

Maxim violations and their reasons in an animated movie: A Gricean approach to communication

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Submission date: 19-Oct-2023 02:29AM (UTC-0400)

Submission ID: 2200516869

File name: 17519-50638-1-PB.pdf (376.67K)

Word count: 4939

Character count: 25745

Maxim violations and their reasons in an animated movie: A Gricean approach to communication

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the utterances of maxim violation produced by characters in the 2022 animated film, Puss in Boots: The Last Wish, as well as the motivations underlying them. Using a qualitative research method, content analysis techniques are used to conduct the analysis. The analysis adopted Grice's Cooperation Principle, which incorporates Grice's Maxims, and their violation, as well as additional hypotheses from other experts regarding the rationale for such violations. To support the analysis, this research involved an expert in the pragmatic field specially to provide analysis related to the types of maxims used and the reasons for using these maxims. This study uncovered a total of 51 utterances of maxim violations in the characters' talks. They can be categorized as the violations of the following maxims: 21 (41.1%) of quality, 16 (31.3%) of quantity, 7 (13.7%) of manner, and 6 (11.7%) of relevance. There are six types of reasons for using maxims violations, namely communicating personal interests, Avoiding discussion, Pleasing interlocutors, Saving face, Misleading listeners, Extending answers. The characters violated the maxims in a variety of contexts and for a variety of reasons, but primarily out of a wish to express their individual self-interests.

Keywords: Grice's maxim, maxim violations, reasons for violating maxims

Article History: Received 9 May 2023, Final revision 28 Jun 2023, Published 29 Jun 2023

Introduction

Verbal communication is the most essential activity for humans to engage in order to exchange information, ideas, and even emotional expressions. It is always present in fictional works such as films, just as it is in real life. Click or tap here to enter text. (Teske & Gut, 2021). Characters in a movie frequently disregard the fundamental principle of effective communication when delivering a speech. As we investigate the violation further, we discover that there are typically four distinct types of maxim violation at play, including quality, quantity, manner, and relevance. Thus, such violations occur in fictional films as the reflection of the reality (Andy & Ambalegin, 2019).

Among the various film genres, animated films appeal to audiences of all ages uniquely (Pan, 2020). Michalon argues that animated films do not only captivate children but also adults. According to the website for Prodigium Pictures from 2021, animated

storytelling is an efficient and effective method for engaging audiences with specific information. Animated films are effective means of conveying information while entertaining audiences, enabling animators to promote a deeper understanding of their goals (Stuchlikova et al., 2014).

Puss in Boots: The Last Wish (hereafter, PBLW) is a well-received example of an animated film. The IMDb website ranks this film as the number one animated film of 2022, with a score of 7.8 out of 10. Due to his passion of adventure, the protagonist, Puss in Boots, expends eight of his nine lives on a heroic quest for the legendary Last Wish (Riganas, 2022). Along his journey, he frequently speaks by violating the communicative principles. This is the reason that this film is worthy to study from the perspective. In addition, the popularity of the film and the animation genre contribute to the worldwide interest in this film.

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Animated films, like live-action films, feature character interactions that develop stories and form dialogue. Mangilaya (2020) argues that discourse is the most important aspect of human communication. Cooperation is essential for effective communication, according to (Pradani & Sembodo, 2021), and both parties must contribute pertinent, accurate, concise, and organized information. Grice (1975) introduced the Cooperation Principle, which consists of four maxims: quantity, quality, relation, and manner, to resolve communication inefficiencies. However, these maxims are occasionally violated, disregarded, or disregarded (Albiansyah, Hidayat, & Alek, 2021; Fadillah & Imperiani, 2020; Yulianti & Ambalegin, 2021).

The focus of the present investigation is maxim violation as proposed by Grice. Maxim violation occurs when speakers intentionally provide irrelevant information in order to deceive conversational companions (Eso, et al., 2020; Yulianti & Ambalegin, 2021). Amianna & Putranti (2017) state that maxims are violated when a speaker in a dialogue intentionally creates confusion or misunderstanding, or

Research Method

This study evaluated the animated film PBLW using a content analysis, focusing on instances of maxim violations throughout the film. The study utilized Grice's (1975) cooperative principle to evaluate these violations and determine their root causes. By analyzing the film as the research site, the study transcends geographical and demographic boundaries to demonstrate how language and communication strategies are used in animated films to engage audiences and enhance storytelling. This study aims to shed light on the effectiveness of maxim violations as a narrative device by analyzing the effect of language usage on narrative and character development in animated films.

As the characters' dialogue frequently deviates from real-world situations, PBLW is a rich source of information for analyzing violations of maxims (Santosa, 2021). The research contributes to a better understanding of the effect of language usage on narrative and

when they intend to achieve a particular objective in a discourse.

Yule (1996) describes a conversation between a woman seated on a park bench with a large dog lying in front of her and a male who joins her on the bench. Due to the woman's lack of knowledge, the conversation exemplifies a violation of the manners dictum, resulting in a misunderstanding and an accident. Numerous films and television programs, including the finding of Dory Purwati et al. (2018) and Rosi Talkshow (Rahmi., 2018), have been found to violate the maxim. This study seeks to investigate the nature of language usage, implicature, and maxim violation in PBLW..

Understanding how these violations occur within the context of a popular animated film can provide valuable insights into the complexities of human communication and contribute to the study of language usage in various media as a whole (Khan., 2018; Turkmen, 2016). This study aims to contribute to the ongoing discussion on Grice's maxims and their application in contemporary animated films by analyzing instances of maxim violation in the film PBLW.

character development in animated films by examining instances of maxim violations and their purposes. The findings can inform future research on violations of maxims in other media forms or cross-cultural genre comparisons. This study aims to highlight the role of maxim violations in animated films and their potential storytelling implications, shedding light on how language is creatively employed to engage and captivate audiences.

This study employed qualitative research methods for data collection, which entail the collection and analysis of data (Seers, 2012). The researcher downloaded PBLW transcripts and used content analysis to select implicatures that contradict Grice's maxims in order to collect data (Bengtsson, 2016). The content analysis enabled careful evaluation of texts and recorded human dialogues, allowing for a systematic examination of maxim violations in PBLW and their root causes (Blanchflower, 2018). Using indirect observation and content analysis, this study

sheds light on how animated films employ language and communication strategies to engage viewers and enhance storytelling, providing valuable insights into the complex

Results & Discussion

In this section, the researcher will discuss the research findings. The conclusion of the research is founded on the problem statement that the researcher produced in the first chapter. The research questions are as follows: "What is the violation of maxims in the dialogue between characters in the film PBLW?" and "What are the causes of maxim violations in the dialogue between characters in PBLW?"

The researcher selects the script for the film PBLW for analysis. The script spans several pages. Since it would take too much time to present every single dialogue in the script, the researcher selects two samples for each category of violated maxim.

Maxim Violation

From the results of this research, it can be concluded how many maxims violation that happens in the movie PBLW movie as the table below:

Table 1 Types of Maxim Violation

No.	Maxim Violation	f	%
1	Quality	21	41.1
2	Quantity	16	31.3
3	Manner	7	13.7
4	Relevance	6	11.7
	Total	51	100

Out of 51, 21 utterances can be classified as maxim quality violations and 16 as maxim quantity violations. Then, the number of utterances that can be seen as violating the maxim of manners, is 7. Last one, 6 utterances can be shown to be in violation of the relevance maxim. This table reveals that the quality maxim is the most frequently violated of the four maxims that can be discovered in this film.

Violation of Maxim Quality

According to Grice (1975), a speaker would be more likely to break the rule of truth

relationship between language usage and narrative construction in the realm of animation.

if they made a false claim than if someone delivered a message with dishonesty and malice.

Data number: 017
 [00.02.59 – 00.03.04]
 Civilian: play a song!
 Puss : no, no, no. I couldn't.
 Child : sing, Puss, sing!
 Puss : **nah, I couldn't possibly...** (gets a guitar and starts playing a song)

Due to the fact that Puss' actions did not correspond to his words, this behavior can be seen as a violation of the maxim quality. Here is other dialogue:

Data number: 018
 [00.13.15 – 00.13.45]
 Stranger : well, well. If it isn't Puss in Boots himself (chuckling). In a flash.
 Puss : Hey...
 Stranger : there's the famous hat, the feather, and of course, the boots. My compliments to your cobbler (chuckling creepily).
 Puss : *(clearly uncomfortable, clear throats)*
Thanks. Uh, good to meet you, too (move his chair away from the stranger)

By not telling the truth, Puss is breaking the quality maxim in this exchange, which is shown in bold.

Violation of Maxim Quantity

Maxim of quantity is when the conversation contains all the necessary information. Violating this maxim is leading to a conversation that give too much information or too little information. Here are some of the dialogues in the script that the researcher believes violated the maxim of quantity.

Data number: 001
 [00.09.03 – 00.09.11]
 Puss : Who are you?
 Doctor : I am the village doctor. I'm also the village barber, veterinarian, dentist, and

witchfinder. And in my professional opinion, you need a wash, a blowout and a little trim around the hindquarters.

The doctor supposed to introduce himself to Puss, but instead of introducing himself to Puss in a single sentence, he went on to list all of his other jobs. He violates the maxim of quantity as the result. Another dialogue:

Data number: 002

[00.13.58 - 00.14.19]

Puss : Puss in Boots laughs in the face of death, (looks at Death) bounty hunter.

Stranger : So, I've heard.

Puss : You will find your reward does not come easily. This I tell you.

Stranger : (rolls his eyes) everyone thinks they'll be the one to defeat me, but no one's escaped me yet.

The unnecessary information that the stranger gives to Puss can be considered as the violation of maxim quantity.

Violation of Maxim Manner

If the speaker made an ambiguous reference, delivered a vague response, said everything but what was anticipated, or made an inappropriate or disorganized statement, they were acting improperly.

Data number: 045

[00.08.57 - 00.09.00]

Puss : Where am I?

Doctor : Not to worry. You are in good hands.

The man then told Puss to not worry and that he is in good hands. Since the man gives Puss an ambiguous answer, he is violating the maxim of manner. Here is another dialogue:

Data number: 046

[00.09.19 - 00.09.31]

Doctor : but, putting my doctor's hat, I think we need to run a few tests. All right. Reflexes (the doctor got punches by Puss). Catlike. (Doctor lift Puss's tail) Temperature. Now lift your tail and relax

Puss : (Puss yelps and take the thermometer) trust me, I run hot. Yep

Despite the context, Puss did not give a further information about what does he mean by run hot. Since there is no clear answer to this dialogue, Puss is violating the maxim of manner.

Violation of Maxim Relevance

Violation of maxim relevance happens when the speaker did not contribute anything relevant to the subject that was discussed, the Cooperation Principle concluded that the maxim relation had been violated. Also, the speaker considered breaking this rule if they attempted a sudden change of subject.

Data number: 039

[00. 23.46 - 00/23.58]

Dog : What's your story?

Puss : My story... (bird screeching in the background)

Dog : What are we looking at?

Puss : ...is over.

Dog : (gasps) Oh, no. Want to rub my belly?

The dog is breaking the rule of relevance in this dialogue since it is not Puss with the relevant response. Here is another dialogue that violate the maxim of relevance.

Data number providing: 040

[00. 28.18 - 00.28.24]

Puss : Goodbye, Pickles!

Dog : Oh, no, Pickles, you're leaving?

Puss : Perro, start digging.

Dog : Okay!

Since Puss did not give the dog a relevant answer to his question, Puss is violating the maxim of relevance as shown in the bold dialogue.

Reasons for Violating Maxims

According to data analysis, there are a few reasons why the visitor broke the maxim rules. They are including misleading the hearer, saving face, communicating self-interest, protracting the answer, avoiding the discussion, and pleasing the interlocutors.

Table 2 Reasons for maxim violation

No.	Reasons of Violation	f	%
1	Communicating self-interest	12	23.5
2	Avoiding discussion	10	19.6
3	Pleasing interlocutors	10	19.6
4	Saving face	8	15.6
5	Misleading the hearer	6	11.7
6	Protracting the answer	5	9.8
		51	100

From the table above, there are 51 occurrences that happens to violate the Grice's maxims. The violation that violates the maxim for the reason 'misleading the hearer' happens 6 times, for the reason 'saving face' is 8 times, for the reason 'communicating self-interest' happens 12 times, for the reason 'protracting the answer' is 5 times, for the reason 'avoiding the discussion' is 10 times, and the last one for the reason 'Pleasing the interlacers' is 10 times. So according to the results above, the conclusion is that the reason 'communicating self-interest' is most of the reasons why the characters in this movie is violating the maxims. Here are some of the results:

Communicating Self-Interest

The speaker chooses to talk about their interest rather than the topic of conversation in order to convey self-interest in this sense. In order to steer the conversation in the other direction, they are therefore breaking the maxim.

Data number: 005
[00.22.52 - 00.23.01]

Dog : Pickles? Is that your name? me, I don't have a name or a home. So, I'm not expert, but you don't look like a Pickles.

Puss : well, you don't look like a cat.

Dog : (gasps) Okay, okay, okay. Full disclosure: I'm not a cat. I'm a dog. (shushing)

In this dialogue the dog was asking Puss if his name is actually Pickles. But despite waiting for Puss' answer, the dog continues to give information about himself and therefore,

violates the maxim for 'communicating self-interest' reason.

Avoiding the Discussion

Avoiding the discussion is occurs when the conversational subject is unpleasant and the speaking partner feels the need to deviate from the rule by responding to the issue in an unrelated manner.

Data number: 041

[00.28.18 - 00.28.24]

Dog : I brought you a sword.

Puss : That's not a sword. That's a stick.

Dog : It's a stick sword.

Puss : Go home.

Although being in hiding, Puss worries that the dog might notify Jack Horner where he is. He then orders him to go home while attempting to silence him. Therefore, he is violating the maxim by avoiding the discussion further to avoid getting noticed by the guards.

Pleasing The Interlocutors

The next justification for breaking the rule is to satisfy the interlocutors. The negative face and frightening actions are related to the pleasant interlocutor. When someone does not respect the freedom of the other person to behave, or does so with malicious intent, that person is posing a danger. This behavior suggests that the speaker is caving in to the power of the audience.

Data number: 003

[00.14.29 - 00.14.40]

Puss : Okay, no more messing around (running and attacking the stranger)

Stranger: (dodging Puss' attack) Slow. Sloppy. Sad.

Despite Puss' attempt to stab him, the stranger was able to sidestep it with ease as he looked down on Puss and tried to bring him down through words by criticizing his movements. The stranger is violating the maxim by dominating Puss in conversation and not giving him a chance to speak.

Saving Face

To avoid making the speaking partner feel uncomfortable or ashamed, the speaker will attempt to use ambiguous language, make comments that are unclear, and tell lies.

Data number: 028

[00.38.04 - 00.38.12]

Kitty : What? This is blank. We've been ripped off! Where is the...

(Suddenly a writing appeared on the map)

Kitty : Oh. Yeah. I knew it was gonna do that.

While looking at a blank map that Puss and his group stole from Jack Horner, Kitty Softpaw, one of Puss' group member, notices that there is nothing on this map. She then become upset and in the middle of her conversation suddenly there is a writing appears on the map. She then become flustered and lying to Puss that they know the map will do that. By this context, Kitty is violating the maxim by saving her face because she is feeling ashamed.

Misleading the hearer

The goal of maxim violation, according to Grice (1975), is to deceive the hearer. With the expectation that the listener won't be able to identify the difference, the speaker gives incorrect information and tells a lie.

Data number: 021

[00.18.58 - 00.19.00]

Mama Luna : I told you health department people, there are no cats here!

Puss : Uh... (clear throat) meow?

Mama Luna : (open door, cats meowing inside)

In this dialogue, Mama Luna is trying to mislead the listener who is knocking on her door, who she thought was the health department, not noticing that the one knocking is Puss. She was trying to mislead the health department so they can keep her cats and keep them safe even though it is against the law. In this context, Mama Luna is violating the maxim to save herself and her cats.

Protracting the Answer

The next reason that people do violate the maxim is Protracting the Answer. Protracting the answer is providing the listener with so much information that the listener becomes bored.

Data number: 008

[00.33.33 - 00.33.42]

Kitty : (looking at Puss' beard) What is this?

Are you a pirate now?

Puss : Shh

Kitty : It's like a possum crawled on your face and died...

Puss : Shh!

Kitty : ...of shame.

Puss : please mock me quietly.

Kitty is asking Puss in this conversation why he has so many facial hairs and why his untidy beard gives him a pirate-like appearance. Kitty provides him with a lot of irrelevant information, and Puss eventually begs Kitty to silently mock him because her taunts wear him out. Kitty is violating the maxim because she is protracting her answers and bore Puss during their conversation.

Discussion

Based on the findings, the violation over the quality maxim is the most common that occurs in this movie. This happens because most of the characters are not honest and do not communicate the facts. The character who frequently breaks this maxim is Puss, the main character. One of the phrases uttered by the main character, Puss, is *Nah, I couldn't possibly*. In contrast to this statement, the character picks up a guitar and begins to sing. This speech constitutes a violation of the quality maxim.

Reasons that appear while breaking the maxims is mostly because of the characters are trying to show their self-interest. By giving the listener some facts about themselves that often not true and sometimes with malicious intents to mislead the listener, therefore the characters violating the maxims. The Dog character violates the maxim with this reason the most to make himself more approachable and can gain more friends along the way. Puss is the second

character that goes against the maxim for this reason by lying about himself in order to maintain his honor and his status as a famous hero.

The quality maxim is the most violated maxim in this study. Same as the study conducted by Purwati et al. (2018) has done research about violation of Grice's maxims in Finding Dory movie. The major protagonists of this film and other characters have been found to violate all of Grice's maxims, particularly the maxim of quality. This occurred when the main character Dory broke the rule by lying to the listener to persuade them to believe what she is saying. She did this to create a warm atmosphere for herself throughout the conversation.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the characters in the PBLW have violated the four Grice maxims. These maxim violations were attributed to communicating self-interest, avoiding the discussion, pleasing the interlocutors, saving face, misleading the hearer, and prolonging the answer. The most prevalent of these reasons was communicating self-interest, followed by avoiding the discussion and appeasing the interlocutors. The characters frequently put their own interests first, avoided uncomfortable topics, and tried to please others, resulting in the maxim violations.

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The maxim violation of quality was also happened in the research by (Noertjahjo et al. 2017). The character in this study violates maxim of quality in order to deceive the listener and avoid embarrassment. Another reasons to violate the maxim quality in this research is to keep a secret from the listener and avoiding conflict with each other.

Both of these researches have the same result as the present study, but what distinguishes this research from earlier studies are the causes of the violation. The characters in this research violate the maxim of quality because they communicate with each other to communicate their self-interest, which initially causes the violation, as opposed to the characters in the previous research who did so to persuade the listener to trust the speaker, to avoid embarrassment and to keep a secret.

Due to his tendency to be sarcastic and not straightforward, the main character Puss frequently violated maxims, particularly the quality maxim. Other characters, including the Dog, violated the maxims in order to gain attention, deceive others, or save face.

These results suggest that the characters in the movie frequently violate linguistic rules to advance their own agendas and manipulate conversation. Understanding these maxim violations and their underlying causes sheds light on the film's dialogue dynamics and character motivations. A good maxim must be truthful and supported by sufficient data.

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