

Cooperative Principle's Violation and Politeness Strategies in A Movie

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Abstract

The present study was aimed to find out the type of politeness strategies which was frequently used by the casts in "Mr. Bean" movie and to find out the type of cooperative principle's maxims which was frequently violated by the casts in "Mr. Bean" movie. This research was a descriptive qualitative method. All data were taken from the utterances of all casts in "Mr. Bean" movie which contained the politeness strategies and the violation of cooperative principle's maxims. The researcher himself was the instrument of the research. The results show that bald on-record strategy is often used by the casts in "Mr. Bean" movie and the violation of relevance maxim is often used by them in "Mr. Bean" movie. It indicates that the casts of "Mr. Bean" movie tend to use bald on-record strategy and to violate the relevance maxim than other categories.

Keywords. maxim, violation, cooperative principle, politeness strategies, movie.

INTRODUCTION

People use language as a means of communication with others. The language spoken certainly has meaning which can be seen based on the context. The study of contextual meaning is called pragmatics (Yule, 1996). It focuses on the meaning of utterances which is aimed and produced by a speaker and interpreted by a listener. It means that they need to organize what they want to say in proportion to who they are talking to, where, when, and under what circumstances. In pragmatics there are some principles, such as cooperative principle and politeness principle.

Cooperative principle assumes that the participants involved in the conversation should be cooperative to achieve the communication goals. It needs to be observed and followed by them based on the cooperative principle which is proposed by Grice. Grice (1975) in Yule (1996) states that cooperative principle makes your conversational contribution 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. In addition, it is elaborated in four sub-principles which are called maxims; they are the maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner. It means that the participants should provide sufficient information, and should speak clearly, relevantly, perspicuously.

However, people occasionally cannot comply with those maxims and they seem to break the rules. It is

called violation. Leech (1992) argues that the maxims are violated in conversations because the speakers are inclined to maintain politeness. He is the first sociolinguist who disagrees with the Grice's cooperative principle. He takes the assumption of the principle that the participants should be cooperative with each other in communication. It means that the cooperative principle controls interlocutors in giving their contributions. Besides, with respect to social and psychological, Leech (1992) denies the cooperative principle because it cannot explain why people are often so indirect in conveying what they mean. Based on his criticism, he proposes a politeness principle which will stand at the same time or in the same place with the cooperative principle.

Politeness is defined as respecting and considering other people's behavior or a way that is used to achieve the purpose of communicating, such as maintaining a harmonious relationship with others. As cited in Yule (1996), in an interaction, politeness is the means employed to show awareness of another person's face. It means that politeness can be accomplished in situations of social distance or closeness. Showing awareness for another person's face when others seem socially distant is often portrayed in terms of respect or reverence. Demonstrating the identical consciousness when others are socially close is frequently described in terms of friendliness, camaraderie, or solidarity. There are some strategies of politeness principle; they are bald on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record.

Bald on-record does not try to minimize the threat to the hearer's face and it would be generally avoided. Therefore, it is mostly used when participants have a close relationship or information that must be shared hurriedly, such as in an emergency. The example of bald on-record is "Watch out!" Positive politeness is used as a way to reduce the intimidation to the hearer's positive face by expressing kindness and truly interest in the needs of the hearer. It gives a greater risk for the speaker of suffering a refusal. The example of positive politeness is "You look hungry. Can I make something for you?" Negative politeness is often utilized by a face saving act. It puts emphasis on avoidance of imposition on the hearer. It is also called as formal politeness. The example of negative politeness is "Could you lend me your money?" Off-record is applied by the speaker to get rid of the potential that compels the hearer to approve something. It uses indirect language. The example of off-record is "It's getting hot in here."

Apart from being found in everyday communication, the two principles above can also be found in conversations between casts in a movie, especially "Mr. Bean" movie. The movie was released in 1997 with the comedy genre. It was directed by Mel Smith and starred in many actors and actresses, one of whom was Rowan Atkinson as Mr. Bean. Mr. Bean himself is a unique character because in his role he does more funny things in pantonym than saying something. It is interesting for the researcher to investigate the type of politeness strategies which was frequently used by the casts in "Mr. Bean" movie and to investigate the type of cooperative principle's maxims which was frequently violated by the casts in "Mr. Bean" movie. Moreover, there are a lot of previous researches related to cooperative and politeness principles. Firstly, a study was conducted by Wartety, Elfiondri, and Rina (2014) which described how the characters in the American sitcom "Sabrina the teenage witch" violate the cooperative principle in order to cause funniness.

In this research the writer uses contextual meaning and pragmatic theories. The writer also uses observation method and note taking technique in collecting data, then uses pragmatics identity method to analyze the data. In presenting the data uses informal method. Based on the analysis, it was found that maxim that commonly violate in order to causes funniness in sitcom “Sabrina the teenage witch” is maxim of quality, the second highest frequency is maxim of relevance and the third position is violation maxim of quantity. Violation maxim of manner is the rare occur.

Secondly, a study was conducted by Waget (2015) which aimed to explore violations of Grice’s maxims in the movie and analyze the purposes of the violations. The writer uses document analysis as the method of this research. Grounded on the analysis, the writer finds that the characters, especially Prince, Tom Canty, King, and the Earl of Hertford in the movie dialogues violate the four of Grice’s maxims. When failing to provide sufficient information, telling lie to their addressers, providing irrelevant glosses, and failing to be true, brief, univocal, and orderly, they respectively violate maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relevance, and Manner. Moreover, the writer finds that the characters violate the maxims in order to mislead the counterparts, be polite, save face, avoid discussion, and communicate self-interest.

Thirdly, a study was conducted by Park (2008) which aimed to examine the ways in which online discussion participants express their sociointerpersonal stance while presenting thoughts and arguments in group discussion forums. The qualitative data analysis of this study, drawn from the real-time, online discussions of K–12 students, makes evident that interpersonal-communication features appear in the form of politeness tactics. The results of the study show that there is decreased use of deferential linguistic forms; on the contrary, a variety of verbal and nonverbal devices that denote positive politeness and bald-on-record (i.e., direct speech acts) frequently occur. The commonality of positive politeness and bald-on-record lies in the fact that both tactics are grounded in the nature of the close interpersonal relationships between participants.

Based on the studies above, some people in communication violate the four cooperative principle’s maxims for several reasons, one of which is politeness. This phenomenon does not only occur in everyday communication, but this also occurs in conversations between casts in a movie, especially “Mr. Bean” movie which is a comedy genre. Therefore, the researcher was interested to find out the type of politeness strategies which was frequently used by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie and to find out the type of cooperative principle’s maxims which was frequently violated by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie.

METHODS

This research was a descriptive qualitative approach because it described a situation systematically or area of interest factually and accurately. This study focused on pragmatic phenomena which were found among the “Mr. Bean” movie casts. They were politeness strategies and maxims’ violation of cooperative principle. According to Seliger and Shohamy (1989) as cited in Ortiz and Garzon (2007), qualitative descriptive approach is concerned with providing description of phenomena that occur naturally, without the intervention of an experiment or an artificially contrived treatment. In addition, it was conducted in this

study because the data analyzed were not to accept or to reject tile hypothesis, but the result of the analysis was the description from the observed symptoms which were not always in the form of numbers or inter-variable coefficient (Subana and Sudrajat, 2001). For the types of qualitative research, the researcher used case study. According to Punch (1998), case study is a case (or perhaps a small number of cases) which is studied in detail by using any methods which seem appropriate. It aims to comprehend a case in its natural setting. As a result, this type was appropriate with this study since the researcher focused on the most frequently type of politeness strategies and maxim’s violation of cooperative principle based on the specific event. All data were taken from the utterances of all casts in “Mr. Bean” movie. The researcher himself was the instrument of the research. The data were collected through documentation with the following steps: (1) Download the data source from YouTube; (2) Collect the primary linguistic data by taking a note from the utterances that were produced by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie. Some utterances which did not contain the politeness strategies and the violation of cooperative principle’s maxims were excluded. To identify the type of politeness strategies which was frequently used by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie and to identify the type of cooperative principle’s maxims which was frequently violated by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie, the researcher did some procedures as follow: (1) transcribing the utterances on a note; (2) analyzing the utterances which contained the politeness strategies and the violation of cooperative principle’s maxims; (3) classifying the types of politeness strategies and violation of cooperative principle’s maxims in form of table; (4) identifying the types which were frequently violated and used by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie. To find out the percentage of politeness strategies and violation of cooperative principle’s maxims in each type, a formula was used in this research. It can be seen as follows:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where,

P = percentage

F = frequency of words

N = total of words

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

This research had two research questions which must be answered; they were to find out the type of politeness strategies which was frequently used by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie and to find out the type of cooperative principle’s maxims which was frequently violated by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie.

Table 3.1. The Frequency of Politeness Strategies in Each Type

Types of Politeness Strategies	Total of Frequency	Percentages (%)
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Bald On-Record	14	45.16
Positive	12	38.7
Negative	5	16.14
Off-Record	0	0
Total	31	100

The types of politeness strategies which were frequently used by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie were presented in Table 3.1. It shows that bald on-record strategy is often used by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie with the percentage of 45.16%. Then, it is followed respectively by positive politeness strategy with the percentage of 38.7% and negative politeness strategy with the percentage of 16.14%. Meanwhile, off-record strategy does not appear at all in “Mr. Bean” movie. However, it reveals that the casts of “Mr. Bean” movie tend to use bald on-record strategy.

Besides finding the politeness strategy which was often used by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie, the researcher also found another result related to the violated cooperative principle’s maxims.

Table 3.2. The Frequency of Violated Cooperative Principle’s Maxims in Each Type

Types of Maxims’ Violation of Cooperative Principle	Total of Frequency	Percentages (%)
Quality	2	14.3
Quantity	2	14.3
Relevance	6	42.8
Manner	4	28.6
Total	14	100

Derived from Table 3.2., the violation of relevance maxim is often used by them in “Mr. Bean” movie with the percentage of 42.8%. Then, it is followed by the violation of manner maxim with the percentage of 28.6% and the violation of quality and quantity maxims with the same percentage of 14.3%. However, it reveals that all casts in “Mr. Bean” movie tend to violate the maxim of relevance.

DISCUSSION

Based on the results, bald on-record strategy is often used by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie, followed by positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record strategies. This finding is in line with Park (2008); he finds that a variety of verbal and nonverbal devices that denote positive politeness and bald-on-record (i.e., direct speech acts) frequently occur. The commonality of positive politeness and bald-on-record lies in the fact that both tactics are grounded in the nature of the close interpersonal relationships between participants. Furthermore, bald on-record strategy is used to get maximum efficiency of conversation and to show someone’s power to others.

The conversation below is the example of bald on-record strategy that Detective Batler uses to David Langley because he is upset with Bean's strange behavior. The detective also wants to show his power as a police officer to David Langley who is in charge of Bean. On the other hand, David Langley violates the quantity maxim. It begins when the detective starts to suspect whether Bean is genius and an art expert or not. Then, he asks Kevin Langley as the person in charge, but he does not provide enough information about Bean because he also just met him, which is a recommendation from Dr. Rosenblum and Cutler as the representative of the Royal National Gallery.

Detective Batler	He's a genius, huh?
David Langley	So they tell me.
Detective Batler	Well, he looks like a fruitcake to me. You'll take responsibility for his actions? You're a braver man than me, and I take on gangs armed with AK-47s. Get him out of here.

Next, the conversation below is the example of positive politeness strategy that Alison Langley uses to David Langley. They are a couple who are debating whether Bean can stay at their house for a while or not. Being upset because he still sticks to his opinion even though they have a close relationship, she offers him to step over her corpse. However, he diverts the conversation by stating that it is an infrequent opportunity and it is good for their children. It aims to make her not annoyed anymore and to agree with him. His utterance violates the relevance maxim.

In this research, the results also show that the relevance maxim is often violated by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie, followed by the manner, quality, and quantity maxims. This finding is not similar to Wartety, Elfiondri, and Rina (2014) who found that maxim that commonly violate in order to causes funniness in sitcom “Sabrina the teenage witch” is maxim of quality. On the other hand, it is in line with Waget (2015) who finds that the relevance maxim is often violated by the characters in The Prince and Pauper Movie. In this type of violation, most characters are discussing or debating with other characters. They have their own opinions or interests so that sometimes they do not listen to others and deliberately say something out of the context of the previous statement. It makes their dialogue irrelevant to each other.

Alison Langley	I'd like to put it on the table right now!
David Langley	This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It'll be great for the kids.

In addition to bald on-record and positive politeness strategies, negative politeness strategy is also used by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie. As stated by Safitri, Mujiono, Herawati (2015), negative politeness is also known as a respect politeness where every participant is not to be disturbed and to be free. The conversation below is the example of negative politeness strategy that George Grierson uses to Mr. Bean because he

does not assume willingness to comply. Here, Bean is in a meeting with George Grierson and David Langley, but he stands up and faces the fan because he is drying his clothes. Then, George Grierson asks Bean to join him while looking at the bean. Apparently, Bean responds by violating the manner maxim; that is doing a weird thing.

George Grierson	Good, down to business. I've asked Bernice to run through the order of events. Dr Bean, would you join us?
Mr. Bean	No, I'll just...

Other results also show that off-record strategy does not appear at all casts in “Mr. Bean” movie. Safitri, Mujiono, Herawati (2015) state that off-record is also known to speak indirect. Sometimes, when speaker speaks, he/she would use vague manners and has more than one meaning. The context of the story that is almost entirely about work might make this strategy not to be used so that the intention of the speaker is conveyed to the hearer and immediately carried out.

Nevertheless, there is one cooperative principle’s maxim that is also violated by the casts in “Mr. Bean” movie; it is the quality maxim. The conversation below is the example of the quality maxim which is violated by Mr. Bean. The story begins when Bean and Kevin Langley are showing their abilities. Bean's ability makes Kevin fascinated and then, he asks how he can do that. But Bean is not honest in responding to him. In addition, Kevin Langley uses positive politeness strategy.

Kevin Langley	That was amazing! Really cool! Can you do this?
Mr. Bean	No, but I can do this.
Kevin Langley	How do you do that?
Mr. Bean	Magic.

CONCLUSION

The frequently used type of politeness strategies and the frequently violated type of cooperative principle’s maxim have been analyzed and discussed in the term results and discussion. Some reasons have also been discussed. However, the finding of the study indicates that the casts of “Mr. Bean” movie tend to use bald on-record strategy and to violate the relevance maxim than other categories. The central aim of this study is to open individuals’ eyes to pragmatic phenomena such as the violation of cooperative principle’s maxim and politeness strategies because sometimes the speaker violates a cooperative principle’s maxim to show politeness. In future studies, the next researcher needs to focus on the violation of cooperative principle’s maxims and the use of politeness strategies in another context.

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