. Then, we categorized the flouting of the maxim into the types of humour revealed in the dialogue transcription.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

There are four main findings of this study. The findings is about the creation of humour by

flouting maxim of quality, the creation of humour by flouting maxim of quantity, the creation of humour by flouting maxim of manner and the creation of humour by flouting maxim of relation. Before coming to those main findings, we discuss about the analysis of Grice's cooperative principles found in the animation movie entitled *Incredibles 2* which were flouted by the characters in order to create humour. As in line with the movie genre as comedy, the maxim flouting carried out by the characters might create humour at some points for the audiences. The analysis was based on Grice's theory that maxim flouting can create humour as telling things untrue with implicit meaning which make someone sometimes unable to catch the intended meaning. Based on the analysis, the number of maxim flouting found in this study could be summarized in this following.

Table 1. Maxim Flouting

No	Types of Maxim Flouting	Frequency
1	Maxim of Quality	19
2	Maxim of Quantity	45
3	Maxim of Relation	59
4	Maxim of Manner	57
Total		180

Based on the table, the total maxim flouting carried out by the characters were 180 utterances in total which were categorized into several points, such as the maxim flouting of quality was 19 occurrences making this category as the least maxim flouting done by characters which represents that the characters tend not to emphasize the act of telling something untrue. It was followed by maxim flouting of quantity as 45 occurrences, thus the maxim flouting of manner became the second top frequency carried out by the character. Moreover, the flouting of relation maxim was the most oftenly occurred in the movie which means that most of the characters blatantly fail to follow the conversations in terms of the relevance toward the meaning hid by another speaker. This findings was in line with Raharja and Rosyidha (2019) which proves that the humours were easy

to create with regard to the maxim of relation by changing the topic abruptly.

Meanwhile, there have been some humours especially in terms of language use which were created by flouting the maxim carried out by the characters in *Incredibles 2* movie. As the genre of this movie, the humours were found in various types that were based on Berger (1995) into 11 categories. The humours findings were summed up in this following table.

Table 2. Types of Humour

No	Types of Humour	Frequency
1	Allusion	6
2	Bombast	22
3	Definition	8
4	Exaggeration	32
5	Facetiousness	24
6	Insult	7
7	Infantilism	2
8	Irony	24
9	Misunderstanding	22
10	Literalness	17
11	Puns	21
	Total	180

Based on the table, there have been 11 types of humour in terms of language use produced by the maxim flouting from Grice's cooperative principle. Infantilism humour was the least variety which only occurred twice throughout the movie. The most occurred humours found in the movie were: exaggeration, puns, irony, misunderstanding, facetiousness and bombast. Meanwhile, the rest of the categories reached below 20 occurrences including: allusion, definition, insult, infantilism, and literalness. In the following section, we explain the four main findings in the study.

Flouting of Quality Maxims

Flouting of quality maxims becomes the least occurred maxim flouting in *Incredibles 2* movie. In order to fulfill the maxim of quality, the characters of *The Incredibles 2* movie are required to make their conversational contribution correspond to the truth or

something which is true. However, regarding to the flouting of the maxim, the characters break the maxim of quality intentionally which have the implicature / hidden meaning behind the utterances. Commonly, the characters flout their utterances by being dramatic or not telling the truth. In order to create humour, the maxim flouting is done deliberately by the characters to respond to another characters in out-of-expectation way or uncommon way which required another speaker to draw the conversational implicature.

The example below is the utterances between Helen and Bob in their conversation through phone calling.

Helen : *Well, that's good. How was Violet's date?*

Bob : *Uh...*

Helen : *That was tonight, right?*

Bob : *Yes. Good. All fine and good.*

Those utterances were taken from Helen and Bob conversation. Helen was having a rest at her hotel after doing heroic business, while Bob was at his bedroom after taking care of his children. From the context we know that Bob was desperate because on one hand, there was a lot of problems about his kids that he didn't know how deal with it which was supposed to be done by Helen as his wife but on the other hand, Helen was out of her house doing heroic things which were supposed to be done by Bob to make living for the family. In this case, Helen was asking about their kids condition after she was out of house and leaving the kids to Bob by saying "Well, that's good. How was Violet's date? That was tonight, right. However, Bob was telling something untrue purposely which was in contrast with the reality that things were getting worse since Helen left the house by replying "Yes. Good. All fine and good." The untrue information was given purposely considering Helen would understand that he needed a help to cope with the kids problems.

Bob, in this case, flouted the maxim of quality because he says something untrue about the information required by Helen by saying opposite things. In fact, Bob needed Helen to come home in which the condition was in mess.

Bob was telling that everything was good even he exaggerate it by repeating the words. If he told Helen about the fact that he failed to take care of the kids, Helen would assumed that Bob was not capable of doing the responsibility as a father. Thus, this condition created humour effect of Bob who pretended to be a strong father regardless the problems he faced.

Flouting of Quantity Maxim

Maxim of quantity requires the characters to provide sufficient information as it is demanded without adding or omitting some informations. With regard to the flouting of quantity maxim, it happens when the characters either give too much information or less information which is unnecessary to be told. When it comes to humour creation, usually the character intentionally add up or reduce the amount of information required to express the implied meaning and also produce humour unconsciously to the audiences. Here was the example.

Helen : *But whose house? Is it a house?*
 Winston : *It's my house. I have several. I'm not using that one. Stay as long as you need.*

The example was taken from the dialogue between Helen and Winston. The context was through telephone calling when Helen's family was moving to the new house given by Winston as Helen confirmed that she joined the program offered by Winston. At the telephone, Helen was asking whose house it is which was given by her and family. Hearing the question, Winston answered it mentioning that it was his house and added that he had many house and told her to use as long as she wants. It was assumed that Winston wanted to emphasize his status as a rich person who was generous and loyal to his business partners. In this case, Winston was flouting of maxim of quantity in which he provided much information than it was required by previous question. This is in line with Cutting (2002: 37) stated that the speaker who flout the maxim of quantity seems to give too little information or too much information. Hence, when the speaker supplies too much

information, the hearer will hear redundant utterance which result to a humour to the audiences.

Flouting of Manner Maxim

Maxim of manner is fulfilled when the speakers produce the utterances by being brief, orderly, avoiding ambiguity and obscurity. However, someone is considered flouting of maxim of manner when the information provided is full of ambiguous things. When it comes to creating humour, the characters usually give extended information to support their statement by using inflated language. On the other hand, when the characters give too little information, they cut intentionally the amount of information to create exaggeration. The example of flouting of maxim of manner could be seen as follows.

Police officer1 : *The banks were insured. We have infrastructure in place to deal with these matters. If you had simply done nothing... everything would now be everything would now be proceeding in an orderly fashion.*
 Mr. Incredible : *You'd have preferred we do nothing?*
 Police officer1 : *Without a doubt.*

The example was taken from the conversation between the police officer and Mr. Incredible. The context was at the police station where Mr. Incredible and family were captured because of fighting the Underminer as it was categorized as illegal activity. The police was calculating the damage and also blamed the superhero for it. Then, Mr. Incredible questioned about their previous utterances. However, the police answered with ambiguity which implied that the superhero were supposed not to come out to fight against the Screenslaver. The police was flouting of maxim of manner because they provided the answer ambiguously. This is in line with Andersen (2013) states that flouting of manner maxim is said to be derived from the situation when a speaker fails to obey the maxim 'by not being brief, using obscure language, not being orderly or using ambiguity'.

Flouting of Relation Maxim

Maxim of relation is carried out by making response or observation which is relevant to the topic being talked. Flouting of relation maxim means that the characters blatantly fail to follow the conversation in terms of relevance. In humour creation, the characters blatantly give irrelevant context to the previous utterances or misinterpret another character's question to avoid issue. The example could be seen in this following table taken from *The Incredibles 2*

Driver	: <i>Excuse me, Mr. Zone?</i>
Frozone	: <i>Sorry, but I'm not really supposed to be here.</i>

The example was taken from the dialogue between Frozone and the driver of Winston. The context was that Frozone was running away secretly to avoid the police after the incident of Underminer invasion to the city since any superhero thing was still illegal. He was fighting along with Mr. Incredible's family to defeat the Underminer and catch him. However, it turned out that the Underminer escaped and the central part of the city was destroyed including the mayor office. When he was on his way running away from the crowd, Frozone was greeted by Winston's driver. However, instead of answering the greeting, Frozone replied the greeting by apologizing and told that he wasn't supposed to be there. Basically, Frozone was flouting of maxim of relation as he answer the question which did not have any relevance toward the information being asked. In this case, he tried to offend the driver not to interrupt him in friendly way. This created humour effect as Frozone was employing irony technique.

Discussion

In communication, people should obey the principle to make the communication smooth and effective. As stated by Grice (1975) makes your contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. Under the principle, there are four maxim which have their own characteristics to be fulfilled that also sometimes is violated and

also flouted depends on the speaker objectives. In fact, the occurrence of maxim is deniable considering that communication strongly needs cooperation although not all people always follow the cooperative principle. Moreover, there have been some deliberate objectives for not being cooperative toward the maxim, especially flouting the maxim, such as the use of maxim flouting in the comedy movie to create humours in the movie. As it is stated by (Dynel (2008a: 6) that maxim can be legitimately flouted for the sake of reaching a communicative goal, i.e. generating humourous effects.

Based on the analysis of maxim flouting found in *Incredibles 2* movie, there have been some findings how the use of maxim flouting by the characters produce some sorts of humours to the audiences. The findings showed that the least occurred maxim flouting was flouting of quality maxim. It represented that the movie taught the audience not to tell lie, since the genre of the move is animation comedy which mostly addressed to kids.

Meanwhile, the most occurred maxim flouting was the flouting of relation maxim. It represented that maxim flouting of relation is the effective communication strategy to create humour. This is in line with Sperber and Wilson (1995) state that due to differences in personal experiences, cognitive background and communicative abilities between the speaker and the hearer, optimal relevance may not be achieved, and thus create misunderstandings and humourous effects on different scenes. Therefore, the maxim flouting production results to the humourous effects which could only be understood by the audiences. Hence, Grice's maxim flouting cannot be separated by the humour effects made by the speakers.

There are four findings with regard to the use of language as mentioned by Berger (1995) as it was reflected on the flouting of the cooperative principle maxim in order to create humour.

First, on the flouting of quality maxim, there were 7 kinds of humour created from 19 maxim flouting of quality, such as allusion, bombast, definition, exaggeration, irony,

facetiousness and literalness. The allusion humour was created using maxim flouting of quality by means of lying about the things that have happened in the past and known by the people around the context. The allusion humour was mostly created by the flouting of quality maxim since it talked about imaginary/conceptual things. The implicature produced was also complicated for another speaker to comprehend which triggered audience laughs.

Furthermore, bombast humour was created by untrue information which was using pretentious form of language. With regard to the definition humour, the flouting of quality maxim made it by defining untrue information to another speaker. In relation to the exaggeration humour, the flouting of quality maxim created it by providing extra information. In regard to irony humour, flouting of quality maxim had close relationship with irony humour. The humour was created by providing information which had opposite meaning. While, literalness was created using flouting of quality maxim by defining the information by words which ended up into untrue information. Finally, with regard to the facetiousness humour in the flouting of quality maxim was mostly done by assuming something as a light matter as untrue information.

Second, on the flouting of quantity maxim, there were also 7 kinds of humour created from 45 flouting of quantity maxim, such as bombast, definition, exaggeration, facetiousness, insult, misunderstanding, and literalness. With regard to bombast humour, the flouting of quantity maxim created by adding much information which is not required and this way entertained the audiences. While, definition humour was created by flouting of maxim of quantity as the speaker added to much information in defining the things discussed by the speakers.

Similarly, the exaggeration humour was created using flouting of quantity maxim when the speaker talked too much beyond the truth which resulted humorous effects. This is in accordance with Al Kaved et al (2015) that bombast and exaggeration are quite similar

when they create the humour effects. In contrast, facetiousness humour was created when the speaker underestimated things by adding to much reasons or information. In regard to insult humour, the flouting of quantity maxim formed it by providing much information intended to degrade another speaker. While, misunderstanding humour was created by flouting of quantity maxim using much information which failed to comprehend the information previously. This is also confirmed by Hassan (2013) that misunderstanding humour is made when the information received by the speaker is too much. On the literalness humour creation, the maxim flouting of quantity made it when the speaker provided information which were taken word-by-word in excessing ways.

Third, on the flouting of manner maxim, there were only 9 kinds of humour created from 57 maxim flouting of manner, such as allusion, bombast, exaggeration, facetiousness, insult, irony, misunderstanding, literalness, and puns/wordplay. In creating allusion humour using flouting of maxim of manner, it was created when the speaker provided information referring to the popular events in the context which was too ambiguous to comprehend by another speaker. On the bombast humour creation, the speaker mostly made it by employing too much words to define the things in order to give ambiguous effect on it.

Similar to exaggeration humour, the speakers mostly put many statements which exceed the truth to make it ambiguous to follow. On the facetiousness humour creation, the speakers were joking by underestimating the things which in fact they pretended to be strong enough to cope it. In the insult humour, the speaker provided information which in fact degraded another speaker ambiguously. On the creation of irony humour, the speaker provided ambiguous information which in fact intended to express something opposite.

While in creating misunderstanding humour, it has close relationship with the concept of flouting the maxim of manner. The speaker mostly uttered ambiguous information

which easily to be misunderstood by other speakers which then created humour to the audiences. This is in line with Detrianto (2018) that flouting of manner maxim usually leads to ambiguous information and it usually make other people laugh when it was addressed to the audience.

In relation to the literalness humour, it was created when the speaker provided the information as taking the meaning word-by-word in ambiguous way. Similarly, the creation of puns humour was made by joking which used a word meaning ambiguously and created the humour effects.

Finally, on the flouting of relation maxim, all 11 humour categories were fulfilled from 59 flouting of maxim of relation, such as allusion, bombast, definition, exaggeration, facetiousness, insult, infantilism, irony, misunderstanding, literalness, and puns. In terms of allusion humour, it was created when the speakers provided information referring to the things which are known in the context irrelevantly. The bombast humour was created by providing the pretentious information which did not have any relevance toward the topic being discussed. On the creation of definition humour, the speaker defines the things in irrelevant way.

Regarding to the exaggeration humour, the speakers excessing the statements beyond the fact which irrelevant to the topics. On the creation of facetiousness humour, the speaker makes irrelevant statement which underestimate the problems which gave implicature to another speaker as well. With regard to the insult humour, the speaker created it by expressing something irrelevant which act to hurt another speaker. On the creation of infantilism humour, the speaker expressed it by pretending to not knowing the topic by mentioning irrelevant information. While, irony humour was created by mentioning irrelevant information which had opposite meaning toward the fact. On the misunderstanding humour creation, it was created when the irrelevant information stated by the speaker did not match toward the previous information. With regard to the literalness humour, the irrelevant information

was formed by using literal meaning caught by another speaker as the response. When it comes to puns humour creation, the irrelevant information was created by joking using word play, which then gave implicature by the speaker.

Hence, it means that the flouting of relation maxim is effective device to produce humour. This is in line with the finding by Wu & Chen (2016) that in daily conversation, the speaker sometimes may make excuses in hopes of cheating the hearer to avoid potential confrontation; however, this action often becomes humourous materials to arouse the audience's laughter.

In terms of the maxim flouting and English education, maxim flouting results in the occurrence of the conversational implicature produced by the speaker to be drawn out by another speaker.

Thus, it needs the ability to identify and understand for the students as it is one of the communicative strategies. Since English is social science which is effective to be learned both in the classroom and outside of the classroom, the successful learning process could be reached how the students and teacher interact each other in which daily classroom interaction between the teacher and students and between students and other students depend on conversation. The students have to be able to improve their ability to use conversational implicature as it could be used to serve a variety of communicative purposes, especially in the classroom.

In addition, Faarahin et al (2012) mentions that fostering pragmatic competence among EFL learners could be one of the L2 teacher roles. This makes pragmatic competence important since some of the language functions can only be carried out effectively through implicatures.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study showed the way how humours are generated through the flouting of maxim in *Incredibles 2* movie. It shows that maxim flouting is one of the effective ways to

improve the communication skills when it comes to the teaching and learning English as foreign language. It is suggested that the through the occurrence of maxim flouting in the movie especially animation genre which is addressed to the audience gives the knowledge about conversational implicatures. In relation to the creation of humour, it is suggested that the humour is not only a deviation of the cooperative principle and its maxim. Other theory of pragmatics can also be used to analyse the humour such as, politeness principle and also the acts of speech acts.

This conclusion makes us able to draw some suggestion. Maxim flouting EFL teachers should exploit Grice's maxim to create a communicative atmosphere in their English classroom basing their teaching style on cooperation which results in the enhancement of the students' communication ability. For the next study, it is highly recommended that the study of cooperative principles needs more to be done to prove the evidence that it improves the students' ability.

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