

CONVERSATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE SHORT STORY “TA- NA -E -KA” FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyse examples of the cooperative principle followed in the short story “Ta- Na- E- Ka”, focusing on some ways of flouting and violating maxims of conversation. The analysis of the story will allow the reader to better understand the events of the story clearly by highlighting the principles of cooperation, followed by the characters, as well as how they are flouted or violated and what their distinctive effects are. To analyze the data, a qualitative method was employed. The researcher applies a detailed textual analysis through frequent reading and analysis to find out profound and adequate data. The researcher read the entire story multi-times. The primary reading was to identify the conversational maxims that were followed, as well as to identify flouting and violating the cooperative principle in the story. An extensive reading was held to optimize the accuracy of the preceding highlights, as the researcher supported the reasons for selecting the Gricean maxims highlighted in the story analysis based on the key reference of the cooperative theory. Based on the analysis, the characters follow all four maxims to communicate successfully, which facilitates the comprehension of the dialogue and reduces misunderstandings. When the cooperative principle is flouted, the interlocutors are expected to work out the implied meaning hidden in language expressions. In the case of violating the maxims, speakers are not cooperative. Only two examples are found about the violation of the quality maxim.

Keywords: Cooperative principle, conversational maxim, flouting, violating, short story.

INTRODUCTION

As human beings we use language to interact and communicate since it allows us to express and share our feelings, thoughts, and emotions. As we use language in order to establish mutual understanding between the speaker and the listener. “So, in order for the communication process between speaker and hearer to become smooth and effective, both of them have to be cooperative” (Zebua, Rukmini & Saleh, 2017). It implies that both interlocutors have to comprehend what they are saying in order for the conversation to proceed.

Thus, the American philosopher “Paul Grice” (1975) came up with the Cooperative Principle theory to explain how people cooperate in conversation. He has proposed four conversational maxims that undergo this principle, which are the maxim of quality, the maxim of quantity, the maxim of relation (relevance) and the maxim of manner. According to Grice, the cooperative principle is the presumption that those who are speaking in a conversation will typically try to be clear, relevant, and truthful. In other words, this means that each participant is responsible for contributing to the conversation as required. However, these four conversational maxims are not fixed rules, which can be easily flouted or violated in many situations. It happens when people disregard conversational maxims, regardless of which or how many there are (Risdiyanto, 2011).

These maxims are frequently used to analyse everyday individual conversations. Regarding literary works, drama is the only work that is written in a conversational style. Thus, it is possible to analyse the conversation between characters in a drama from the perspective of cooperative principle as well as to clarify how these maxims can be broken by characters in some occasions.

Many studies have examined the use of the cooperative principle in different literary works, for instance, Sari and Afriana (2020) have analysed the conversations in the Time movie based on the cooperative principle by observing the utterances between the characters. The results showed that all four maxims of conversation are followed in the movie and the most frequently followed maxims are the maxim of quantity and maxim of relation. While the maxim of manner is found least followed.

Another research was conducted by Riyanti and Sofwan (2016) to investigate the use of flouting and violating with the aim to analyze the speech acts and Grice’s maxims non-observance in the World Magazine Advertisements. The findings revealed that the maxim of quality is most frequently flouted among the four maxims.

However, in this analytical research, many aims of the researcher are firstly to be in quest of finding the cooperative principles followed in the selected story “Ta- Na- E- Ka” by Mary Whitebird. Additionally, the maxims are broken in literary texts to produce various rhetorical strategies and metaphorical language. The second study goal is to

examine some ways in which literary text flouts and violates Grice's cooperative principle maxims and the distinctive effects that do so.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

GRICE'S COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

Grice considers the four conversational maxims that undergo his Cooperative principle theory, are the ground rules that we follow while speaking and interpreting statements in regular circumstances (Black, 2006, p. 23). It is crucial to recognize these maxims since they are implicit presumptions we make in conversation. These four conversational maxims and their sub-maxims make the cooperative concept more understandable.

Maxim of quantity is to be as informative as possible when contributing and do not provide more information in your contribution than is necessary (Black, 2006, p. 23). By providing too few details, speakers risk making their listeners incapable of understanding what they are talking about. On the other hand, giving the audience more information than they require runs the risk of boring them. According to this adage, the statement is the most convincing or informative one that may be made throughout the conversation.

Maxim of quality is to make an effort to provide a contribution that is accurate (Benton, 2016). Speaker should refrain from saying anything he/she knows to be false. In addition. The speaker should not assert anything for which he/she lacks sufficient support. Accordingly, the speaker should tell the truth by being genuine.

Maxim of relation (relevance) is to be relevant, which states that speakers are considered to be making a point that is related to what has already been expressed or talked about (Guo & Li, 2017). Maxim of manners, on the other hand, is to be perspicuous, which states that speakers should be succinct and orderly while avoiding vagueness and ambiguity (Black, 2006).

When communicating with others, however, these maxims are not occasionally followed by people. For a variety of reasons, they deviate from the fundamentals and violate the maxims when expressing their ideas. For the purposes of achieving their goals, the speakers in this case disregard and violate the maxims.

FLOUTING AND VIOLATING

A maxim is flouted when someone purposefully disregards it in order to get their listener to understand the underlying meaning. According to Grundy (2000), flouting a maxim is a particularly subtle approach to get the other person to make assumptions and then come up with an implicature. Flouting can be found in common forms such as "Tautology, metaphor, overstatement, understatement, rhetorical question, and irony" (Zebua, Rukmini & Saleh, 2017). Speakers deliberately flout the cooperative maxim with the intention of being understood by their listeners. In other words, they wilfully violate the maxim with the intention that their listeners are aware of it.

While violation of the maxim occurs when the speaker deliberately misleads or manipulates the hearer. The hearer incorrectly assumes that the speaker is cooperating when they purposefully provide insufficient information or says anything that is dishonest, irrelevant, or confusing (Mael, Septiana & Retnani, 2018).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To achieve the aims of this research, a qualitative method has been employed since it is considered the most suitable investigation method in this case. According to Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge (2001), the goal of qualitative research is to create an explanation for the phenomena. Therefore, the researcher has applied a detailed textual analysis through frequent reading and analysis to find out profound and adequate data. First of all, the researcher has read the whole story to identify the conversational maxims which have been followed, as well as to identify the flouting and violating of the cooperative principle in the story. That has made it easier for the researcher to determine which types have been followed and which have not. A second read employing have taken place in order to optimize the accuracy of the earlier highlights. Then, using the cooperative principal theory existing from the aforementioned key reference, the researcher has corroborated his reasons for choosing the highlighted Gricean maxims as these findings have been discussed in two main sub-sections in the analysis part.

THE ANALYSIS OF THE STORY

The selected story is analysed into two main sub-sections according to their sequence of events in terms of the employed cooperative principle as well as the flouting and the violating of the maxims.

THE EMPLOYED COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

Example 1.

*"It's not a crime to borrow money, Mary. But how can you pay it back?"
"I'll baby-sit for you ten times."*

In the above dialogue, Mrs Richardson asked Mary how to pay the money back. Obviously, Mary replied that she would babysit for her ten times. There are two possible maxims of this answer. The first maxim is quantity when Mary's answer is as informative as required. She did not say too much nor too little. The second maxim represents in Mary's reply which is specifically perspicuous and concise. As she avoided the ambiguity. It means that the maxim of manner is followed in this dialogue.

Example 2.

*"Which side do you want?" Roger asked.
"I'll go toward the river, if it's okay with you," I(Marry) said.
"Sure," Roger answered.*

In this conversation above, Roger asked Mary about the way that she wanted to go with and Marry answered accordingly that she would go toward the river. In this regard, there are also two possibilities for the maxims. Firstly, Mary's answer is relevant to roger's question about which side she wants to walk by, there is relevancy in the conversation, it indicates the maxims of relation. Secondly, Mary's answer is as informative as necessary, which reveals the maxim of quantity.

Example 3.

Another conversation happened when Mary found a restaurant on the shore and she decided to order food because she was hungry. The man on the counter asked her what she wanted, as it is reported in the following dialogue:
He asked me what I wanted. "A hamburger and a milkshake," I said, holding the five-dollar bill in my hand so he'd know I had money.

The answer of Marry is as informative as needed to the man's question, which indicates that the maxim of quantity is followed. Since it dictates that those participating in a discussion provide as much information as is necessary, but no more (Black, 2006).

Example 4.

*Do they have a phone?"
"Yes, yes," I answered. "But don't call them."*

When Mary was asked in the aforementioned conversation whether her folks had a phone or not. She followed the maxim of relation by giving a relevant answer to the speaker's question. Mary confirmed that they had by answering "Yes, yes" and then she asked the man not to call them because she later would explain the reason to him.

Example 5.

*Finally, my grandfather asked, "What did you eat to keep you so well?"
I sucked in my breath and blurted out the truth: "Hamburgers and milk shakes."*

In this conversation, when Mary came back home after spending five days in the wilderness to accomplish the rite, she looked well. Her grandfather strangely wondered what she had been eating to keep well. Mary mustered her courage to tell him the truth. In this sense, there are two maxims followed. The first followed maxim is the maxim of quality, which is found in Mary's reply. Her answer is in accordance with the rule of the maxim of quality. She answered with the truth that she believed was true. The second is a maxim of quantity. Mary's answer is as informative as necessary, as she did not hide any needed information. This is in accordance with the maxim of quantity rules.

SOME WAYS OF FLOUTING AND VIOLATING

FLOUTING

Example 6.

*"What happened if you couldn't make it?" Roger asked.
"Many didn't return," Grandfather said. "Only the strongest and shrewdest. Mothers were not allowed to weep over those who didn't return. If a Kaw couldn't survive, he or she wasn't worth weeping over. It was our way."*

In this conversation, Roger asked his grandfather about what if one could not survive of that experience, and his grandfather flouts the quantity of maxim by being verbose and giving too much information. The grandfather answered that many did not return. He added that only the cleverest and the strongest managed to survive, and he also said if a Kaw was not able to survive, mothers were not permitted to cry for their children who did not return. He concluded that a Kaw was not worth crying for if he or she could not survive according to their tradition. The

grandfather ceased following the maxims to convince his grandchildren to infer the hidden meaning behind his answer, that they had to struggle to survive. In other words, the speaker uses implicature (Levinson, 1983 as cited in Khosravizadeh, & Sadehvandi, 2011).

Example 7.

“Mrs. Richardson,” I said, “would you lend me five dollars?”

“Five dollars!” she exclaimed. “What for?”

“You remember the ceremony I talked about?”

In this conversation, when Marry asked Mrs. Richardson to lend her five dollars. Mrs Richardson exclaimed and immediately replied by asking a question about what the five dollars were for. She avoided answering Mary’s question in this conversation. Mrs Richardson broke the rule of relevance by abruptly changing the topic of the question, which means flouting the maxim of relation.

Example 8.

“I’ll probably laugh about this when I’m an accountant,” Roger said, trembling.

“Are you trembling?” I asked.

“What do you think?”

Roger had been asked if he was trembling, however, he did not answer relevantly. Instead, he asked another question, which clarifies the flouting the maxim of relation. Such flouting can take the form of abruptly shifting the subject, particularly when a speaker asks a question that is often unrelated to the issue at hand, or when the speaker fails to address the topic directly (Thomas, 1995, as cited in Muslah, 2015).

Example 9.

“What the heck are you doing here, kid?”

“Hold it, kid. I just wanna know what you’re doing here. You lost? You must be from the reservation. Your folks must be worried sick about you. Do they have a phone?”

In this excerpt, the owner of the restaurant surprised by finding Marry sleeping in his place, he bombarded her with a lot of questions wondered whether she may be lost. The man flouts the maxim of quality since he asked a series of questions to know the reason behind her sleeping in his place. According to Brown and Levinson(1978) making rhetorical questions is one of the aspects of flouting the maxim of quality.

VIOLATING

Example 10.

“Why do you keep holding your head?” Roger asked.

“Oh, nothing. Just nervous,” I told him.

In this conversation, Mary lied on Roger when he asked her about the reason of keeping holding her head. Intentionally, Mary violated the maxim of quality because she told a lie to deny the reality of being afraid to lose the five-dollar bill which was hidden there. The act of lying is frequently done with the goal to deceive or mislead the listener deliberately(Black,2006).

Example 11.

“That’s a pretty heavy breakfast, honey,” he murmured.

“That’s what I always have for breakfast,” I lied.

When Marry ordered the food, the man at the counter told her that the meal is heavy for breakfast. Marry lied that she was used to have it for breakfast. Mary’s reply was not truthful, which indicates that she violates the maxim of quality.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis part of the story, it revealed that all conversational maxims of the cooperative principle theory were followed in the story. The characters flouted three conversational maxims which were the maxim of quality, the maxim of quantity and the maxim of relation. Contrary to flouting, the maxim of quality was the only rule which was violated in this analysed story.

The cooperative principles presented in this short story were followed for many reasons: to run smooth and cooperative dialogue between the characters, to make it simple for us to understand the dialogue or conversation in a literary text, as well as to reduce misunderstandings between the reader and author. However, the maxims are not always followed, and there are various ways that this can occur such as flouting and violating. In the context of the story, some characters flouted the maxims to get the listeners and reader to guess the implied meaning underlying the words, while the main character (Marry) purposefully stopped using the maxims to mislead the listener and achieve her own goals by violating the maxim of quality.

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