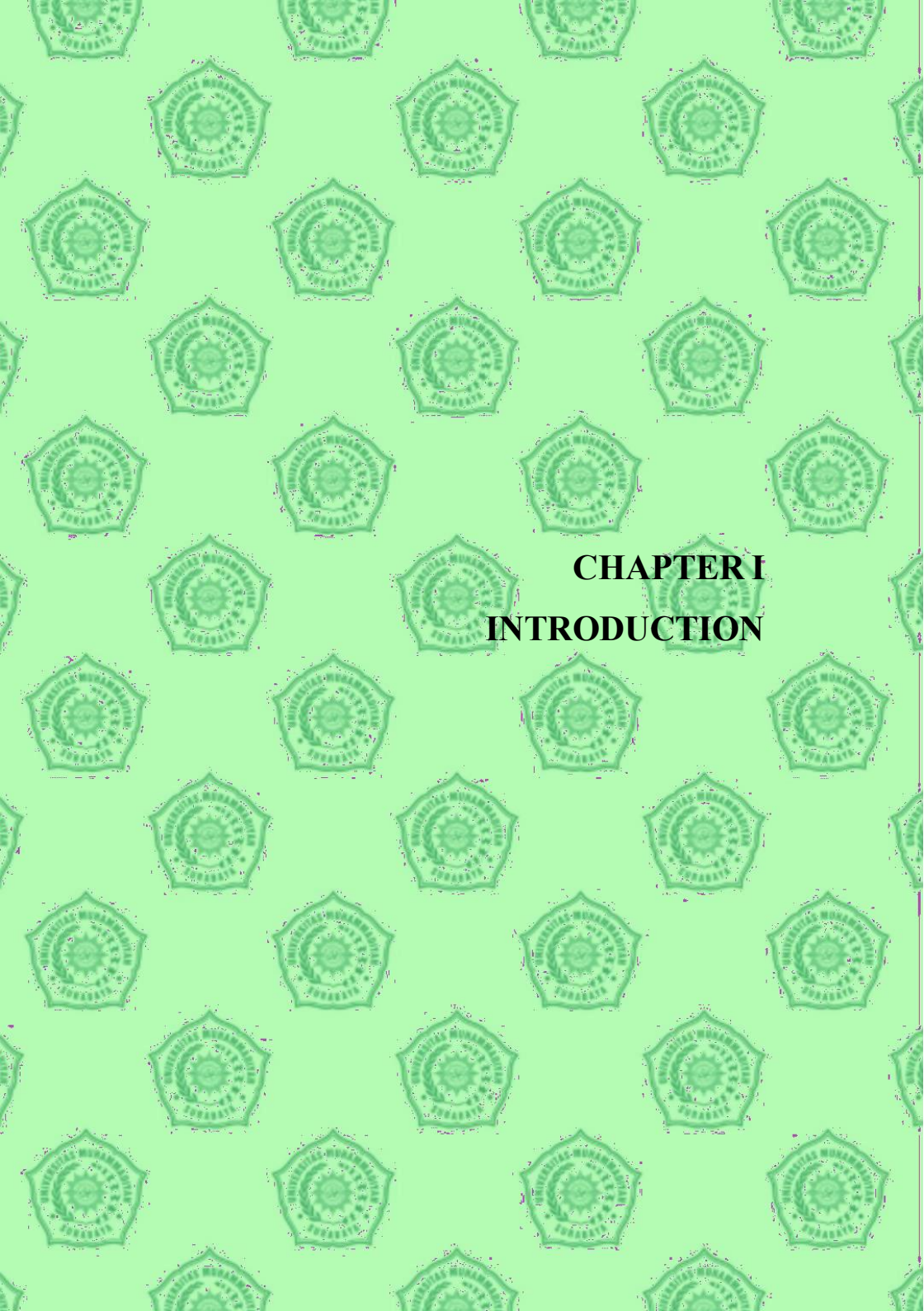




CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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This chapter contains the background of the study, followed by research question and objectives of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Pragmatics is the study about the meaning of communication between the speaker and the hearer and how they use the language to communicate each other (Noftriana et al., 2014). According to Levinson (1983), pragmatics investigates how more is communicated than is actually said, involving phenomena such as deixis, implicature, presupposition, and speech acts. It contrasts with semantics, which deals with context-independent meaning, while pragmatics is essentially about context-dependent aspects of interpretation (Xiyao, 2015). As a part of pragmatic, Maxims play a crucial role as guidelines that speakers usually follow to ensure their contributions are appropriate and helpful, facilitating mutual understanding.

Within Maxims theory, Grice's Cooperative Principle stands as a foundational framework that governs effective communication through four conversational maxims: quantity (contribution is informative as it required), quality (being truthful), relevance (convey in informative relevant), and manner (being clear and orderly) (Noftriana et al., 2014). While these maxims typically guide successful communication, speakers often deliberately violate or "flout" them to convey implicit meanings, create dramatic effects, express emotions, or reveal psychological. Grice (1975) states there are implicature inside when someone try to communicate each other by using the language with speaker's intention is not expressed explicitly (Cristina, 2021). Regarding that, the implied meaning sometimes is hidden and without realizing it, the meaning inside and the conversation depend not only on the speaker, who is trying to deliver a message, but also on the hearer, who draws a conclusion from

the implication of the utterance, depending on the context in which it occurs (Noftriana et al., 2014).

Flouting is when people make an uncooperative principle when they are communicating it means that the person has already committed a violation of the maxim (Andy & Ambalegin, 2019). A flouting implicature is a conversational implicature based on an addressee's assumption that the speaker is deliberately breaking (flouting) a conversational maxim while still being cooperative (Wahyuni et al., 2019). The phenomenon of flouting maxims becomes particularly significant in cinematic discourse, where dialogue serves as a communication tool for character development and narrative progression, movie also portrays very well gesture, intonation, situation and expression of the characters that happens within the story as real as in real life situation (Hamidah et al., 2022). Linguistic deviation often provides deeper insights into character psychology and enhances the audience's understanding of the narrative's underlying themes (Nafi' et al., 2025),

There are various kinds of social deviance or behavioral variation as 'disorder', when they are better conceptualized using other categories, such as 'non-pathological individual differences', 'lifestyle choice', or 'crime'. Based on world health organization A mental disorder is characterized by a clinically significant disturbance in an individual's cognition, individual's emotional regulation, or behaviour (World Health Organization, 2022). It is usually associated with distress or impairment in important areas of functioning. There are many different types of mental disorders. Mental disorders may also be referred to as mental health conditions. The latter is a broader term covering mental disorders, psychosocial disabilities and (other) mental states associated with significant distress, impairment in functioning, or risk of self-harm. In 2019, 1 in every 8 people, or 970 million people around the world were living with a mental disorder (World Health Organization, 2022).

Understanding how individuals with mental disorders communicate their experiences and intentions requires examining not only what they say, but what they do with their words. Speech act theory has become increasingly influential in contemporary pragmatics, communication studies, and neuroscience, offering a framework for analyzing how utterances function as actions rather than mere descriptions (Tomasello et al., 2022). Recent neuropragmatic research has revealed that speech acts activate specific brain signatures related to commitment, action expectation, and social cognition, demonstrating that communication involves complex cognitive mechanisms beyond simple information transfer (Tomasello et al., 2019). By examining how characters with mental illness employ speech acts in film dialogue, researchers can gain deeper insights into how language functions not merely as information transmission but as social action that both reflects and constructs psychological states and interpersonal relationships.

A script is an original written instrument or document which contains the dialogue and action for a drama, a movie, or other performance (Putri, 2021). Script will be used as one of the important data to analyze the flouting maxim of the movie. The movie *joker* (2019) is a psychological movie that have mental disorder main character who apply implicature throughout his entire dialogue. *Joker* is a psychological thriller film directed by Todd Phillips and starring Joaquin Phoenix as Arthur Fleck, a failed clown and aspiring stand-up comedian whose descent into mental illness inspires a violent countercultural revolution against the wealthy in a decaying Gotham City in the early 1980s (Phillips, 2019). This film received praise for exploring the psychological side and background of the *Joker* character in depth. *Joker* opens up a discussion about the importance of attention to mental health and how social injustice can affect a person's life. This movie won Golden Lion as Best Film at the 76th Venice Film Festival (2019), becoming the first superhero comic book film to win the main award at the art film festival (Venice International Film Festival, 2019).

This movie also a favorite at the Oscars after its victory at the Venice Film Festival, following in the footsteps of previous winners such as Roma and The Shape of Water (Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, 2020). The Joker movie is very relevant for linguistic studies, there are several research related to this movie shows that the main character uses various language functions such as expressive, directive, referential, metalinguistic, phatic, poetic, and commissive (Friarly & Linuwih, 2020). The existence of research discussing linguistic features in this movie can be an important reason that this movie can be a suitable object for flouting maxim research. In addition, Arthur Fleck's character portrayal has been analyzed from multiple perspectives, including psychological and linguistic approaches, making it a rich source for pragmatic analysis, particularly in examining how conversational implicature functions in contexts of mental illness and social alienation (Friarly & Linuwih, 2020).

Arthur Fleck is the main character; He is a lonely and struggling man who works as a clown by day and dreams of becoming a stand-up comedian. Arthur lives in a city filled with poverty, violence, and social injustice, and he often feels ignored and mistreated by the people around him. "There are five kinds of Personality Disorder reflected to the Joker as the main character in Joker movie by Todd phillips, they are; borderline personality disorder, depressive personality disorder, sadistic personality disorder, antisocial personality disorder, and negativistic personality disorder" (Rahman et al., 2020). As a character struggling with mental illness and social alienation, Arthur's speech often deviates from conventional conversational norms, creating a rich linguistic landscape for pragmatic analysis. His dialogues are characterized by hidden meanings, contradictions, dark humor, and psychological complexity, making them particularly suitable for examining how flouting maxims functions as both a character-building device and a narrative technique.

Despite the critical and popular success of Joker (2019) and its complex portrayal of mental illness through dialogue, there remains a

significant gap in scholarly research examining Arthur Fleck's linguistic behavior from a pragmatic perspective. While studies have analyzed the film's psychological and social themes, few have specifically investigated how the deliberate violation of conversational maxims in Arthur's dialogue contributes to character development, reveals his psychological state, and advances the film's narrative structure. Previous research conducted on different movie shows that every movie has a high possibility at flouting and violating maxim, for example is study in movie “Wonder Woman” that uncover 12 flouting maxims, but also found that the character use flouting to enhance storytelling and express deeper meaning.

A study under the titled “violation Maxims in *Spider-man: No Way Home* Film” by Putri Mayang Sari and Anita (2023) examined the character conversations / dialogue of the movie Spider man to determine the kinds and occurrences of violated maxims based on Grice’s theory, found 32 cases of flouting especially in maxim relevance. The other study titled "An Analysis of Maxim Relevance by Main Character in *Taxi Driver* Film by Risa Maulana Ishaq and I Gede Agoes Caskara Surya Putra in 2023 seeks to investigate the violations of relevance maxim made by the primary character in the 1976 *Taxi Driver* film. These several studies bring a lot of similarity, such as using the same theory about flouting maxim from Grice cooperative principle. The previous study examines linguistic data from films or fictional character.

Based on the finding on previous study that shows about how one movie containing a lot of flouting cases. First, there’s no research has specially examine the flouting cases on movie Joker, this gap highlights the need for a deeper study regarding this movie. Second, many studies analyze Joker as a character, but few focus on how his mental illness influences his flouting of maxims and pragmatic behavior. This study is designed to address this gap by offering a comprehensive analysis of flouting maxim on movie Joker, aiming to uncover flouting maxim cases that were overlooked in earlier research. By choosing this topic, this study

wished to contribute to broadening the discussion around media representation, and informing future scholarly work in film and pragmatic studies.

As described above, the literature as an element of the film has become a media culture that is evolving. The movie can summarize and present the social culture that existed long ago in the form of mythical tales into a story that can be enjoyed in the form of audio-visual equipment. The message and the existing cultural values can be channeled into a moral lesson for movie lovers. The movie as a medium of education is exciting to be presented to the children. Not all movies have positive values that build the character of children. Many movies are bad and should not be the children's

1.2 Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What types of speech act are showed in Arthur Fleck's dialogue throughout the Joker (2019) movie?
2. What types of conversational maxims are flouted in Arthur Fleck's dialogue throughout the Joker (2019) movie?
3. How do these flouted maxims contribute to Arthur Fleck's character development?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the research question, this study aims to:

1. To Identify and categorize the specific types of speech act in the Arthur Fleck's dialogue.
2. To identify and categorize the specific types of conversational maxims (quantity, quality, relevance, and manner) that are flouted in Arthur Fleck's dialogue throughout the Joker movie.

3. To examine the relationship between flouted maxims and character development, exploring how these linguistic violations reveal Arthur Fleck's psychological state and contribute to his character arc.

1.4 Significance of the Research

Some purposeful research is expected to have benefits on the audience of the research. It is also expected to benefit the writer or researcher himself. Accordingly, the writer wishes this to be significant from both theoretical and practical point of view.

1.4.1 Theoretical Significance

This study contributes to the field of pragmatics by extending the application of Grice's Cooperative Principle and maxim theory to cinematic discourse. It demonstrates how flouting maxims functions as a deliberate artistic and narrative device in film dialogue, rather than merely representing communication breakdown. The research provides empirical evidence for the systematic use of maxim violations in character portrayal and psychological representation, thereby enriching our understanding of pragmatic theory in creative contexts.

Furthermore, this study bridges the gap between linguistic pragmatics and film studies, offering interdisciplinary approach that can inform future research in both fields. It establishes a methodological framework for analysing dialogue in psychological dramas and other character driven narratives.

1.4.2 Practical Significance

The findings of this research offer several practical applications:

1. For educators and students in linguistics, literature, and communication studies, this study provides a concrete

example of how pragmatic theories can be applied to analyze real discourse, enhancing understanding of both theoretical concepts and their practical applications.

2. For scriptwriters and filmmakers, the research offers insights into how linguistic strategies can be employed to create psychologically complex characters and convey subtext effectively through dialogue.
3. For film critics and analysts, this study provides a systematic framework for examining dialogue as a narrative and character-building tool.
4. For further research, the research contributes to understanding how language patterns may reflect psychological states and social alienation.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

1.5.1 Scope

This research scope focuses exclusively on Arthur Fleck's spoken dialogue in the film *Joker* (2019), directed by Todd Phillips. It includes all of Arthur Fleck's spoken lines throughout the film, along with the necessary contextual information for pragmatic interpretation. The analysis centers on selected scenes where conversational maxims are clearly and deliberately flouted, providing sufficient data for a comprehensive pragmatic analysis. The study also covers scenes representing different stages of Arthur's character development to capture the evolution of his dialogue and pragmatic use.

1.5.2 Limitation

The study limitation excludes dialogue from other characters except when it is directly relevant to understanding Arthur Fleck's responses. It does not analyze non-verbal communication or visual

elements of the film. Additionally, the research does not include comparisons with other film adaptations of the Joker character, nor does it analyze the film's broader social and political themes beyond their linguistic manifestation.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding to understand this study, the definition of terms which are often found in this study as follows:

1. **Pragmatics**

It is a branch of linguistics that studies language use in context, focusing on how speakers and hearers create and interpret meaning through communication that goes beyond the literal or semantic content of utterances.

2. **Speech Act**

A speech act is the functional unit of communication that combines what is said (locution), what is intended (illocution), and what effect it produces (perlocution).

3. **Flouting Maxim**

It is a deliberate and obvious violation of one or more of Grice's conversational maxims, performed with the intention that the addressee will recognize the violation and infer the speaker's intended implicit meaning or communicative purpose.

4. **Conversational Maxims**

It is the four principles proposed by H.P. Grice as part of the Cooperative Principle: the maxim of quantity (make your contribution as informative as required), quality (try to make your contribution true), relevance (be relevant), and manner (be perspicuous, clear, brief, and orderly).

5. **Joker (2019)**

It is a psychological thriller film directed by Todd Phillips, serving as a standalone origin story for the DC Comics character Joker, focusing on the character's transformation from Arthur Fleck into the iconic villain through a realistic portrayal of mental illness and social inequality.

