



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

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Through this chapter, the researcher will present a theoretical review to clarify the conceptual framework used in this study. Including Grice's conversational maxims (quantity, quality, relation, and manner) which serve as the central analytical tools.

2.1 Pragmatics

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, Pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by speaker or writer and interpreted by listener or reader (Nazeeva Yusrina et al., 2024). This type of study necessarily involves the interpretation of what people mean in a particular context and how the context influences what is said (Eragamreddy, 2024). Furthermore, pragmatics explores how utterances can make listeners draw inferences about what is said in order to arrive at an interpretation of the speaker's intended meaning, revealing that communication often involves more than just the literal words spoken (Ma et al., 2025).

Based on Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975), explain about how communication relies on mutual cooperation between speakers and listeners. Pragmatics explores phenomena such as implicature (implied meaning), speech acts (e.g., promises, requests), and deixis (context-dependent references like "here" or "now"). Speech acts learn the meaning of language based on the relationship between utterances and the actions performed by speakers. The discussion about meaning of speech acts (illocutionary act) is part of the science of linking the pragmatics meaning of words in social situation and the words chosen in a context (Mazulfah, 2019). For instance, when someone responds, "It's raining," to a request to go hiking, the listener infers rejection through contextual relevance

rather than explicit refusal (Grice, 1975). Pragmatics studies how “a message’s meaning might change depending on the environment in which it is given” (Eragamreddy, 2024). Pragmatic competence shows that the ability to interpret and produce contextually appropriate language is critical for effective communication.

A subfield of linguistics known as pragmatics examines how a message's meaning might change depending on the environment in which it is given, it focuses on how speakers modify their language usage in specific social and cultural contexts to meet their communication objectives (Eragamreddy, 2024). For example, a statement like "This room is cold" might function as a request to close a window rather than a mere temperature observation. Thus, Understanding the language and meaning levels of pragmatics is essential for efficient communication in a range of contexts. This contextual dependency of meaning demonstrates that successful communication relies not only on linguistic competence but also on the ability to interpret social sign and shared cultural knowledge between interlocutors (Eragamreddy, 2024).

2.2 Psychology

Psychology is a branch of science that is the object of the discussion is the state of human soul. This approach seeks to understand human behavior, why and how they do things and also understand how these creatures thinking and feeling. Psychology approach is a way of analysis based on the viewpoint of psychology and departed from the assumption that the literary work always discusses about the event of human life and addressing emission in life. Psychology is an academic and applied discipline that involves the scientific study of mental function and behaviors. (Brenan, 2006:23)

2.2.1 personal disorder

A personality disorder is a broad group of abnormal personalities in which the individual is believed to exhibit maladaptive patterns of behavior acquired since childhood. The main study of the research is a

personality disorder. Personality disorders are a class of mental disorders characterized by enduring maladaptive patterns of behavior, cognition, and inner experience exhibited across many contexts and deviating, from those accepted by the individual's culture.

Joker (Arthur Fleck) displays borderline personality disorder, evident in his rapidly shifting moods, intense fear of abandonment and impulsive self-destructive actions, which the study describes as “unpredictable, manipulative, unstable” and marked by “frantic fear of abandonment”. He also exhibits Depressive Personality Disorder, characterized by pervasive gloominess, pessimism, brooding and a sense of worthlessness, repeatedly portrayed as “sad, discouraged, pessimistic and brooding” throughout the film. Sadistic Personality Disorder is reflected in his explosive rage and pleasure in humiliating others, described as “explosively hostile, abrasive, cruel” and “liable to sudden outbursts of rage”.

His behavior aligns with antisocial personality disorder, shown by impulsive, irresponsible, and violent acts without remorse, such as shooting three men on the subway and killing Murray, which the analysis identifies as “impulsive, irresponsible, deviant, unruly” and “acts without due consideration”. Finally, Joker shows traits of Negativistic (Passive-Aggressive) Personality Disorder, manifesting as resentment, indirect negativity and resistance to others’ expectations, noted as “resentful, contrary, skeptical, discontented” and “venting anger indirectly”. These disorders are further linked to a Traumatic Brain Injury with Pseudobulbar Affect, causing uncontrollable laughing episodes that Joker attempts to explain with a “FORGIVE MY LAUGHTER” card.

2.2 Speech Act

According to Tauchid and Rukmini (2016), our acts in using utterances in everyday communication are known as speech acts. In addition, Searle established speech acts in his elaboration of Austin's work. Speech actions can be divided into three categories: illocutionary,

perlocutionary, and locutionary. Producing meaningful utterances, such as communicating the truth or the situation as it is, is known as a locutionary act (Eragamreddy, 2024). As an act of communication, a speech act succeeds if the audience identities, in accordance with the speaker's intention, are expressed. "The first thing one should notice is that speech acts are actions happening in the world, that is, they bring about a change in the existing state of affairs" (Mey, 1993).

2.2.1 Locutionary

The locutionary act represents the basic level of utterance production, focusing on the actual words spoken and their literal meaning. As described in the literature, a locutionary act encompasses "the actual utterance and its apparent meaning, comprising any and all of its verbal, social, and rhetorical meanings, all of which correspond to the verbal, syntactic and semantic aspects of any meaningful utterance" (Mineiro et al., 2023). This act involves the phonetic, phatic, and rhetic dimensions of speech, where speakers produce sounds that form words with conventional meanings. Essentially, the locutionary act is what is said in its most literal form, without considering the speaker's intentions or the context of communication.

2.2.2 Illocutionary

The illocutionary act represents the intended function or force behind an utterance, going beyond mere literal meaning to convey the speaker's communicative purpose. Research indicates that the illocutionary act "is the active result of the implied request or meaning presented by the locutionary act," serving as the core component of speech act analysis (Mineiro et al., 2023). This level of speech act is central to pragmatic analysis because it reveals what speakers are actually doing when they speak, whether requesting, promising, threatening, or asserting. Searle's classification system divides illocutionary acts into five fundamental types (assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives) each characterized by specific illocutionary forces and felicity conditions (Geurts, 2019).

1. Assertive Illocutionary Acts

Assertive or representative speech acts commit speakers to the truth of expressed propositions, reflecting what speakers believe to be the case. Geurts (2019) explains that "representatives are usually taken to include threats, offers, bids, and bets" and function to make "words fit the world (of belief)". Research on Libyan textbooks found that representatives showed the highest frequency among all speech act types, with percentages ranging from 39.34% to 52.08% across different textbook levels (Mineiro et al., 2023). The dominance of assertives in educational materials reflects their fundamental role in conveying information and establishing factual claims in classroom discourse.

2. Directive Illocutionary Acts

Directive speech acts represent attempts by speakers to get hearers to do something, expressing what the speaker wants the hearer to accomplish. Previous study notes that directives cause speakers to become "committed to the goal that p will not be true unless b sees to its truth," where the addressee must act to fulfill the propositional content (Geurts, 2019). The prevalence of directives in textbooks reflects their importance in classroom interaction, where teachers frequently issue requests, commands, and questions to guide student learning.

3. Expressive Illocutionary Acts

Expressive speech acts convey the speaker's psychological state or emotional attitude regarding a particular situation or proposition. Geurts (2019) characterizes expressives as speech acts whose "main function, according to many authors, is to express psychological states," including acts like "greeting expresses pleasure at meeting or seeing someone, thanking expresses gratitude". These speech acts make words fit the world of feeling, allowing speakers to express emotions such as gratitude, apology, or congratulations.

4. Commissive Illocutionary Acts

Commissive speech acts commit speakers to future courses of action, binding them to undertake specific behaviors or activities.

Previous study explains that "commissives deal with the acts which commit the speakers to some future course of action" and notes that speakers undertake commitments "of the form Ca,bp, i.e. Alfred is committed to act on Alfred will walk the dog" (Geurts, 2019). According to Haugh and Kádár (2017), commissives create obligations and expectations that extend beyond the immediate speech situation. Fleck's utterances frequently prove unreliable or contextually inappropriate, raising questions about his capacity or willingness to fulfill stated commitments.

5. Declarative Illocutionary Acts

Declarative speech acts bring about changes in the world through their utterance, establishing new states of affairs by virtue of being spoken. Geurts (2019) emphasizes that with declaratives, "the speaker changes the world via words" and provides examples such as "I find the defendant guilty of armed robbery" and "I christen this ship the USS Stormy Daniels". These performative utterances require specific institutional contexts and authority, functioning independently of the speaker's psychological states. Notably, research on Libyan EFL textbooks found a complete absence of declaratives across all examined materials, representing "a deficiency" in pragmatic coverage that limits learners' exposure to institutionally significant speech acts (Mineiro et al., 2023).

2.2.3 Perlocutionary

The perlocutionary act concerns the actual effects or consequences that an utterance has on the hearer, whether intended by the speaker or not. According to scholarly discourse, "a further perlocutionary act is the actual effect of the locutionary and illocutionary acts, such as persuading, convincing, scaring, enlightening, inspiring, or otherwise getting someone to do or realize something" (Mineiro et al., 2023). This dimension of speech acts focuses on the outcomes of communication, including how hearers respond emotionally, cognitively, or behaviorally to what has been said. The perlocutionary effect can vary significantly across different hearers, as individual interpretations and reactions shape the ultimate impact of any communicative act.

2.3 Conversational Maxims

The Conversational Maxims consist of Maxim of Quantity, means that participant's contribution is informative as it required (for the current purposes of the exchange) (Noftriana et al., 2014) The participant does not contribute more than required, Maxim of Quality indicates that participant's do not say what they believe to be false and they may not say if they have lack adequate evidence (Hossain, 2021), Maxim of Relevanc is used when the participants just the convey in informative relevant, Maxim of Manner means that the participants have to be perspicuous and to avoid obscurity of expression and avoid ambiguity (Hossain, 2021). The utterance of the participants produces are brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity) and orderly. When Flouting a Maxim, the speaker does not intend to mislead the hearer but wants the hearer to look for the conversational implicature, that is, the meaning of the utterance not directly stated in the words uttered, therefore, when the speaker intentionally fails to observe maxim, the purpose may be to effectively communicate a message (Noftriana et al., 2014).

2.3.1 Maxim of Quantity

Maxim of Quantity requires speakers to provide an amount of information that is sufficient for the purpose of the conversation, but not excessive (Noftriana et al., 2014). This means giving as much detail as is needed, and no more. As Paul Grice formulated in his foundational work, *Logic and Conversation* (1975), speakers should "make your contribution as informative as is required" without overwhelming the listener with unnecessary information (Grice, 1975). This maxim ensures communication is efficient and avoids confusion caused by too little or too much detail.

In addition, the maxim of quantity is the expectation that people will say just enough and give the right amount of information in a conversation. According to this maxim, the expectation is that people in conversation: Give enough information to be informative in the

conversation, don't provide too little information that would make your contribution to the conversation uninformative, don't give more information than you need to for your contribution to be informative (Hossain, 2021).

2.3.2 Maxim of Quality

Maxim of Quality emphasizes truthfulness and reliability in communication (Wijaya, A., 2014). Speakers are expected not to say what they believe to be false or for which they lack adequate evidence. Grice clearly stated in the same seminal work that participants should "not say what you believe to be false" and "not say that for which you lack adequate evidence" (Grice, 1975). This maxim underpins trust in conversation by encouraging honesty and discouraging deception or unsupported claims. According to Hossain (2021) state that the maxim Quality that Grice (1975) discuss as "do not say what you believe to be false and do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence" (Hossain, 2021)

2.3.3 The Maxim of Relation

The Maxim of Relation, or relevance, requires that contributions to a conversation be pertinent to the topic at hand (Hossain, 2021). According to Grice's Cooperative Principle, conversational contributions should be "such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice, 1975). This maxim keeps conversations coherent and focused, preventing irrelevant or off-topic remarks that could disrupt understanding.

In addition, according to Wijaya, A. (2014) Maxim of Relevance is used when the participants just the convey in informative relevant. In addition, the speaker must not say anything off-topic or outside the discussion and anything that has no correlation or is not related to what is being discussed (Op.Sunggu & Afriana, 2020). This maxim serves as a tool that connects interaction with each other. But on the other

hand, there is often the flouted of this maxim, it happens because of the hidden meaning that the speaker wants to convey to the listener.

2.3.4 The Maxim of Manner

The Maxim of Manner focuses on clarity and orderliness in communication (Hossain, 2021). Speakers should avoid obscurity, ambiguity, and unnecessary complexity, while being brief and orderly. Grice (1975) described this maxim as a guideline to “avoid obscurity of expression,” “avoid ambiguity,” “be brief,” and “be orderly” (Schamberger & Bülow, 2022). This maxim helps ensure that messages are clear and comprehensible, facilitating smooth and effective communication.

Maxim of Manner means that the participants have to be perspicuous and to avoid obscurity of expression and avoid ambiguity (Schamberger & Bülow, 2022). The utterance of the participants produces are brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity) and orderly (Noftriana et al., 2014). In addition, the opposite of clear expressions or good manner can be ambiguous and unclear statements will be considered a violation of proverbs (Op.Sunggu & Afriana, 2020). To avoid misunderstanding and ambiguous meaning, the listener must have a relationship, background knowledge or listener can guess the meaning from the utterance that given by speaker because it can be useful for participants to understand the meaning conveyed by the speaker.

2.4 Flouting Maxims

Flouting maxims occurs when speakers intentionally violate Grice's principles to convey implicit meanings, relying on listeners to recognize the deviation and infer the intended message (Hossain, 2021). For example, sarcasm flouts the Maxim of Quality (truthfulness) by stating the opposite of what is meant, as in “Great weather!” during a storm. Similarly, a vague response like “I didn't not do it” flouts the Maxim of Manner, creating ambiguity to avoid accountability. Such

deliberate violations generate conversational implicatures that enrich communication by adding layers of humor, irony, or indirect criticism. This strategic use of language allows speakers to express meanings that go beyond the literal content of their words.

Moreover, flouting maxims serves important rhetorical and social functions, such as softening criticism or emphasizing emotional states (Imachulatha Abi et al., 2025). In literature, flouting is often employed to deepen character complexity; for instance, contradictions in dialogue can reveal internal conflicts or hidden motives (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010). By analyzing how speakers manipulate these linguistic norms, we gain insight into the nuanced ways language is used to achieve specific interpersonal or narrative effects (Imachulatha Abi et al., 2025). This highlights the flexibility of Grice's maxims as not only rules for cooperation but also tools for creative and strategic communication.

2.5 Character Development

Character development refers to the evolution of a character's traits, motivations, and behaviors across a narrative, driven by internal conflicts and external pressures (Smith et al., 2019). Effective development creates multidimensional personas, as seen in *Joker*, where Arthur Fleck's transformation from a marginalized individual to a vengeful antagonist reflects societal alienation and psychological decay (bizworld, 2024). This process often follows a character arc, such as a positive arc (growth), negative arc (decline), or flat arc (consistency influencing others). For example, a protagonist overcoming fear to lead a rebellion demonstrates growth through adversity (Film Lifestyle, 2024).

Psychological realism in character development relies on aligning actions with consistent motivations and flaws (Smith et al., 2019). In *Joker*, Arthur's use of dark humor and erratic speech flouts conversational maxims, mirroring his fractured psyche and societal disconnection. Writers achieve depth by integrating backstory, relationships, and moral dilemmas, ensuring characters evolve organically rather than serving as plot devices (bizworld, 2024). This

evolution engages audiences by fostering empathy and reflecting universal human experiences, such as resilience or moral ambiguity (Vogler, 2007).

2.6 Previous Study

A study under the titled “Violation Maxims in Spider-man: No Way Home Film” by Putri Mayang Sari and Anita (2023) examined character conversations / dialogue of the movie spider man to determine the kinds and occurrences of violated maxims based on the Cooperative principle that part of Grice’s theory. By employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the researchers identified 32 cases of flouting, with the maxim of relevance occurring the most often. Even with these violations, the communication within the character inside the film is still effective, highlighting how the maxim is flouted and Cooperative Principal aids in grasping implied meanings. This article shows that understanding conversational maxims is essential for interpreting the underlying intentions and messages in film dialogues.

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. This research utilized a qualitative descriptive approach that included direct observation, watching the film, and analyzing dialogues based on Grice's Cooperative Principal theory from 1975. The findings revealed 19 occurrences of maxim violations, with 5 instances distinctly identified as relevance maxim flouting by the main character. These violations were attributed to providing irrelevant answers, changing topics, making jokes, and expressing denial. In summary, the relevance maxim flouting is a communication technique that the characters use to enrich their roles and influence the emotional tone of various scenes within the film.

Another study named “violation Maxims in the ‘*Wonder Woman*’ Film,” carried out by Esra Juniati Op. Sunggu and Afriana in 2020, seeks to explore the different kinds of maxim flouting and examine the reasons behind characters in the *Wonder Woman* film disregarding them, using Grice’s Cooperative Principle (1975) as a framework. By employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the researchers scrutinized the film’s script and identified 12 instances of maxim flouting: one related to quality, two concerning quantities, two regarding manner, and seven tied to relation, which was the most commonly violated. The results indicate that characters, particularly the primary ones, flout these maxims to express underlying meanings, evade straightforward responses, convey feelings, or inject dramatic and comedic elements. Ultimately, all four kinds of maxims were ignored throughout the film, with the maxim of relation being the most prominent, highlighting how characters utilize implicature to enhance dialogue and aid in storytelling.

The three studies share a common foundation in applying Grice’s Cooperative Principle (1975) to analyze maxim violations in film dialogues, using qualitative descriptive methods to identify and categorize instances of flouting. All three emphasize that the maxim of relevance (relation) is the most frequently violated maxim, highlighting its key role in shaping conversational implicatures that enrich communication and storytelling. However, differences arise in their scope and focus: Putri Mayang Sari and Anita (2023) examined a broad range of maxim violations in *Spider-Man: No Way Home*, identifying 32 cases with a dominance of relevance maxim flouting.

While Risa Maulana Ishaq and I Gede Agoes Caskara Surya Putra (2023) concentrated specifically on the main character’s relevance maxim violations in *Taxi Driver*, finding 5 distinct instances linked to tactics like topic changes and jokes. Meanwhile, Esra Juniati Op. Sunggu and Afriana (2020) analyzed *Wonder Woman* and reported floutings across all four maxims, with relevance again most prominent, but also notable violations of quality, quantity, and manner, demonstrating a wider distribution of maxim flouting. Collectively, these studies show that while the maxim of relevance is commonly flouted to convey implicit meanings,

the extent and types of maxim violations vary depending on the film's narrative style and character dynamics, illustrating how pragmatic principles adapt to different cinematic contexts.

