

The Art of Implication: Studying Flouting of Maxims in Comments on Indonesian Instagram Influencer Pages

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Abstract

This research aims to explore types of flouting of maxims and elucidate the speakers' implied meanings. Utilizing a qualitative descriptive approach, the study draws data from Instagram comment sections that exhibit instances of maxim flouting. The analysis is underpinned by Pragmatics, employing Grice's (1975) theories to categorize the types of maxims and Leech's (1983) theory to explain the reasons for the utterances in the given situations. The study analyzes five selected datasets, guided by conversational implicature and the cooperative principle. The findings reveal a prevalence of flouted maxims, particularly the Maxim of Relevance. The study also uncovers that netizens on Instagram primarily use different contexts and goals of the utterance. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of online communication dynamics and the nuanced use of language in social media interactions.

Keywords: *flouting maxim, influencers Instagram account, netizen's comment*

Introduction

Language plays a pivotal role in facilitating communication, serving as a conduit for both written and spoken expressions essential for human interaction. The indispensability of communication lies in its capacity to foster comprehension of individuals' needs, thereby enabling the establishment of mutual understanding. Furthermore, communication serves as a precursor to informed action, underscoring its instrumental role in shaping subsequent behavioral outcomes. During the process of communication, conversation is a prevalent method of communication in which individuals may speak interchangeably (Levinson, in Prasatyo & Kurniyawati, 2023). It is hypothesized that at least two participants, the speaker, and the hearer, should engage in the conversation and exchange roles from this perspective. On the other hand, language serves as a tool for maintaining positive relationships among participants by serving as a means of communication (Cruse, 2000). This aligns with Alan's view (Wijana, 1996:45) that everyone in a discourse is accountable for their actions when the language is employed to communicate between the speaker and the listener.

The outcome of a discussion is dependent upon the diverse speakers' approach to the engagement. The term used to describe the manner in which individuals endeavour to facilitate effective communication is known as the Cooperative Principle (E.S., 2015).

The imperative for linguistic clarity arises from the potential for misunderstandings that may emerge during or following communicative exchanges. Achieving effective communication necessitates the active engagement of both interlocutors in fulfilling their

respective roles. By embracing these roles conscientiously, communicants contribute to the cultivation of an environment wherein the risk of misinterpretation is mitigated, fostering more meaningful and purposeful interactions.

Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that instances of misunderstanding may inevitably arise during communication. Ideally, a cohesive collaboration between interlocutors—comprising both the speaker elucidating a point and the listener comprehending the conveyed message—is essential to preempt potential misinterpretations in the communicative exchange. This collaborative endeavor is critical in both oral and written communication, necessitating the listener's adept understanding of the speaker's utterances in spoken discourse, as well as a comprehensive comprehension of the creator's intended meaning in written forms such as texts, captions, or messages.

In this contextual framework, adherence to the principles of cooperation in communication is paramount. Such adherence ensures that both parties actively contribute to the shared goal of fostering mutual understanding, thereby minimizing the likelihood of communication breakdowns, and fostering a more effective and nuanced exchange of information.

Furthermore, the principle of cooperation emphasizes the existence of a cooperative effort that exists between the speaker and the speech partner in a conversation. The collaboration in question is related to the utterances spoken. This statement is supported by Bublitz & Norrick (2011) who stated that principle of cooperation is one of the principles of conversation in pragmatic science. Therefore, speakers should make the speech relevant to the context, clear and easy to understand, compact and concise, and always on the issue. The cooperative principle is also proposed as a norm in a conversation known as the conversational maxim by Jufrizal and Refnaldi (2008). It implies that it serves as a guide to facilitate effective communication.

In relation to principle of cooperation, maxim is summarized in this theory. Grice (1975) explained a theory called cooperative principle. In this theory, it is explained that both the speaker and the hearer are expected to give a conversational contribution such as required, the information that they give to each other should be as informative as required, do not give more and less information to the hearer.

In theory of maxim, Grice (1975) categorize the maxims into four categories to make the conversation work well. Griffith (2006) defines a maxim as a piece of advice that is broadly applicable. It implies that communication proceeds as if speakers are generally guided by these maximums. The first maxim is maxim of quality in which the speakers are expected to say the truth and to be able to give the evidence of what they are saying. Second, maxim of quantity in which the speaker is expected to be as informative as required. Third, maxim of relevance explains that the speaker is expected to say something that relevant to the context they are talking about. Fourth, maxim of manner relates to the speaker expected to say something orderly, avoid obscurity and ambiguity expressions. Those four maxims are important to build a meaningful communication.

Flouting maxim could happen because there is a misinterpretation between what the hearer has got from the speaker message. This statement is supported by Cutting in in Noertjahjo (2017) flouting happens when a speaker fails in observing the maxim but expecting a hearer to recognize the implied meaning. Meanwhile, violating happens in order to deceive a hearer with letting the hearer only knows the surface meaning of an utterance. Saying something which is not true is an example of flouting and violating toward maxim. The flouting and violating of maxim can be prevented if both the speaker and the hearer can meet the cooperative theory.

However, it is hard to make them meet the cooperative theory. There are several reasons that cause the maxim to be flouted. In general, flouting maxim happens due to several reasons. Leech (1983) conducted the theories within four types of category; they are competitive, convivial, collaborative and conflictive. (1) Competitive (when the illocutionary goal competes with the social goal), (2) Convivial (when the illocutionary goal coincides with the social goal), (3) Collaborative (when the illocutionary goal is indifferent to the social goal), (4) Conflictive (when the illocutionary goal conflicts with the social goal).

Flouting maxim often happens in daily social communication platform especially found on Instagram. It can be seen from the reaction of the reels or video's viewer towards the things that they have watched. Uniquely, it mostly even only happens on some influencers comment pages in Indonesia by Indonesian netizens. These are examples of flouting maxim on the Instagram comment on Gita Savitri's (@gitasav) Instagram post related to information about recommendation to join dinegeri.orang community for all Indonesian nomad all around the world:

"@tommyngroho26 : gua diblock dong sama si paling childfree. (I was blocked by this most childfree woman).

@nianasmaul : Stress juga si, aslinya mah terserah gak mau punya anak/enggak tapi bisa gak si gausah banyak bacot di sosmed gak mau punya anak, dan orang2 pun gak bakalan peduli gitu (It's stressful too, actually it's up to you whether you want to have children or not, but you can do it or not, you don't have to talk a lot on social media, you don't want to have children, and people won't care either way)."

Those comments on Gita Savitri's post are included in flouting maxim because the comments are not related at all to the instruction that Gita gave on her video. The video is telling us to join with a community, but netizens' responses are out of context. It does not only happen on Gita Savitri's post, but also happens on other influencers' Instagram comment page. These are netizens' comment on Sarwendah's video about her new house room tour which is still under renovation. She tells the netizens the locations of each room and its room function. However, some flouting maxim uttered by netizens on the comment page:

"@allaboutprtw: onyo ganteng banget iyaa (onyo is so handsome right)

@inggitsukmaa: Kak maaf, banyak banget vidio yang sliweran soal "berlebihan nya physics touch" betrand ke kakak. Selama nya dia bukan anak kandung kakak. Dia sudah dewasa kak, mungkin kk dan suami harus tegas ke betrand. Terutama kk, jangan harus lebih aware (Sorry sis, there are a lot of videos circulating about "excessive physics touch" From Betrand to you. Forever he is not your biological child. He's an adult, sis, maybe you and your husband should be stricter. Especially sis, you must be more aware)."

On Sarwendah's video about room tour in her future new house, most people only focus on the visual given by the video which is the interaction between her and her adopted child, Betrand. Therefore, from most of the responses it can be concluded that netizen mostly do flouting maxims.

Related to those issues, some present studies have been employed to find out flouting maxim on social media. Prasatyo and Kurniyawati (2021) conducted research entitled an

analysis of flouting maxim in Aiman's talkshow *Tudingan Konspirasi di balik Korona*. This research is aimed at investigating the flouting maxim and analyze the implicature of it. The result of the finding shows that the guest speaker flouted all maxims. The maxim flouted when the speaker responded irrelevant statements, answered to the question but lack of adequate evidence, said too much and or too little information than it is required, and replied something unclear or ambiguous as well as provided unnecessary prolixity.

The second previous study is employed by Apriyani and Wiraharja (2023) entitled the analyses of flouting maxim in *Kong Skull Island Movie*. To sum up, the researcher found that the most types of maxims flouted by the characters in the movie is flouting maxim of quantity and the most types of reason behind the flouting maxim is collaborative reason. In this present study, the researcher will try to investigate kinds of flouting maxim from Indonesian netizen's perspective on some influencers' social media (Instagram) because there is a unique fact that the comments from Indonesian netizen are more variative compared to whole netizens around the world on the same case which is here is on influencer's Instagram account.

Based on the reasons above above, the researcher tried to establish two problems, include: (1) What types of flouting of maxim are found on the comments page of Indonesian influencer made by the netizen, and (2) Why do Indonesian netizen flout the maxims on their response through the video stated on the comment page. Therefore, this study was done by classifying the types of flouting of maxim used by netizen on Indonesian influencer's Instagram account, and the reason why the uttered the statements which are flouted the maxim.

Method

The collected data underwent qualitative analysis in this study. After data collection, the researcher employed Grice's (1975) theoretical framework to categorize the identified instances of flouting maxims in the movie, addressing the first research question outlined earlier. In pursuit of understanding the motivations behind the characters' deviation from conversational maxims, the researcher utilized Leech's (1983) theoretical framework to address the second research question posed in this study.

The primary data set for this inquiry emanated from the commentary provided by netizens on the Instagram accounts of influential figures. The subjects under scrutiny included accounts associated with contentious influencers, namely Gita Savitri (@gitasav), Sarwendah (@sarwendah29), and Rizky Billar (@rizkybillar). From each influencer, one post was taken to identify the kinds of flouting maxim. From each post, five comments were used, which made 15 data in total. The systematic data collection process involved methodical procedures. Utilizing observational methods, the researcher meticulously reviewed video content disseminated by the influencers on their Instagram accounts.

Subsequently, the researcher conducted a comprehensive analysis of the uploaded videos and systematically examined the comments from netizens in response to the influencers' content. After a comprehensive examination of both video content and accompanying comments, the researcher employed the note-taking technique to systematically amass and categorize data. The accrued information underwent meticulous organization into discrete classifications, delineated by the discerned

instances of maxim flouting and the intrinsic rationales behind such linguistic phenomena within the comments provided by netizens.

Results and Discussion

Types of flouting of maxim found on the comments page of Indonesian influencer

In this research, the researcher analyzed the data from Gita Savitri (@gitasav), Sarwendah (@sarwendah29), and Rizky Billar (@rizkybillar). The reasons on analyzing the comments on those influencers are because they have different variants of comments.

Firstly, this research will analyze the netizens comments on Gita Savitri's post. Gita Savitri is a famous influencer, a chemist, and a student who got scholarship in Germany. She is living in Germany now. Gita Savitri (@gitasav) on her video explained to netizens the way how to make a hand-cream. She explained how to make a hand-cream from some materials that could be found at home. There are several comments on this post that are indicated as flouting maxims:

@mmmmmmmmvii: Mbak e itu Perempuan di Palestina pada kehabisan pembalut dan terpaksa harus minum obat penunda menstruasi akibat opresi dari Israel. Mana nih postingannya? (Miss, women in Palestine are running out of tampons and are forced to take medication to delay menstruation due to Israeli oppression. Where's the post?)

The comments made by @mmmmmmmmvii is categorized as flouting the maxim of relevance because she tried to connect hand-cream topic (a woman's wellness) with tampons (a woman's wellness too) and then changing the topic by saying that Palestinian woman need to take medication for preventing menstruation. It is said in hope Gita Savitri as an influencer can attract the people to give instruction to women around Indonesia to care about woman in Palestine as Gita Savitri is well known as Indonesian feminist that has a role in the world of medication and women wellness. However, the comment is not related at all to the topic given by Gita about hand cream and change the overall topics.

@ditarakna: kak lo kuteksnya dari nail air shop di Germany ato biasanya kutekan sendiri? (Sis, do you get your nail polish from a nail air shop in Germany, or do I usually polish it yourself? I'm always obsessed with the colors you picked!

The comment made by @ditarakna is considered as flouting maxim of relevance because she commented on the visual on something that she saw, not something that is related to the topic.

@me_maesya: profesi kak gita sangat mulia menurutku. Jebolan jerman ga pernah mengecewakan. (In my opinion, Sis Gita's profession is very noble. German bachelor never disappoints).

The comment made by @me_maesya is categorized as flouting maxims of relevance because she comments on Gita Savitri profession as a chemist not about the video. Although, the reason she might said it was because Gita Savitri always shares free information about medication or drugs.

@octitania: kaa, kalo pewangi deodorant tu pake apasi? (Kaa, what do you use as a deodorant fragrance?)

The comment made by @octitania is considered as flouting maxims of relevance. The video commented by her was telling about how to make a hand-cream and its fragrance. The video does not talk about deodorant fragrance.

@els_adora: kompornya bagus. (the stove looks good)

The comment made by @els_adora is considered as flouting the maxim of quantity because the netizen tried to give an information related to the video that the stove used by Gita Savitri is a good stove. However, this comment is limited and does not give enough information especially related to the video.

From analyses of comments by netizens made on Gita Savitri's comment page, it could be concluded that most people flouted the maxims of relevance.

Secondly, the video that will be analyzed is from Sarwendah on her account @sarwendah29. Sarwendah was one of girlband members and she became more famous after her marriage with a famous presenter, Ruben Onsu. In this occasion on the selected video, Sarwendah explained to netizen her experience when she ate Coto Makassar in one of the restaurants. She posted this video in Ramadan moment. These are some flouting maxims made by netizen:

@septian_vector: tahukah kamu bahwa sekarang kita bisa menyukai komentar tanpa harus menekan tombol love, cukup pukul komentar dua kali. (did you know that now we can like comments without having to press the love button, just hit the comment twice.)

This comment made by @septian_vector was analyzed as flouting maxim of relevance since the comment is not related at all to the topic on Sarwendah's video. This comment was made to get notice because after seeing the comments page, his comment is the top comment from all the comments.

@hendri_yani_susanto: Ci makan aja cantik gitu ya.. upss lagi puasa (Ci you look pretty by just eating that... oops, I'm fasting)

The comment made by @hendri_yani_susanto is categorized as flouting the maxim of relevance because he did not respond appropriately to the content of the video spoken by Sarwendah, he only focused on Sarwendah's face and tried to be sarcastic by saying "uups I am fasting" since it is fasting month.

@nidaniswaa: btw hari pertama puasa loh. (btw this is the first day of fasting.)

The comment made by @nidaniswaa is considered as flouting maxim of manner because the comment made by her created ambiguity, and it could be considered as a sarcastic response. She tried to insult Sarwendah action to post the food vlog in the afternoon by implying that this is the first day of fasting month so that you could not eat in afternoon, or trying to remind her that she could not eat in the afternoon and post it on social media. Thus, it created multi purposes on her comments.

@divazkfln: rambut bunda lucu banget. (Bunda, your hair looks cute).

The comment made by @divazkfln is considered as flouting maxim of relevance because it is not even related to the video made by Sarwendah's food vlog.

@gazelleo : mama betrand menggoda banget. (Betrand's mom is so attractive).

The comment made by @gazelleo is considered as flouting maxim of relevance because he does not even respond to the content of the food vlog made by Sarwendah. He focused on the Sarwendah's appearance. In conclusion, those comments made by netizens on Gita Savitri's, Rizky Billar's and Sarwendah's Instagram post, could be simplified into this table:

Lastly, this research will analyze the comments page of Rizky Billar (@rizkybillar). Rizky Billar is an actor and influencer. He became famous after his relationship with his wife Lesti Kejora who was matched by netizens all around Indonesia. On his post, Rizky Billar wanted to sell his first car, the white BMW, he has willingness to sell the car and donate all the money to all people in Palestine. These are several selected comments made by his followers:

@2426.pict: nyesel tadi beli cilok 5ribu padahal kalo ditambahin 0 nya 3 kebeli tu bmw. (I regret buying a cilok for 5 thousand even though if I added 0 it would be 3 and I would buy a BMW)

The comment made by @2426.pict is considered as flouting maxim of quality because he was being sarcastic (as if he really has the money, but in fact he does not have enough money to buy the car). He used the coherent comment to the post made by Rizky Billar, but he made it as a joke to respond that he was able to buy his car if he did not by any cilok (meatball) which is literally will never happen, and at the end he added if the zeros on 5000 was added by three.

@nandaa_abiel: kalau Ikhlas ga harus ada kamera bang wkwkwk. (If you're sincere, you don't have to have a camera, bro hahaha.)

The comment made by @nandaa_abiel is considered as flouting maxim of quality because he tried to respond to Billar's intention to bid his car for donation to Palestinian people, but he was not sure if Billar wanted to do it purely from his heart or because of fame that most people post about Palestine.

@indraepreja: pake google form, biar pemenangnya terdata dan transparan. Ada nama asli, nama ig, dan bid nya. (Use google form, so that the winners are recorded and transparent. There is the real name, ig name, and bid.)

The comment made by @indraepreja is categorized as flouting maxim of quantity because Rizky Billar's video expect the netizen to do a bid on comment page, while comment made by @indraepreja explained more than the expected response. It suggested the way Billar collected the bidding information.

*@kimslendian: siapa dia? Pengusaha biliar? (Who is he? Carpool businessman?)
The comment made by kimslendian is considered as flouting maxim of relevance because it tries to relate with the video by asking who the speaker is, but the expected response is to bid the highest price of car. @kimslendian also relates Rizky Billar's name with billiards.*

@rinawati1909: *jangan hiraukan mereka yang penting hati kita Ikhlas sukses.* (Don't pay attention to them, the important thing is that our hearts are sincere and successful.)

The comment made by @rinawati1909 is categorized as flouting maxim of quality because she tried to respond by predicting that there might be some hate comments to Rizky Billar's post (where in the fact it might be true or wrong seeing that everyone's judgement can be different toward something). Overall, based on the analyses of Rizky Billar's Instagram video post, it can be concluded that the flouting maxims are more variative.

Table 1. Flouting Maxims according to Grice (1975)

No	Influencers	Flouting Maxims			
		Quality	Quantity	Relevance	Manner
1	Gita Savitri		1	4	
2	Rizky Billar	3	1	1	
3	Sarwendah			4	1
	Total	3	2	9	1

According to the table above, it can be concluded that most netizens on those influencers' Instagram comment post did flouting maxim of relevance. Meanwhile, for the reasons to do the flouting maxim, the researcher is using the theory by Leech (1993). These are divided into competitive, convivial, collaborative, and conflictive. Based on the analysis presented previously, the data could be displayed as follows:

Table 2. Reasons on flouting the maxim Leech (1993)

Influencers	Competitive	Convivial	Collaborative	Conflictive
Gita Savitri	3	2		
Rizky Billar			2	3
Sarwendah		3	1	1
Total	3	5	3	4

Based on the table above, the reasons made on Gita Savitri's comment post, is mostly demanding and requesting Gita to make more explanations on their curiosity on how to create a product. While on Rizky Billar's post, the netizens mostly scolded and accused him by implying that he did not donate his car sincerely from his heart. Lastly, on Sarwendah's post, most netizen did convivial purpose to greet and impressed by Sarwendah's beautiful appearance.

In conclusion, netizens comments on an influencers' Instagram on those influencers are categorized mostly as flouting maxim of relevance because they did not comment on the topic related to the video but just stated on their purpose towards the influencers. While for the reasons, netizens have different reasons to comments. In Gita Savitri's comment post, the netizens mostly did competitive purpose to get Gita's explanation on something they want, on Rizky Billar's post, netizens mostly did conflictive purpose to scold and accuse him of being not sincere to donate his car. Lastly, on Sarwendah's post, mostly focus on the visual and did convivial purpose to greet and impressed by Sarwendah's genic and pretty appearance.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the researcher has found that in Gita Savitri's, Sarwendah's and Rizky Billar's Instagram post, most netizens did flout maxim of relevance. For the reasons of doing the flouting maxim, netizens did it differently towards different influencers. In Gita Savitri's comment page, netizens did mostly on Competitive purpose, on Rizky Billar's comment page, netizens mostly did conflictive purpose while on Sarwendah's comment page most netizen did convivial purpose.

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