

Exploring flouted maxims in *homeless to Harvard: The liz murray story movie*

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Abstract

Homeless to Harvard (2003) is an actual event story and a motivational movie of Liz Murray, a woman whose parents are drug addicts. This research was focused on finding the maxims flouted and the reason for flouting the maxims. The study used a qualitative method. To analyse the collected data, descriptive research and pragmatic identity were used. Results showed 12 times maxims were flouted in total. The flouted maxims were quantity (five times or 41%), quality (two or 17%), relation (two or 17%), and manner (three or 25%). Results also revealed the motivation for flouting the maxims and motives for flouting them were collaborative, conflict, and competitive. Since this research was limited to Grice's cooperative principles and motives in flouting maxims, future researchers are encouraged to investigate more variables, such as implicature, speech acts, and deixis.

Keywords: Cooperative principles, flouting maxims, motivational movie

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a significant role in human communication actions. As a connector of humans' transformation ideas, language is an essential consideration in communication skills. Pragmatics, a branch of the study of human language, cooperates with human conversation. Therefore, when someone speaks to each other, the disposition of the speaker and hearer or vice versa needs to be considered to make a conversation run smoothly. In addition, to make the conversation beneficial and appropriate to both speaker and hearer, Grice, in his maxims, mentioned that there are four maxims to be considered. The four maxims are the maxim of quantity, the maxim of quality, the maxim of relation, and the maxim of manner (Grice, 1975).

The use of language is to express an idea or thought through a conversation. Also, it can be stated that language is a medium for information to be conveyed. Therefore, it requires both the speaker and the hearer for the conversation to occur. Yule (1996) stated that cooperative principles are used by speakers to contribute to a conversation as required. In addition, he stated that the four maxims are interrelated to each other. Moreover, cooperative principles

provide both speaker and listener with a smooth conversation. Thus, the language used as a tool for conversation supports sustaining a good relationship between the speaker and the hearer.

Sometimes people are intended to flout some maxims for some tendencies or purposes. But by floating some maxims, sometimes the hearer might not be able to comprehend the actual meaning or the purpose of floating the maxims. In this case, the hearer may misinterpret the conversation which would be unbeneficial and inappropriate. This research will apply cooperative principles by Grice as the main theory: The cooperative principles are the four maxims proposed by Grice (1975).

The study of meaning in a conversation-the speaker's intention and listener's interpretation is called pragmatic (Yule, 1996). In a line, Kreidler (1998) stated that pragmatics refers to the ability of individuals to understand the meaning of a detailed condition, infer meaning from the speaker's utterance, and analyse the statement by the speaker-finding the completeness of the utterance. According to Helmie and Lestary (2019), understanding pragmatics is beneficial such as understanding someone's meaning, assumption, goal, and action through their utterances. In this research, the researchers are interested to analyse pragmatics theory-cooperative principles in a movie. Moreover, "Movie" as a representation of a cultural conversation of real-life consists of an area in which conversation exists a lot. However, flouting maxims in a movie may be purposely done by the author to produce specific goals or intentions. According to Nuringtyas (2018), flouting maxims can occur in movies, stories, talk shows, and stand-up comedies.

1. Cooperative principles

For the conversation to run smoothly- when a speaker and listener understand each other- cooperative principles must be applied. Cooperative principles also underline the speaker's behavioural action to a particular circumstance that would be helpful for the listener to give a suitable response related to the utterance. According to Yule (1996), the use of cooperative principles is a basic need for a conversation to be advantageous. Therefore, Grice (1975) proposed four maxims that are supposed to not be flouted to be cooperative in a conversation. The four maxims offered by Grice are presented as follows:

a. Maxim of quantity

The Maxim of quantity refers to the amount of information provided by the speaker. The speaker is expected to deliver not too much and not too little information-supposed to contribute as required (Leech, 1983).

b. Maxim of quality

Maxim of quality is understood as not stating something that we don't believe or is untrue and lacking evidence (Jafari, 2013). In other words, it is expected that the speaker says the truth or fact in a conversation. Grundy (2000) also stated that the maxim of quality requires the speaker to say the reality.

c. Maxim of relation/relevance

Maxim of relation deals with the relevance of the content. In addition, the conversation should be running based on the topic discussion. Cutting (2002) also stated that the speaker is supposed to be consistent with what has been said before.

d. Maxim of manner

Maxim of manner wants the speaker to speak clearly. The speaker must speak about things that the participant or listener might understand- it requires clearness and order.

In sum, cooperative principles are used in a conversation to create a condition of a smooth conversation. A good conversation according to Grice consists of becoming informative, factual, relevant, and clear. Therefore (Ibrahim et al., 2018) sum up some phrases that indicate the four maxims as follows:

Table 1. Distinguished phrases of cooperative principles (Yule, 1996)

Maxim	Phrases
Quantity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as you probably know • to cut a long story • I won't bore you with all the details
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As far as I know • I may be mistaken, but... • I am not sure if this is right, but... • I guess
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oh, by the way • Anyway • Well, anyway
Manner	(Speakers are supposed to do a thing to avoid ambiguity and insignificance of statements)

2. Flouting maxims

Sometimes people are intended to flout the maxims to create specific condition-hidden meaning, this phenomenon is named the flouting maxim. Levinson

(1983) and Grundy (2000) stated that the speaker stops employing maxims for the listener to create meaning themselves-hence it requires an implicature. However, according to Jafari (2013), the flouting maxims are intentionally made by the speaker without any intention to betray or create confusing statements. Still, Sembiring and Ghazali (2017) defined flouting maxims occur when the speaker is unable to relate a particular maxim in a conversation and causing confusion. The only reason to flout the maxims is that the speaker wants to ensure that the listener understands the speaker's intention (Helmie & Lestary, 2019).

Based on the definition above, the consequences of flouting maxims in a conversation become either misinterpretation by the listener or the wrong maxim used by the speaker. The definition of the four flouting maxims is explained as follows:

a. Maxim of quantity

The Maxim of quantity can be flouted by the speaker when the speaker doesn't get to the point of the conversation-giving too much or too little information. In other words, the flouting maxim of quantity is that the speaker provides an inappropriate statement.

b. Maxim of quality

The flouting maxim of quality occurs when a speaker creates a situation where the speaker says something that is not true or something true but the speaker denies it. The case may occur when the speaker uses hyperbole, metaphor, irony, and banter in a conversation.

c. Maxim of relation

The flouting maxim of relation occurs when a speaker speaks nonsense or is unrelated to the topic spoken (Cutting, 2002). The speaker uses spoken language that has multi-meaning. In other words, the speaker uses language that the listener doesn't understand. The case may happen when a speaker is hiding something or does not want to tell the information directly.

d. Maxim of manner

Flouting maxim of manner means that the speaker created an unclear situation-when speaker created a sentence that may lead to misinterpretation (Cutting, 2008). The case usually happens when a speaker states information not orderly or briefly.

Flouted Grice maxims have been becoming familiar in Linguistic research. Some recent research has been done on Grice maxims, such (Noftriana et al., 2014; Helmie & Lestary, 2019; Hanna & Ghazali, 2017; Marlisa & Hidayat,

2020). The research from Noftriana et al. (2014) found that the maxim of manner is the most often flouted maxim in Stand Up comedy by Raditya Dika, which, the finding indicated that Stand Up comedy by Raditya Dika tended to hide or obscure something. Moreover, Hanna and Ghozali (2017) in the research, and analysis of the “Jungle Book” movie script, mentioned that the most frequently flouted are maxims of quality and the least frequently flouted are maxims of relation. Another research, Helmie and Lestary (2019) in their research of the movie “Home Alone 2” found that there are four maxims that are being flouted for some reasons, for example competitive, collaborative, convivial, and conflict reasons. Meanwhile, Marlisa and Hidayat (2020) in their research, flouted maxims in a Good Morning America (GMA) talk show and found that the most flouted maxims are maxims of quantity and manner.

Homeless to Harvard (2003) is an actual event story and a motivational movie of Liz Murray, a woman whose parents are drug addicts. In the movie, we can see that the social-cultural context of the main character is between the educational setting and homelessness. Yolanda and Bram (2021) stated that the language used is influenced by someone’s social status and position in society. Therefore, the researchers are interested in conversation toward the social-cultural context of the movie and then focus on the flouted Grice maxims used in the movie Homeless to Harvard (2003). The research focused on finding the flouted maxims and getting deeper into the interpretation of the motives of the flouting the maxims by the characters in a movie.

METHODS

This research aimed to find out the floated maxims in the conversations of the movie “Homeless to Harvard: The Liz Murray story” by considering Grice (1975)-quantity, quality, relation, and manner. Moreover, it aimed to reveal the motives for flouting the maxims in the conversations of the movie “Homeless to Harvard: The Liz Murray story”. Hence, a qualitative descriptive approach was employed in this research. According to Hancock, Ockleford, and Windridge (2009), qualitative research can be used to understand the social phenomenon where humans and things are interrelated. In addition, descriptive research functions to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics-how and why something is happening (Gall et al., 2007). Concerning data collection, it was done by applying a non-participatory method as the data were collected by watching a movie. To make the data accurate, the researchers first downloaded the movie script and watched the movie many times afterwards. The researchers collected the data by focusing only on the flouted maxim. Next, the data analysis was undertaken by utilizing pragmatic identity, that is, the study of intended meaning (Yule, 2016). Pragmatic identity allows the researchers to uncover the identities of the speaker through dialogue or a conversation. Therefore, the

researchers chose the Pragmatic Identity framework to understand the intended meaning of the characters' utterances. To identify the motives of floating maxims, the researchers applied a dialogical relationship (Mannay & Morgan, 2015).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Types of flouting maxims in Homeless to Harvard by Liz Murray movie

This part explains the flouted maxims found in the movie "Homeless to Harvard: The Liz Murray Story". Therefore, based on the data analysis the researchers found that some maxims are flouted in the conversations. The maxims flouted are presented as follows:

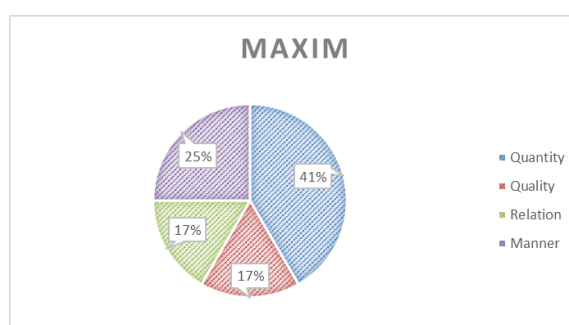


Figure 1. Maxims flouted in the movie "Homeless to Harvard: The Liz Murray story"

The total maxims flouted were eleven times. Furthermore, the maxim of quantity was flouted five times (41%), the maxim of quality was flouted two times (17%), the maxim of relation was flouted two times (17%), and the maxim of manner was flouted three times (25%). As the data have been classified based on their category, the researchers then will focus on the discussion of the flouting maxims.

1. Maxims of Quantity

Data 1 (11:47-12:04)

Liz's teacher : "yeah, what do you read?"

Liz : "The Encyclopaedia. The lady upstairs, Eva, she found one in the dumpster, the whole set except from R to S, if you've asked me from R to S I would've done it wrong, I was just lucky"

The conversation happened when the class exam just finished and Liz was about to leave the class, but the teacher stopped her and asked how did she get a perfect score for the exam. Therefore, the teacher asked what she reads.

However, Liz explained it too much by giving the information about who found the encyclopedia. Consequently, Liz flouted a maxim of quantity by providing not as required information. Thus, the motivation for flouting the maxim is collaborative, because Liz wanted to give more understanding to the teacher. However, the extra information led to disadvantages and became useless.

Data 2 (18:28-18:30)

The Cop : “you are not getting her to school”

Liz’s father : “I told her to go, I told you to go to school. She’s got a mind of her own, she is a feminist”

The conversation happened when the cops came to the house because Liz didn’t come to school (probably because Miss Wanda called the cops-an appointment when Liz got one hundred for her exam, she has to keep coming to school). Liz’s father flouted the maxim of quantity because he gave too much information to the cop. Instead of telling the point, she added more description of Liz by saying that she has her own mind and she is a feminist.

Data 3 (58:20-58:25)

The principal : “Mr. Murray”

Liz’s father : “I am Peter, Peter Fidelity”
“Never actually married Liza’s mother”

The conversation occurred when Liz’s father met the principal to give some information due to Liz’s identity for her school. The flouted maxim occurred when Liz’s father added more information that is not important or unnecessary. Therefore, the maxim flouted is a maxim of quantity, because Liz’s father did not follow the rule of giving information as required (maxim of quantity).

Data 4 (60:46-60:52)

Liz : “I love you, dad.”

Liz’s Father : “oh don’t do that. Don’t love me, it is a waste of energy”

The conversation occurred when Liz and her father finish the interview with the school principal when the father was about to go back to the shelter. Liz stated that she loves her father however the father didn’t reply as required, and he added up unnecessary information. Therefore, he flouted the maxim of quantity.

2. Maxims of Quality

Data 1 (57:11-57:24)

Liz’s father : “I don’t know how to go to a normal school”

Liz : “why, this is not a normal school?”

Liz's father : "well, it is public, but it is like a private"

This conversation happened when Liz and her father were on the way to attend the meeting with the school principal. The flouted maxim in the conversation is the maxim of quality. The reason is that Liz was not sure whether the school is public or private, then she said that it is public but private. Therefore, the statement is flouting the maxim of quality because the speaker is not sure about the truth.

Data 2 (70:49-70:53)

Liz : "what's college like?"

Liz's friend : "it's all crap, shut up!"

The conversation happened when Liz and her friend, Christ, were at the principal office. They were talking about the scholarship to Boston. The maxim flouted occurred when her friend said that "it's all crap, whereas she didn't know how college is alike. Therefore, the maxim that was flouted was the maxim of quality because the speaker doesn't speak the truth or lacks evidence.

3. Maxims of Relation

Data 1 (4:52-4:57)

Liz : "help her, father, she can't see, she'll get mugged.

Liz's father : "always a big problem"

This conversation happened when the mother just got the money and went out of the home. Liz was asking the father to look up to the mother. She is afraid that the mother will get mugged. However, the father said, "always a big problem". In this case, the father flouted the maxim of relation, that is when the speaker uttered something that is not relevant to the topic. Instead of saying yes or no to help the mother, Liz's father changed the topic or stated something that has a hidden meaning.

Data 2 (25:00-25:45)

Liz : "all of it? Even my encyclopedia?"

Liz's mother : "I'm really sorry, they board up the whole place"

"there was nothing we could do, it just, crap happens, I mean..."

"Look, I gotta go around the corner and see few friends"

"just for a minute okay? You finish your burger. I'll be right back, just be a minute"

Two maxims were flouted in this conversation. First is the maxim quantity, because Liz's mother was giving too more information than wanted. Liz only asked about her encyclopedia, but the mother told her more than needed. The

second maxim that was flouted was the maxim of relation, Liz's mother suddenly said that she has to go around to see her friends and the conversation got Liz confused. The maxim of relation is flouted because the mother created a confusing situation and hid something from Liz

4. Maxims of Manner

Data 1

Liz's mother : *"Give it (money) to me, it is mine!"*

Liz's sister : *"we are hungry"*

The conversation occurred when Liz's mother wanted to get some drugs but has no money, and she wanted to take the money from Liz by saying that it is hers. However, Liz's sister replied by saying "we are hungry". Therefore, Liz's sister flouted the maxim of the manner by not talking up to the topic spoken. In the other words, Liz's sister created an unclear condition that makes the listener confused (what do they want to do next or just tell that they are hungry).

Data 2 (36:16-36:36)

Liz : *"you wanna get your stuff or you'll leave me here alone?"*
"let's go"

Liz's friend : *(say nothing)*

The conversation happened when Liz went from her grandpa's house and met her friend who is homeless as well. The conversation flouted the maxim of manner because she created an ambiguous situation or created misunderstanding. She did not follow the topic of the conversation whether she (her friend) gets her stuff on her own or goes somewhere because there is no deal of a specific place/objective of where they are going.

Data 3 (57:39-57:53)

Liz : *"well, just say that you're a long-time truck driver"*
"That is why they will never see you"
"you're living with your girlfriend now or also"

Liz's father : *"will you give me a girlfriend?"*

The conversation happened when Liz asked her father to pretend to be normal. In a conversation, her father flouted the maxim of the manner by stating an unclear statement. Liz just asked him to pretend for having a real girlfriend. However, the father misinterpreted and created an ambiguous statement afterwards. Therefore, the maxim of manner is flouted because the father didn't understand the topic.

The analysis of the movie “Homeless to Harvard: The Liz Murray Story” revealed that maxims were flouted eleven times. Moreover, the most frequently flouted maxim was the maxim of quantity. This finding was confirmed by the finding from Setiawan and Haryani (2020), Kristiani et al. (2021), and Lestari and Firdaus (2021). In the research, Setiawan and Haryani (2020) found that the maxim of quantity is the most often flouted by the speaker (22.22%) in the movie “Detective Pikachu”. The reason for flouting the maxim of quantity is that the character wanted to convince and show that the character is trustworthy. Furthermore, Kristiani et al. (2021) also found that the maxim of quantity is the most commonly flouted by characters in the movie “A Star is Born”. The reason for flouting the maxims is because of the genre of the movie, which is a romantic drama. In addition, Lestari and Firdaus (2021), in their research revealed that the maxim of quantity is the most dominant maxim that had been flouted in the movie “Detective Pikachu”.

The motive for flouting the maxims

Speakers have their reason for flouting the maxim, it can be intentional or accidental. It is probably because the speaker wants the hearer to find the hidden meaning of the utterance or as required. Therefore, in the movie “Homeless to Harvard: The Liz Murray Story”, the researchers found that collaborative, conflict and competitive motivation existed in the conversation. This finding revealed a resemblance with (Setiawan & Haryani, 2020), in which, their research also revealed that collaboration, conflict, and competitiveness as motives for flouting maxims. However, in their research, they also found convivial as a motive in flouting maxims. Therefore, the motives found by the researchers in this research are explained as follows:

a. Collaborative

The collaborative motivation in flouting maxim happens when the speaker provides information but the hearer does not get the point of the speaker, the information might be too little or too much. Therefore, the researchers found that collaborative motivation happens in the maxim of quantity (data one, two, three, and four) and data two maxim of relation.

b. Conflict

The conflict motivation in the flouting maxim occurs when the speaker speaks of negative feelings or reactions such as offence toward the topic discussed. Thus, in the flouted conversations above, the researchers found that conflict motivation occurred in data two maxim of quality and data one maxim of manner.

c. Competitive

Competitive motivation happens when the speaker is a self-centred goal the purpose is to benefit the speaker. The goal may be reached by ordering, asking, demanding, and begging. Therefore, in this movie, the researchers found that competitive motivation existed in data four maxim of quantity, data one maxim of manner.

CONCLUSION

From the researchers' perspective, the movie "Homeless to Harvard: The Liz Murray Story" is interesting to research. Indeed, a true event and a motivational story bring the researchers' interest to studying the pragmatic field. Thus, by using Cooperative competence (Grice, 1975), the researchers found that the four maxims were flouted intentionally and accidentally by the characters in the movie. Therefore, the accidentally flouted maxims have no motivation toward them. The researchers found that there are five times flouted maxim of quality, two times flouted maxim of quantity, two times flouted maxim of relation, and three times flouted maxim of manner. Furthermore, based on the flouted maxims, the researchers found three reasons for flouting maxims, they were collaborative, conflict, and competitive. In addition, the most used motivation in flouting maxims is collaborative motivation.

This research is limited only to Grice's theory and motivation for flouting the maxims. Therefore, the suggestion is aimed at future researchers to add more variables to make the data more complete and clearer, such as implicature, speech acts, and deixis. Other motivational movies are also expected to research. The researchers think that motivational movie brings a particular benefit not only for the researchers but also for the reader.

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