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## Geolinguistics In Flouting Grice's Conversational Maxim By Political Leaders In Critical Times

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### Abstract

This study pragmatically analyzes the data from literature in terms of maxims violation by political leaders in critical situations. The interest of the current study is to explore the geographical differences and linguistics similarities in terms of Grice ' s Conversational Maxim violations by political leaders in critical situations. People usually obey conversational maxims to fulfil an effective communication without misunderstanding. Analysis of the maxims violations from the literature showed that political leaders violate the four principles of maxims in critical situations to convey meanings in their favour. Maxims violations by political leaders were similar regardless of politicians' language or geographical region. It can be implicated that political leaders violated maxims to convey particular shades of meanings that might not be conceivable to masses in order to get their support. This result also showed that there are linguistics similarities regardless of the language, background, or geographical differences.

**Keywords:** Language geography; Geolinguistics; Violation, Flouting; Cooperative Principle and Politics.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Language considered a vehicle to express and thoughts across conversation. Humans have developed languages based on their needs for conversation (Ayasreh and Razali, 2018). To have an effective communication there is a need to have speaker and a hearer in every communication (Ayasreh, 2014; Awwad et al., 2019, Ayasreh et al. 2019). Ideally, the speaker and the listener need to

cooperate with each other to convey and to comprehend each other's speech effectively when communication. Otherwise, misunderstanding might happen between them and fall into a breakdown in their communication. However, it is well known that speech has layers and shades of meaning. That said, a person's meaning can be different than what that person is saying (Ayasreh et al. 2020). This notion was suggested in Grice's theory in which he proposed that a listener can derive different levels of meaning from a speaker which can be a transmitted meaning or an implicit meaning (Thomas, 2014). Thus, the study aims to answer the following main questions:

- What are Grice's maxims that violated in political context?
- To which extent are Grice's maxims followed in the political context?
- Are there differences in flouting the maxims between politicians regarding their geographical backgrounds?

## 2. Geolinguistics

Language considered as one of the most powerful markers which reflects identity, not only as individuals, but as groups (Saqr, et al. 2022). Language liberates and constrains our feelings and thoughts. As known "The pen, or the turn of phrase, is indeed mightier than the sword". Language, similar to other parts of our culture as it considers as a product of geography and a force acting upon the lives of people in all places around the world.

Language geography considered as apart of human geography which explores the distribution of languages in different geographical places. Linguistic geography can be identified as the studies of the way individuals exchange conversation about the landscape. For example, toponymy refers to the study of place names (Kadmon, 2000). Landscape ethnoecology, also named as ethnophysiography, which refers to the study of landscape ontologies and the process they are produced in language (Johnson, et al. 2012). Linguistic and geography can be defined as two main principles: Linguistic geography and Geolinguistics.

Linguistic geography, which concerns of the history of languages and their distribution through space (Delgado, 1962), also the study of the dissemination patterns and particular constructions of languages in communication (Williams, 1980).

Geolinguistics or other various other terms have been suggested. For example, linguistic geography, 'dialect geography' which deals with region and language variations (Trudgill, 1983 and Pei, 1966). geolinguistics is the study of language distribution and its relation with other discipline such as politics, geography, economic and cultural processes (Gunnemark, 1991).

## 3. Background of the Study

Grice (1975) proposed a principle named as "The Cooperative Principle". He clarified that observing the "Cooperative Principle", one should "make your

conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange on which you are engaged" (p. 45). Moreover, Grice proposed that if mankind want to express an effective and smooth communication, Speakers must follow the cooperative principle which is classified into four principles called maxims. The Cooperative Principle are Maxim of Manner, Maxim of Quantity, Maxim of Quality and Maxim of Relation. Schiffrin (2001) defined the cooperative principle as the following:

- Principle of quality: The speaker must not state something about a topic for which he does not have sufficient evidence. It is not permissible to lie or tell someone you think is a liar; The main word for this principle is truth or affirmation.
- Principle of Quantity: The speaker must not contribute more or less information to the conversation than is necessary. In other words, provide the required information for the purpose of the conversation.
- Quantity Relation: the speaker should say something related to the topic.
- Principle of manner: the speaker should avoid ambiguity and ambiguity of expression and should be concise and well organized.

#### **4. Previous Studies**

For the conversation to be successful, the speaker must respect or follow these principles and prevent flouting the principle of cooperation. These principles must be followed to respect originality, quantity, relevance also the method information is presented at every turn of the conversation (Grice, 1975). Although, in real life, not all conversation achieves the principle of cooperation - people often fail to respect the principles in many settings of everyday life and on several cases (Nieto, 2011). There are many reasons for this to happen, for example, some people are unable to speak clearly due to anxiety, frustration, nervousness, lack cultural awareness in terms of communication, are unqualified to communicate on a particular topic, or simply because they deliberately want to hide information. On the other hand, listeners are also responsible when communicating because the listener may not understand what the speaker is trying to say (Cherchia & McConnell-Ginett, 1990; Gumpers, 1982). Likewise, Davis (2007) and Thomas (1997) have argued that when a listener hears a speech, the speaker is expected to follow four principles. However, when it is observed that the speaker is not following the cooperative principles, the listener must make an extra effort to infer the true meaning behind the speaker's speech. What one can conclude from the previous argument is that communication can have special levels of meaning for certain reasons. Grice was particularly interested in how a people deliberately chose not to follow the rules, a process he called "flouting of a maxim". Grice recognized that there are situations in which the speaker deliberately flouted the maxim, particularly when the listener wants to have a meaning that exceeds or differs from the intended meaning (Thomas, 1997). This additional meaning is what Grice conceived of as implied (Thomas, 2014; Grice, 1975; Thomas, 1997). Brumark (2006) and Gumpers (1982) and Cherchia and McConnell-Ginette (1990) indicated that having the same basic knowledge of the speaker helps the listener to comprehend what the speaker is trying to say. The basic knowledge involved is not limited to the rules

of understanding linguistic elements, nonetheless, knowledge of the world or setting of speech in question. This knowledge is useful to the speakers because they can imply inferences (Coulthard, 1977).

Several studies (eg Mashudi 2007; Sadehvandi, & Khosravizadeh, 2011; and Rundquist, 1990) conducted on violating of Grice's principles in different settings, for example; literature, religion, and humor, in both oral and written contexts. Other examples include " Flouting Grice's Maxims at Dinner " (Rundquist. 1990); "Some Cases of Violations of the Maximum Volume and Violations by the Main Characters (Pari and Tim) at Dinner for Shamks" (Sadehvandi, & Khosravizadeh, 2011); "The Flouting and Hedging Maxims in the English Translation of Surah Yasin" (Mashudi, 2007), also " The Flouting of Conversational Maxims by the main characters in Titanic Movie " (Porvanto, 2008).

Conversely, it should be noted that it seems there are few studies on violations of the Grice principles in a political setting. This analysis of small questions can be considered a good start to analyze Grice's theories in a political setting. The researcher hopes that this article will shed light on the ease with which listeners can be manipulated by their leaders who are aware of their ability to use language to win public support. Present analysis allows us to understand how speakers, especially political leaders, can color the words they choose to produce nuances of meaning that not all readers and/or listeners are always aware of politicians' inferences.

## **5. Violating a maxim**

Violating a maxim is the "unostentatious non-observance of a maxim". According to Grice (1975), speaker did so because they wanted to mislead the audience if the speaker violates the principle. This meant to give the speaker a misleading connotation and indicates that this type of speech is commonly seen in several settings, for example, parliamentary speeches, debates and advertisements. Opting out a maxim occurs when the speaker is unwilling to cooperate in the way the maxim requires" (Grice, 1975). Harris (1996) argued that the speaker would avoid to avoid making a false implicature or appear uncooperative. Opting out occurs in a variety of situations in public life when the presenter is unable to respond in the way normally expected or for ethical or legal reasons.

## **6. Flouting Maxims in political context**

Ali and Abdulmun'im (2020) analyzed the violation of the Cooperative Principle in United State Presidential Debate between Biden and Trump. They empirically analyze the text of the first US presidential debate in 2020. They explored whether presidential debates lack consideration of data that violate the principles of Grice. They found that Biden and Trump did not observe the four maxims which results in flouting the maxims of quantity, quality, manner, and relation. They also found that the maxim of relation was the most violated in the debate.

Aisya & Fitrawati (2019) conducted study titled as “An Analysis of Flouting of Maxim Performed By Politician Guests In Mata Najwa Talk Show In The Episode Of Adu Lantang Jelang Penentuan And Babak Akhir Pilpres”. Their finding showed that both party leaders “Riza and Yusril violated the maxim for variety of reasons. They found that 55 statements violated the principle of cooperation by both leaders. The results showed that the maxim of quality was the most violated maxim in the interview. Furthermore, all four maxims were flouted for deferent reasons. The result is consistent with the idea that politicians need public trust, so they are flouting the maxim to gain support.

Buddharat, et al. (2016) analyzing the violations in the transcript of the second round of the 2016 American presidential campaign debate between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, also the second political debate between Democrat nominee, Barack Obama and Republican nominee, John McCain in 2008, the results of the study shows that political leaders have violated the principles of manner, quantity, quality and relationship. Their study reveals that the obvious way in which politicians' responses produce repercussions is by violating principles, particularly of quantity, quality, and relevance. Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, Barack Obama, and John McCain violated the maxim of quantity to deliver their ideas to the public because the whole point of an election debate is to get people to vote for one of them as the next president, even if their responses were irrelevant. This shows how they violated the principles of quantity, quality, manner, and relevance in the debate.

Ayasreh and Razali (2018) explore Bashar Al-Assad's Interview with the ARD channel during Arab spring. They found that the Syrian leader violated the four principles of maxims. Likewise, Ayasreh et al. (2019) analyzed the violation of Grice's during the Arab Spring. They found that the former president of Libya Muammar Muhammad Abu Minyar al-Gaddafi flouted the four maxims in several occasions during the interview. The violation of maxims occurs by talking too much, playing upon words, responding too short and changing the topic. It was found that he was flouting the maxims in order to deliver additional implications in his favor, and it also found how Bashar Al-Assad color the choices to express particular shades of meanings that are not always conceivable to all readers in order to gain the support from the masses.

## 7. DISCUSSION

The aim of the current study is to investigate the cooperative principle in terms of violating the maxim based on political setting by reviewing literature in political context. The following table shows examples of maxim violation by political leaders in critical communication.

Table1: Violation of Grice's Conversational Maxim by political leaders in critical communication.

No	Year	Country	Politician	Flouting Quantity	Flouting Quality	Flouting Manner	Flouting Relationship
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1	2020	United states	Donald Trump	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted
2	2020	United states	Joe Biden	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted
3	2019	Indonesia	Party leaders in final round of presidential election (Riza and Yusril)	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted
4	2016	United states	Hillary Clinton	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted
5	2013	Libya	Muammar Muhammad Abu Minyar al-Gaddafi	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted
6	2012	Syria	Bashar Al-Assad's	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted
7	2008	United states	Barack Obama	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted
8	2008	United states	John McCain	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted	Flouted

The results showed that the four principles of maxims were violated by political leaders when they face difficulties in answering questions. The study analysis reveals that there are many reasons for how and why political leaders violate maxims for example:

- Political leaders flouted the maxim of relevance change the track of the topic being discussed and to mislead the hearer in critical situations. They change the topic consciously by answering irrelevant answers.
- In flouting Quality, that is “do not say what you believe to be false” the strategies of Metaphor, Hyperbole, and Overstatement are used equally, which reflects the idea that when this maxim is flouted, the statement given is either metaphorical, exaggerated or overly-stated to hide or avoid answering a question truthfully or when political leaders do not say the truth and when their contributions are not based on sufficient evidence.
- Political leaders violated the maxim of quantity when they made overstatement or an exaggerated response that makes the response more informative than is needed. They made overstatement to strengthen their contribution or to have an agreement and to show strong opinion.
- Finally, in flouting the maxim of Manner, political leaders do not say clear statement and this kind of flouting confused the hearer which implies the use of metaphoric expressions with ambiguous answers.

## 8. CONCLUSION

Political Leaders blatantly violated all four principles of maxims during the interview for several reasons regardless their background or their geographical place, such as, hide the truth, do not want to answer, do not know the answer, send implied message, or mislead the listener, because they are willing to convince the people. In fact, most of them flouted the maxims in such an artistic and confident way to gain social power and public favor. Political leaders in critical communication color their choices of answers to express shades of meanings that are not always conceivable to listener unless they are familiar with political contexts and have background knowledge regarding the context. In addition, this study also showed that there are linguistic similarities regardless of the language, background, nationalities, or geographical differences.

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