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CONVERSATIONAL ANALYSIS OF GRICE'S MAXIM THEORIES ON COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES IN BAHASA INDONESIA LECTURERS

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Abstract

As human always involve in social interaction; they are required to use language appropriately to avoid missed-understanding. They need to obey to what-so- called as 'cooperative pinciples' (Grice, 1975) and 'politeness' (Leech, 1993). However, it is unavoidable that failure of communication often occur especially in a community with different backgrounds (e.g. culture, economy, education, etc.). This study aims (1) to figure out the types of violation of Grice's cooperative principle, and (2) to figure out the degree of politeness principle in daily conversation among lecturers in Musamus University majoring Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia. The data of the present qualitative study were conversations among lecturers of PBSI of Musamus Univeristy which transcripted and analizyed descriptively based on the four maxims of cooperative priciple by Grice (1975)—maxim of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner and the degree of politeness by Brown and Levinson. The findings revealed that maxim violation was dominated by maxim of relevance (58) while other maxims were maxim of quantity (31), maxim of quality (23), and maxim of manner (20). Some factors triggering speech participants to violate the maxims were to create humor, to avoid being involved in further conversation, to show anger, to ask for confirmation, and to ask someone to do something. In addition, different cultural background also contributes to it. Meanwhile, speech participants tend to use positive politeness to show respect and honor since the conversation occurred at work field.

Keywords *: Grice Maxim Violation; Brown and Levinson Politeness; Cultural Background*

INTRODUCTION

Communication goes well when the hearer is able to recognize and understand the speaker's intended meaning (Fauziah *et al.*, 2018). However, a failure in communication is unavoidable; some factors such as missed-perception (Juariyah, 2012), aphasia

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(Gumiwang, 2021), and crosscultural communication (Yue *et al.*, 2020) can contribute to communication failure. The failure may lead to astonishement, surprize, confusion, embarassement, or even anger. Androfo *et al.* (2021) reported that tribe conflict between Dayak and Maduranese in Banjarmasin was mainly triggered by missed communication because of different cultural perspective.

Likewise, Merauke, a city in Papua where there live different tribes with different mother languages are potential to have missed-communication when they speak Bahasa Indonesia, Indonesian national language which serves as lingua franca. Since it was declared as the area of transmigration in 1966 (Arif, Agustus, 2007), Merauke has been popular as the city of diversity, of which people call it as the second 'Beautiful Indonesia Miniature Park'. Many people from different tribes from other provinces (migrants) live together such as Makasarnese, Javanese, Bugisnese, Batakese, Ambonese, and many others. Papuanese, which is the native tribe, consists of some tribes dominated by Mariend. The diversity of tribes may refer to the diversity of languages. Papuanese, According to forestpeople org (2011), speak around 253 different languages. The number does not cover the language of some migrants who live in Merauke. Although people in Merauke including lecturers and students in Musamus University use Bahasa Indonesia to gain mutual understanding. Still, cross-cultural differences makes the posibility of pragmatic failure (the term referred to the failure to get what is meant by the speaker) becomes wider (McGee, 2019).

Grice's theory of cooperative principle demands the speaker and the hearer to communicate no more than what is required (Hidayati *et al.*, 2018). Grice further divides the principles into four namely maxim of quantity (make your conversation as much as needed by the speech partner), maxim of quality (give the true information), maxim of relevance (giving relevant informtion) and maxim of manner (make your speech as clear as possible). There are some factors, according to Toda and Gozhali (2017) triggering speect participant to violate the maxim such as hiding 'the truth (20 times), followed by saving face (15), avoiding discussion (5 times), expressing feelings (4 times), pleasing the hearer (3 times), avoiding punishment (2), and the last is building someone's belief (1 time)'. Meanwhile, Al-Zubeiry (2020) stated that humour or jokes can be created by violating the maxim.

Grice theory may be effective to avert missed-communication among speaker and hearer. However, people may violate the maxim because of some reasons such as being intimate, friendly, indirect refusal, and many more. For instance, when a friend wants to refuse her friend's invitation. Although it is possible to say 'No, I can't', the response may be a bit rude. The utterance 'No, I can't' is grammatically and semantically correct. In English, however, it is not common to be used as the expression to rejects someone's invitation. It may sound better when we say 'I'm afraid, I need to do my homework'. The expression may seem flouting the maxim of relevance but it is acceptable as it is to show politeness by being indirect. Unfortunately, according to Leech (1983) in Gereda (2014) argues that the cooperative principle of Grice cannot describe the reason of why speaker tend to be indirect. Leech further explains that degree of politeness is mainly affected by the relationship of both speaker and hearer. To add, Brown and Levinson scale of politeness in Gereda (2014) states that three factors such as context, social, and culture impacts the degree of politeness. Furthermore, Brown and Levinson in Sudarsono (2022, September 2) stated three strategies of politeness such as bald on-record, negative politeness, positive politeness, and off-record (indirect) as well as simply not using the face threatening act.

Considering the uniqness of the speech participants in Merauke in term of cultural background that challenge the study of pragmatic, this study aims to (1) to figure out the types of violation of Grice's cooperative principle, and (2) to figure out the degree of politeness principle in daily conversation among lecturers in Musamus University majoring *Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia*.

There are some previous studies of cooperative principle by Grice. Hidayati *et.al* (2018) analyzed the type of maxim violation in students' daily conversation in Universitas Mataram who are from different tribes. Their findings revealed that more violation occurred compared to the utterance that follow the whole maxim. The main factor was because most of students were from distinct cultural backgroud. Inspite of cultural background, the speech participants had purpose to create a harmony by violating the maxim. Unfortunately, the study does not speak further about why people violate the maxim.

Similarly, Rahmi (2018) who studied the violation of maxims in political conversation in Rosi Talkshow. Her findings drawed to a conclusion that maxim of quantity is the dominant among four maxims. It is because the speaker wanted to give clear information

as well as to attract sympathy from audiences. Again, Rahmi's study does not really have deeper analysis of why the speaker violated the maxim.

Unlike the two studies, Sastrawan & Sajarwa (2022) investigated the cooperative principle on daily conversation of the Verneuil (a small community in Paris whose people from different cultural background). Their findings revealed that in Verneuil daily conversation the speech participants adhered Grice's Maxim; however, maxim violation happened when their native culture interfered. The findings indicate that cultural background can contribute to a missed-communication.

From the three previous studies, this present study tries to fill the gap that is to analyze deeper of why people (with different cultural background) violate the maxim in terms of the degree of politeness.

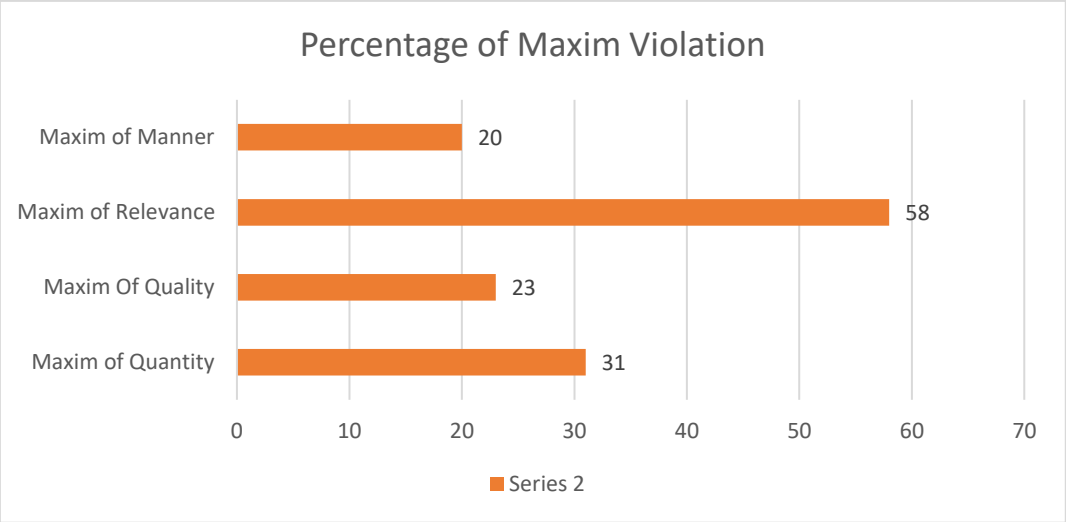
METHODS

This is a descriptive qualitative study; the data were conversation among lecturers of Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia of Musamus University. The method of collecting the data were recording which later were transcripted. In addition, the transcripted data were classified and analyzed descriptively based on Grice Cooperative Principles and Brown and Levinson level of politeness.

FINDINGS

A. Violation of the Maxim

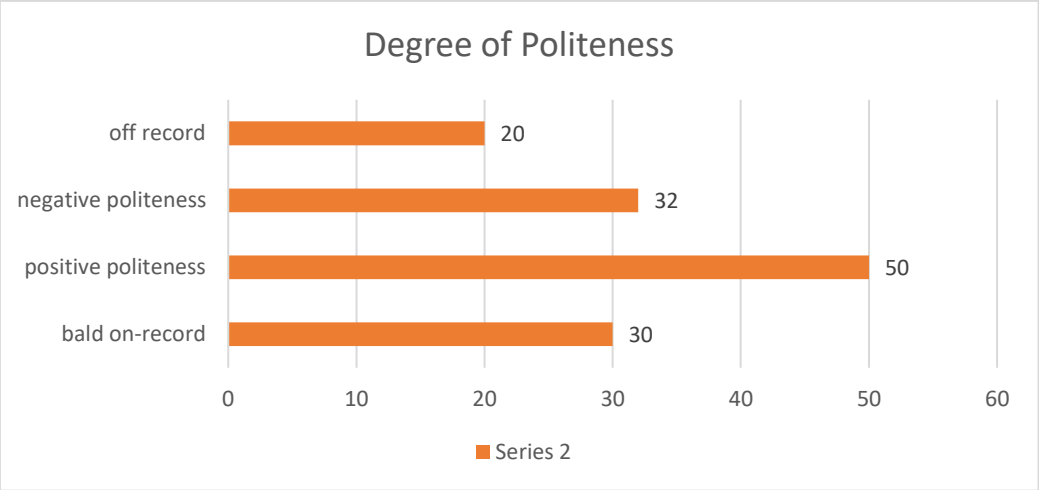
After the process of data reduction, among 157 transcripted conversations, there were 132 data could be used as samples in that they indicate maxim violation. Later, the data was classisfied based on four maxims of Grice Cooperative Principles. The data are seen as follows:



From the graphic above, there are 31 conversations belong to the violation of maxim quantity, 23 conversations adhere to the violation of maxim of quality, 58 conversation include to the violation of maxim of relevance, and 20 conversations belong to the violation of maxim of manner. However, it is seen that the lecturers of Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia of Musamus Univesity tend to violate maxim of relevance very often compared to other maxims. Maxim of relevance requires speech participant to give relevant information (Grice (1975) in Hidayati *et al.* (2018)). However, the participant violated the maxim for some purposes such as to create humor, to avoid being involved in further conversation, to show anger, to ask for confirmation, and to ask someone to do something.

B. Degree of Politeness

The same data were also analyzed based on Brown and Levinson degree of politeness; they are such as bald on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record. And the findings are as follow.



From the graph above it is found out that off record consists of 20 conversations, negative politeness covers 32 conversation, positive politeness comprises 50 conversations, and bold on record covers 30 conversations. Positive politeness dominates the conversation.

DISCUSSION

As aluded in findings, in term of maxim violation, violation of maxim of relevance becomes majority. The speech participans violate the maxim of relevance for some aims such as po. Meanwhile, from the degree of politeness, majority of speech participant used positive politeness. It is mainly affected by the place of conversation where they were in campus. Therefore, it was required that they need to show respects among their partners. In addition, bald on record is dominated by the conversation between the head of study program and her subordinate and between senior (the lecturers who have worked for quite some times) and junior (the lecturers who have just worked for 7 months) The samples of conversation are as follows:

Conversation 1

Bu Hanova : *Bu, bisakah saya pulang sebentar untuk menjempuk anak saya dari sekolah?* (1.a)

Ibu, may I go for a while to pick my son up from school?

Bu Nova : *Sudah siap tugasnya bu? Ingat deadline tanggal 21 November.* (1.b)

Have you done your work? Remember the deadline is on November 21st.

Bu Hanova : *Baik Bu, saya selesaikan tugas saya dulu.* (1.c)

Allright, let me finish my job first.

The conversations were taken when all lecturers were busy preparing for study program accreditation. It was close to the deadline when all data of accrediation must be uploaded. Bu Hanova who has a kid of 5 years old wanted to pick her child from school by saying (1.a); however, instead of giving relevant answer by responding 'yes' or 'no', Bu Nova, who is the head of study program commanded Bu Hanova to finish her duty. The command seems to be direct as Bu Hanova is the leader of the study program who has power to give direct instruction to Bu Hanova who is her subordinate. In this case, according to the Brown and Levinson degree of politeness, Bu Nova's utterance belongs to Bald and Record. The speaker, Bu Nova, did not tend to try to implicitelly lessen the face-threatening acts although she has options to do so such as commanding in non-manipulative way. Her choice was to highlight that it was her job to remind her subordinate for not leaving before her job was done.

Conversation 2

Zem Santo : *Ko pulpen saya habis ya bu? Kalau dosen pulpen sampai habis pertanda apa ini Bu?* (2.a)

Bu, why do I run out of the pen? If a lecture run out the pen what could be

the sign?

Fina : *Tertawa kecil. Pertanda apa pak?* (2.b)

What sign Pak?

Zem : *Pertanda bukan dosen. Tidak pantas menjadi dosen*. (2.c)

It means I am not a lecturer. I don't deserve being a lecturer.

Conversation 2 was taken in the classroom where we were working on accreditation. At the time, everyone was underpressure. They worked from the early morning till dark; therefore, Pak Zem who was a lecturer of pragmatic tried to break the ice by creating a joke. Bu Fina was supposed to answer Pak Zem by explaining why he had run out the pen. Yet, she broke the maxim of relevance by asking Pak Zem back. She seemed to be fool foor not knowing the answer although she actually knew the answer. It was seen from her giggiling. Her choice of response show the creation of humor as well as tried to be more intimated with friends. Remembering Bu Fina was a new employees, she tried to get around with Pak Zem, who was a senior. Furthermore, in term of degree of politeness, Bu Fina wanted to agree with Pak Zem. She actually knew the intended meaning of Pak

Zem; she, therefore giggled and let Pak Zem answered so that the message of the jokes will also be recognized by other friends. This belongs to positive politeness.

Conversation 3

Pak Agus : *Kalau tidak ada dana baru bagaimana kita mau jalan? Macam mobil kasih jalan bagaimana, bensin tidak ada. (3.a)*

How can we do the job without money? It is the same like car without gasoline. How the car can go?

Bu Wahyuniar : *(Tertawa) setuju Bu Dina? (3.b)*

(laughing) Do you agree with Pak Agus Bu Dina?

Bu Dina : *Maaf ya bu saya lagi ngerjain dulu.* (3.c)

(I am sorry. I need to do my job first)

Conversation 3 was taken still in the same situation in which accrediation process was running. They talked about the fund for everyday's snack which had not been issued by the authority. Therefore, Pak Agus, who was from Nusa Tenggara Timur (one of provinces in Indonesia) was trying to discuss and made joke about it. Bu Wahyuniar was carefully listening to Pak Agus. Meanwhile, she also wanted an affirmation from Bu Dina whether she agreed with what Pak Agus said, and Bu Dina seemed not interested to the conversation. Thus, she said (3.c) as a form of reluctant instead of giving relevant answer. Bu Dine also tried to have positive politeness by asking an apology for not involving in the conversation. She wanted to save Bu Wahyuniar face.

Conversation 4

Bu Santi : *Bu, bisa minta tolong ambilkan gula-gula di situ?(4.a)*

Bu, can you get me gula-gula?

Bu Ratu : *Saya tidak melihat ada gula disitu bu (4.b)*

I can't see sugar in there

Bu Santi : *Itu kelihatan bungkusnya dari sini (4.c)*

I can see the pack from here

At the time, there was a son of Bu Shanti who wanted some candies. Bu Santhy said 'gula-gula' to refer to candies that she brought in the black plastic bag next to his backpack. She asked Bu Ratu for help; however, Bu Ratu gave the irrelevant answer by saying (4.b). She said that she did not see sugar instead of saying yes/no for her willingness. In this case, Bu Ratu did not mean to reject to do what Bu Santi asked her, but it was rather because Bu Ratu did not know that 'gula-gula' is actually the term refers to candy. Missed

communication in terms of violating maxim of relevance happened because of cultural background. Positive politeness was seen from Bu Ratu. Her word choice of pronomomina 'I' was 'saya' which means it is more polite than 'aku'. Although Bu Ratu and Bu Santy were closed, Bu Ratu—who is new employee there—was trying to be more polite to Bu Santy who was her senior. There are a lot of conversations indicating the violation of relevance maxim caused by different cultural background.

Conversation 5

Bu Ratna : *Ibu kalo tidak dipakai dong kasi masuk saja, bisa kan? (5a)*
Ibu, if you don't need it anymore please keep it. Will you?
Bu Fina : *Bu, maaf maksudnya bagaimana? (5b)*
I am sorry but I do not understand what you meant.
Bu Ratna : *Itu kuncinya kalau sudah tidak dipakai kembalikan saja.(5c)*
The key should be returned if you do not need it anymore
Bu Fina : *Oh baik, bisa.* (5d)
I see. I would love too.

Bu fina is a new lecturer who has just moved from Java to Merauke, Papua. She did not understand the meaning of the utterance (5a), as it is non-standard Bahasa Indonesian language that is normally used in Merauke. She, thus, asked for a confirmation by not corresponding the question with relevant answer. Again, the missed-understanding is triggered by different cultural background. In terms of the degree of politeness, bu Fina used positive politeness by saying sorry.

Conversation 6

Pak Muda: *Ibu? (6.a)*
What about you?
Bu Angla: *Apa pak? (6.b)*
What is it?
Pak Muda: *Pesan makan bu. (6.c)*
Ordering some meals.
Bu Angla: *Menurut Bapak tadi saya ngomong laper terus ngapain saya keluar? (6.d)*
(in your opinion what would the hunger people do?

All lecturers were in a room working for study program accreditation and Bu Angla just came from somehwere. Bu Angla came when Pak Muda was about to leave to buy some lunch for all lecturers and himself. He asked Bu Angla if she

wanted to add the order, but she gave hint by giving rethorical question. It means that she already had luch and she did not want to order another lunch. By saying (6.a), Pak Muda violated maxim of quantity. He did not ask clear information for Bu Angla was not in the room when they talked about lunch. He should ask Bu Angla with clear information. Whereas, in term of degree of politeness, Bu Angla use off-record politeness.

Conversation 7

Bu Ratu : *Pak Kurik itu dekat ya? (7.a)*
Pak, Is Kurik close?
Pak Agus : *Ah dekat saja (7.b)*
Yes, it is
Bu Santi : *Jangan percaya Bu, itu dua jam. Kasih yang lelaki saja. (7.c)*
(Do not trust him. It is about two hours. Give the task to men)

Bu Ratu had a duty to distribute some important letters to schools in Kurik, one district in Merauke which is full of Javanese immigrants. She asked Pak Agus if it was close to Merauke. However, instead of being honest by giving true information, Pak Agus violated the maxim of quality. It was then confirmed by Bu Santi that it was actually far away. Pak Agus intention may indicate that he actually wanted to calm Bu Ratu to do her task. Meanwhile, Bu Santi used (7c) as a hint that the job should have been given to men—referred to Pak Agus, who was more capable to cover such long trip. In this case, Bu Shanti used off-record politeness.

Conversation 8

Bu Nova : *Pak Rayis di SMA I Merauke kan? Dia Bahasa indonesia kan? (8a)*
Pak, Rayis works in SMA 1 Merauke, doesn't he?. He was Bahasa Indonesia alumni, wasn't he?
Pak Agus : *Ya benar (8b). Sudah selesai bu tugasnya? Luar biasa.*
(Yes, that is true. Have you done the task. Amazing)

Bu Nova had a task to record all alumnus of Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia. She clarified Pak Agus about one alumni named Rayis if he was really from Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia. However, her statement of (8a) showed an ambiguity. She should say in complete sentence rather than a chunk.

She violated the maxim of manner. In (8b), Pak Agus showed positive poltiness by giving Bu Nova compliment as well as to encourage her to do the other task.

CONCLUSION

From findings and discussion we may conclude that most lecturers in Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia of Musamus University tend to violate maxim of manner quite often. The factors triggering them to violate the maxim of manner are to create humor, to avoid being involved in further conversation, to show anger, to ask for confirmation, and to ask someone to do something. Findings of two of factors trigerring lecturers to violate the maxim such as (1) to avoid being involved in futher conversation and (2) to create humor has similar findin in the study from Toda and Gozhali (2017) and Al-Zubeiry (2020). In addition, there are many violation caused by different cultural background as lecturers are from different provinces. It is affirmed by the study from Androfo *et al.* (2021). In addition, the politeness strategy is mostly dominated by positive politeness since the conversation occurred in campus which requires respect and honor to save the face of speech partner.

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