

THE VIOLATIONS OF MAXIMS IN THE SIDESTOCK ONLINE STORE

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Abstract

The study aims to describe the violations cooperative principle in the interaction between e-commerce administrators and customers. The data are the utterance of e-commerce administrators and customers, which later is examined by using Grice's pragmatic approach. The descriptive qualitative method shows several violations of maxims carried out by the speakers. They are maxim of quantity, relevance and manner. The most dominant violation that occurred was the violation of the maxim of quantity. In the interaction between e-commerce administrators and customers, there are many utterances involving sellers and buyers in bargaining for goods, so many utterances spoken by admins exceed the information customers need. In this case, the admin as the seller must offer the goods even though the customer does not need them in the context. In addition, the violation of the maxims is used to make their goods sold.

Keywords: The Principle of Cooperation, Maxim, Administrators, and Customers

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital world, online transaction on electronic commerce (e-commerce) has been people's favorite. It provides a fast, safe and convenient place to shop for modern people. However, as an offline transaction, the online transaction also involves a bargaining system in its process. In the offline bargaining process, the seller and buyer carefully pick up the diction and body gestures to close the deal as they wanted. On the other hand, in an online transaction, the only choice the buyer and seller have to get the price of the items as they wanted is by utilizing the language because it is not done in face-to-face interaction. Therefore, analyzing the language of online transactions is interesting since language becomes the only medium for the participant to achieve certain goals.

A language is a communication tool used by humans to communicate and interact with fellow humans. In human life, language will never be separated. Kridalaksana (in Efendi, 2012) argues that language is a system of arbitrary sound symbols used by members of social groups to work together, communicate, and identify themselves. Wijana (Wijana, 1996, pp. 46–52) says that the communication process to run smoothly

requires cooperation between the speaker and the interlocutor. Furthermore, to achieve communicative objectives, Leech (in Nadar, 2013, p. 6) argues that the interlocutor interprets what is meant by the speaker when making a particular utterance because of the background of understanding possessed by both the speaker and the interlocutor. Good communication will occur if the speaker and the interlocutor have the same background knowledge and compromise on the same communicative goals.

In particular, as in online transactions, the only background knowledge supporting the communication process is the details of the items on the market. With this limitation on hand and no face-to-face interaction, both seller and buyer have the high possibility of creating misunderstanding in their communication. For example, when a customer asks an e-commerce administrator about information, the e-commerce administrator may not provide a precise, detailed, and matching answer.

The mismatch of question and answer in conversation is discussed in pragmatic studies, especially those focusing on violations of the principle of cooperation. The cooperative principle proposed by Grice offers a set of rules that both interlocutors should follow to achieve their respective needs.

Grice divides the principle of cooperation into four categories: the maxim of quantity, relevance, manner, and quality. The maxim of quantity requires that the information provided is by the need or does not exceed the need. The maxim of relevance requires that the conversation has relevance or is interconnected. The maxim of manner requires the speaker or interlocutor to avoid unclear, confusing, long-winded, and prolonged expressions and express something coherently. Finally, the maxim of quality requires that the utterance is by the truth and the truth is certain or by the facts (Wijana, 1996, pp. 46–52).

However, in everyday communication, the cooperative principle is impractical and does not apply to "real language use" (Jia, 2010, p. 88) says. Huang (in Radfar, Z. H., Sudana, D., & Gunawan, 2020) states that the amount of information provided must be appropriate in the principle of cooperation. In addition, he argues that conversations are conducted in a correct, relevant, and transparent way. Though the interlocutors do not always follow the cooperative principle, the communicative goals can still be achieved. Some people even utilize the violation of the cooperative principle for their own sake.

In the current study, the researcher violates the cooperative principle that occurred in online transactions as a foundation to reveal the linguistic phenomenon. The online store platform to analyze is Sidestock (Sidestore men's original brand). Sidestock is one of the largest online clothing stores with a thousand followers. Sidestock has many potential customers interested in their goods with this number of followers. Thus, analyzing the customer's conversation and the store's admin will reveal the communicative pattern in an online marketplace.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Grice (1975) argues that people need to cooperate for successful communication. Four maxims of conversation apprehend such cooperation. They are maxim of quantity, quality, relation, and manner. Maxim of quantity demands the speaker to be informative. He should give the information as informative as required, not too much or too little. He should not exceed the information as to his contribution to the conversation. Maxim of quality requires truthfulness in the information given by the speaker. The information should not be false, and the speaker should have adequate proof to deliver such information. Maxim of relation limits the speaker to give the relevant information under the topic discussed. Finally, the maxim of manner confines the speaker to give clear information for his contribution. The information should not be ambiguous, which could lead to any misunderstandings.

In regular conversation, the speaker may not comply with the principles of the four maxims. Certain individuals violate the maxims to give other people an opportunity to interpret the message and the meaning. Some people even deliberately violate the maxim to make a multi-interpretation for the listener. Under the framework of Cooperative violates, the maxim is called a flout to maxim since the speaker does the exact opposite of the maxim. Flout of the maxim of quantity is indicated through an excessive or vice versa. Flout of maxim of quality is deemed if the information is false and incorrect. Flouting maxim of relation is done if irrelevant information is brought to the discussion. Maxim of manner is violated when the speaker's utterances are ambiguous and unclear.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive research method with a qualitative approach. Under this approach, the study's goal is to get particular detail on specific individuals/groups (Lambert & Lambert: 2012). The study's data source is the chat of customers and admin of the online store of Sidestock. The researcher collects the data by classifying which utterance violates the cooperative principle. Later, the data is analyzed based on the classification of maxim's violation under Grice's cooperative principle. Finally, the utterance consisting of maxim's violation is discussed based on the situation and context of the conversation. The instrument of the present research is the researchers themselves. For a more comprehensive discussion, the researchers compare and contrast the findings with related previous studies.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the analysis, there is three violation of the Cooperative Principle (CP); violation of maxim of quantity, relevance, and manner. From a total of 23 data, 12 data belong to the analysis of maxim of quantity, 7 of maxim of manner, and 4 of maxim of relevance. The distribution of the violation of the cooperative principle is shown in Figure 1 below.

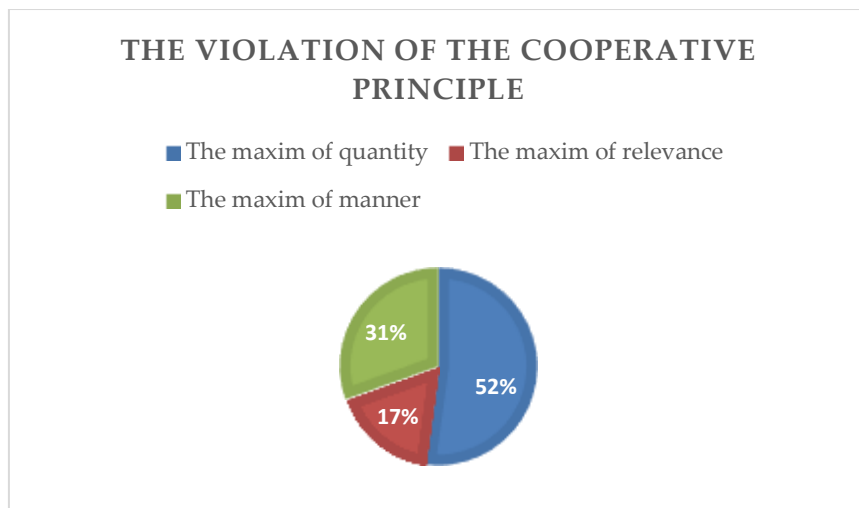


Figure 1: Compilation of the findings

Figure 1 above showed the violation percentage of the maxim of quantity is 52%, the maxim of relevance is 17%, and the maxim of manner is 31%. Several data are chosen to describe since several data have similar characteristics.

The maxim of quantity

Data 01. The conversation below occurs when a customer asks about a brand of pants that he wants to buy from the Sidestock online shop.

Customer: *Selamat pagi min, saya mau memesan celana Under Armour yang #065 yang warna hitam apakah size M-nya masih ready?*

[Good morning min, I want to order #605 Under Armor pants, black color. Is size M still ready?]

Admin: *selamat pagi juga ka, untuk saat ini celana Under Armour yang #065 size M-nya ready ka. Tapi jika kaka mau nyari atau pilih celana yang lain juga boleh, kebetulan saat ini kita lagi ada barang baru.*

[good morning, bro/sis. For now, size M #605 Under Armor pants are ready. But if you want to look for or choose other pants, you can do so, we also have new stuff right now]

In the data above, the customer's speech is considered adequate. It contains a truth value. The customer asks what he wants, #605 Under Armor pants, black, size M. The admin's reply is considered a violation of the maxim of quantity because he provides excessive information. The admin of the shop gives excessive information as a marketing trick. The customer who's been texting the online shop's admin indicates that he is a potential customer, not a window shopper. Thus, telling the customer that the shop has new items will increase the probability of the deal.

Data 02. This conversation occurs when the customer asks to wrap his package for a gift, but the admin politely denies the request.

Customer: *Saya minta barangnya dibungkus seperti bungkus kado, soalnya barang ini mau saya kasih ke istri saya yang lagi ulang tahun.*

[Please wrap the item as gift because I want to give this item to my birthday wife].

Admin: *Maaf ka, kemaren kebetulan yang biasa packing gak masuk jadi saya bungkus biasa, soalnya saya tidak bisa packing seperti bungkus kado. Sekali lagi minta maaf ya ka.*

[Sorry, Sis, yesterday the employee who used to pack was absent, so I packed it as usual item because I can't pack like a gift wrap. Once again, I'm sorry.]

Even though both utterances contain truth value in the conversation above, the admin provides excessive information by giving several reasons behind his incapacity in fulfilling the customer's request. The employee who is absent, his incapability in wrapping the gift, and his double apology are indicated through the expression "sorry." The excessive information uttered by the admin. Such excessive information is important to get the customer's understanding and avoid the customer's bad review due to the shop's service. Following the cooperative principle, the adequate conversational contribution of the admin toward the customer should include merely the information of the absence of the packing worker.

Data 03. This conversation occurs when the customer asks the stock of Columbia t-shirt to the admin.

Customer: *Selamat siang gan, untuk kaos Columbia sudah ready belum gan?*

[Good afternoon, bro. is the Columbia shirt ready, bro?].

Admin: *Selamat siang ka, untuk stok kaos yang saat ini ready adalah kaos champion, jika kaka mau lihat detailnya cek di IG kita kak.*

[Good afternoon bro, the ready one is champion t-shirt, if you want to see the details, check our IG bro]

Instead of answering the "yes/no" question directly, the admin states that other information is considered excessive because he informs the other shirt that the customer does not ask. The customer asks about the Columbia shirt, while the admin provides information about the Champion shirt. In this case, the admin violates the maxim of quantity. By violating the maxim, the admin implicitly says that the items asked by the customer are not on the stock, but he does not want to lose the potential customer. Therefore, the admin offers similar shirt to keep the possibility of the deal.

Data 04. This interaction occurs when the admin notifies the customer regarding the ordered item and offers other items that the customer did not ask for.

Customer: *Baik min saya mau yang warna hitam size 30.*

[Ok, min, I want the black one, size 30].

Admin: Baik. Oh iya kak kebetulan hari ini kita ngadain diskon 11/11. Mungkin kaka tertarik untuk liat-liat barangnya.

[Ok. Well, we have a 11/11 discount, in case you are interested, you can window shopping the other items].

The statement conveyed by the customer above is concise and does not deviate the truth value because it is clear that the customer is only interested in black goods, size 30. Therefore, customer's request is already positively confirmed by the admin. However, the admin also gives sale event information and offers window shopping to the customer. Thus, when the admin offers the customer to window shopping, his contribution is excessive. Such additional information is regarded as a violation to the maxim of quantity. The violation is done to attract the customer and increase the possibility of the sale.

Data 05: The dialog below occurs when the admin provides information regarding the order limit on that day.

Admin: selamat pagi untuk hari ini pemesanan via Gojek kami terima hanya sampai jam empat.

[Good morning, today we accept orders via Gojek only until four o'clock].

Customer: Jika saya mau pesan jam setengah lima masih bisa kan min? soalnya saya masih di kantor dan ada barang yang mau saya beli untuk dipakai hari sabtu.

[If I want to order at half past five, can it still be done, min? Because I'm still at the office and I want to buy things to use on Saturday].

In the dialogue above, the admin has made his conversational contribution clear. However, the customer tries to negotiate the store's open hours for the sake of his interest. Therefore, when the response encroach upon the information given, this action has been deemed a violation of maxim of quantity.

From the data above, both the customer and the admin have violated the maxim of quantity by delivering excessive information toward the conversation. Therefore, it makes the contribution of the interlocutor more than required. The violations of quantity maxims done by the admin have a similar pattern. It is aimed to create more significant opportunities for the closed deal and maintain the potential customer. Meanwhile, the violation done by the customer is aimed to get a special service from the shop.

The maxim of relevance

Data 013: The interaction occurs when a customer asks for an online store office address. At the same time, the admin informs how to order.

Customer: Maaf min saya mau tau alamat kantornya, saya mau langsung ke tempat saja biar enak.

[Sorry, I want to know the address of the office. I'd rather come to the store.]

Admin: *Jika mau order bisa langsung lihat di IG kami kak, disitu sudah kita jelasin detailnya, terimakasih.*

[If you want to order, you can directly look at our Instagram (IG). In our IG, we have explained the details. Thank you].

In the conversation above, there is a violation of the principle of cooperation, namely the maxim of relevance. The admin does not provide information related to what is the topic of conversation raised by the customer. Instead of answering the question, the admin provides another piece of information that is irrelevant to the conversation. It indicates that his speech violates the principle of cooperation. The irrelevance response coming from the admin indicates that the store does not have an offline service. Therefore, though the answer looks irrelevant, the admin's response is politely refuse the customer's request to shop offline.

Data 014: The interaction occurs when a customer asks about Uniqlo pants, while the admin does not provide information according to what the customer asked.

Customer: *Siang gan, untuk celana Uniqlo yang warna coklat apakah masi ada?*

[Afternoon, bro. For Uniqlo pants, brown color, is it still available?].

Admin: *Selamat siang kak, saat ini kita sedang mengadakan big sale di shopee, jadi kaka bisa cek langsung ke shopeenya.*

[Good afternoon sis. Right now, we are having a big sale at Shopee, so you can check directly at Shopee].

In the dialogue above, the admin (the interlocutor) violates the principle of cooperation because the contribution given is irrelevant to the customer's needs. Customers need information about Uniqlo pants which are brown, while the admin promotes the sale event. The admin violates the maxim of relevance because the information provided is unrelated. Through the admin's response, the customer does not have any adequate information whether the stock of brown color Uniqlo pants is ready or not. Therefore, he has to check up on himself on the Shopee marketplace. However, the admin's response is implied not to ignore the potential customer's needs but to invite the potential customer to window shopping on a sale event while checking the wanted items himself.

Data 015: The interaction occurs when the admin provides information regarding the delivery of goods ordered by the customer. Meanwhile, the customer did not respond by the admin's speech.

Admin: *Pagi kak untuk jaket TNF yang kaka pesan sudah kami proses, apa mau ikut pengiriman hari ini ata besok?*

[Morning Sis, we have processed the TNF jacket that you ordered, do you want to be delivered today or tomorrow?].

Customer: *Kalau jaket Columbia harganya sama ga dengan jaket TNF?*

[Is the price of Columbia jacket as same as the TNF jacket?].

The dialogue above occurs when the admin provides information to the customer about the delivery of the ordered goods. Using the question form, the admin expects the customer to reply as needed. However, the contribution given by the customer is irrelevant to the question stated by the admin. Instead, the customer raised another question. Thus, it is clear that the contribution made by the customer violates the maxim of relevance. Furthermore, the violence implies that the customer has an eye on the Colombia jacket, but his budget is limited. Thus, the customer's response may invite two actions; the customer replaces its TNF jacket's order with the Colombia jacket, or he may order both jackets as long as the Colombia jacket's price is the same as the TNF jacket.

Data 016: The dialog occurs when a customer asks about a TNF jacket.

Customer: *Min jaket TNF bagus ya untuk naik gunung?*

[Min, is the TNF jacket good for hiking?]

Admin: *Jaket Gastra juga bagus kak kalau untuk naik gunung, soalnya bahannya juga kaya tebal.*

[The Gastra jacket is also good if you go up the mountain because the material is also thick.].

In the dialogue above, the speaker asked about the quality of the TNF jacket, while the interlocutor gave contributions or information about the Gastra jacket. The irrelevant information conveyed by the admin has violated the maxim of relevance because the speaker does not provide the information needed by the speaker. Though the admin's response is deemed irrelevant, it is informative for the customer. By saying "also," the admin implies that the TNF jacket is suitable for hiking as the customer requires. However, the admin has another recommendation that may suit the customer's need, the Gastra jacket. Giving such a recommendation does not mean that the admin ignores the customer's need but to maximize the customer's satisfaction with the shop, he promotes better items for particular needs.

Two to three data in the violation to the maxim of relevance done by the admin reflect an effort to maintain the store's performance and potential customer (data 014 and data 016). Meanwhile, in data 013, the admin violates the maxim of relevance to indicate that the store's system is unnegotiable. Thus, when the customer want to check out particular products and close the deal, the process is done in an online system. In the data above, it is not only the admin who violates the maxim of relevance, but also the customer itself. The customer do such violation when they are in the process of considering which items suit them best. Thus, after the particular information given, the customer keeps asking about another product.

The maxim of manner

Data 017: The interaction occurs when a customer asks for details about the size of Life Is Good pants, but the admin only tells him to check it himself.

Customer: Boleh minta perinciannya tentang ukuran celana Life Is Good kak.

[Can I ask for the size details of Life Is Good pants, bro].

Admin: lihat di IG kami aja kak.

[Just take a look at our IG].

The interaction above, the information provided by the admin does not meet the need of the customer. The admin's contribution to the conversation is deemed unclear since it leaves the customer puzzled because he does not get the required information. Therefore, it violates the maxim of manner.

Data 018: This interaction occurs when a customer asks for a Deus shirt.

Customer: Selamat pagi gan, untk kaos Deus apakah sudah ready?

[Good morning, bro, is the Deus shirt ready?].

Admin: Selamat pagi kak, kaka bisa cek di Sidestock kami.

[Good morning, bro, you can check our Sidestock].

In the dialogue above, between the customer and the admin, there is a violation of the maxim of manner. Contributions given by the admin contain elements of ambiguity or disorganization. From the customer's speech, as a speaker, the information needed is only limited to whether Deus shirts are ready or not. However, the admin provides information that is not coherent. He only provides information for customers to check for themselves at the Sidestock Instagram.

Data 019: This conversation took place between the admin and the customer regarding the availability of Staford pants.

Customer: Gan celana Staford yang #002 size L masih ready ga?

[Bro are the #002 Staford pants, size L, ready?].

Admin: Untuk melihat stok silahkan lihat di IG kami ka @sidestok.

[To see the ready stock, please look at our IG @sidestok].

In the dialogue above, the admin answers the question by ordering the customer to check the items himself. As an admin, he should explain in detail and provide information according to the customer's needs. At first glance, the contribution given by the admin is unrelated. However, it indicates the violation of the maxim of manner because his speech is ambiguous and unorganized.

Data 020: This conversation occurred when a customer wanted to buy a Columbia and Puma boxers.

Customer: *Min saya mau beli boxer Columbia sama boxer Puma, boleh minta alamat tokonya kebetulan saya di daerah Ciputat.*

[Min, I want to buy Columbia and Puma boxers. Can I have the address of the shop, I'm in the Ciputat area.]

Admin: *Silahkan pesan via Whatsapo atau via Shopee.*

[Please order via Whatsapp or Shopee].

In the dialogue above, the speaker wants to buy Columbia and Puma boxers directly at the shop. However, the admin's response is not coherent to the query. As an admin in an online shop, he should contribute coherently and clearly, so that the customer can get the proper information. The admin should be able to explain in advance the ordering rules made by the shop or reject the request by saying "Sorry, our shop does not accept direct visits to the place so that you can order via WhatsApp or Shopee."

Data 021: This conversation occurs when the admin provides information to the customer regarding the delivery of his order.

Admin: *Pagi kak, untuk kaos polo Lacoste yang kaka pesan sudah kita proses ya, jadi bisa ikut pengiriman hari ini.*

[Morning bro. We have processed the Lacoste Polo shirt that you ordered. So, you can join today's delivery].

Customer: *Saya lagi diluar kota min.*

[I'm out of town, min.].

In the conversation above, the customer's response looks ambiguous or confusing. Since the delivered items need to be accepted by the recipient, the information given by the customer leave the admin puzzled, "is it right for him to send the goods or not?" In this case, the customer has violated the maxim of manner, because it has made an ambiguous or unclear contribution.

Data 022: The interaction below occurs when a customer asks about his order package.

Customer: *Sore min paket yang saya pesan kira – kira berapa hari ya nyampinya?*

[Good afternoon min, how many days did it take for the package ordered by me to arrive?].

Admin: *Nanti kita infoin ka.*

[We'll let you know later, bro.]

As in nature, the admin of any store should provide information coherently and clearly so that the customer can get the information clear. Although the admin's information is related to the information needed, the speech is very uncooperative. It indicates a violation of the maxim of manner.

Most of the violation of maxim of manner is performed by uttering such short and uninformative responses. Though it seems like the responses belonging to the maxim of manner is irrelevant to the previous utterance, the data above belong to the violation of manner not relevance. It is due to the short and uninformative responses to the queries asked. In some cases, the maxim of manner is violated when the first interlocutor asks for information that is already clear, for example an information of shipping period and detail size of the item.

The data above indicated that the most dominant violation of the principle of cooperation is the maxim of quantity. It indicates that in the interaction between e-commerce administrators and customers, many utterances spoken by the admin exceed the customers' information. In this case, the admin as the seller must offer the goods even though the customer does not need them in the context. In addition, the violation of the maxim of quantity is used to make their goods sell and provides an informative explanation about the goods. This is different from what was found by (Lestari, 2015; Narsiwi & Ariyana, 2018). They found that the violation of the maxims in the principle of cooperation is a means that serves as a humour expression. Meanwhile, Nugraheni (Nugraheni, 2015) found the violation of the principles of cooperation is influenced by the environment, technology, and age development. Astuti (Astuti, 2014) added that the violation of the principle of cooperation is intended to ensure the quality of the goods. In addition, it is aimed at saleable merchandise. The violation of cooperative principles also is to give the interlocutor the impression that the information provided may not be complete enough, the preamble for politeness, and be used to circumvent (Hadiwijaya & Amalyasari, 2019). And that is confirmed by the findings of (Kurniati, 2019; Wibisono, 2017). They found the violation of these maxims serves to show, explain reasons provide an informative explanation (Kurniati, 2019; Wibisono, 2017). In addition, violations also serve to show feelings of irritation and complaints (Wibisono, 2017).

CONCLUSION

The current study implies that the violation of maxim is done under several reasons. The seller violates the maxim in order to close the deal and as the marketing tricks for the potential customer. While the customer violates the maxim to negotiate several rules of the store for the sake of their personal interest. The results implies that both interlocutors deliberately violate the maxims to achieve communication goals.

The data shows that the maxim of quantity is the most violated maxims. It indicates that in the interaction between e-commerce administrators and customers, many utterances spoken by the admin exceed the customers' information. In this case, the admin as the seller must offer the goods even though the customer does not need them in the

context. In addition, the violation of the maxim of quantity is used to make their goods sell and provides an informative explanation about the goods.

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