

REVEALING THE IMPLIED MEANINGS OF THE CHARACTERS' UTTERANCES IN MEG CABOT'S VALENTINE PRINCESS

(MENGUNGKAP MAKNA IMPLISIT PADA UCAPAN PARA TOKOH DALAM NOVELA VALENTINE PRINCESS OLEH MEG CABOT)

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Abstract

This study is analyzing implicature in the characters' utterances in Meg Cabot's Valentine Princess. The data are taken from the Valentine's Princess novella. The theories employed in this study are Grice's flouting maxim and Brown and Yule's context of situation. The aims of this study are to find out the kinds of maxims the characters flouted, to reveal the implied meanings behind the characters' utterances, and to dig out the reasons behind their actions to do so. It turns out that the characters flout all four of Grice's maxims with various implied meaning such as; they have other ideas or desires about something, they hint on something else, and they indirectly ask for some favors. While the reasons of their actions are also various such as; they do not feel comfortable to speak their minds, they want to emphasize about their views or ideas about something, and express their disappointment or annoyance.

Keywords: implicature, maxim, pragmatics

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisa implikatur atau makna implisit pada ucapan para tokoh dalam novela karya Meg Cabot. Data dari penelitian ini diambil dari novela Valentine Princess. Teori yang digunakan penelitian ini adalah teori Grice mengenai pengambangan maksim dan teori Brown dan Yule mengenai konteks dalam situasi. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan jenis-jenis pelanggaran maksim yang terjadi pada novela Valentine Princess, makna implisit dibalik ucapan para karakter, dan alasan-alasan dibalik pelanggaran maksim yang mereka lakukan. Hasil penelitian menyatakan bahwa para tokoh mengambangkan keempat maksim dengan makna implisit yang bervariasi, seperti; mereka memiliki ide-ide lain atau keinginan yang berbeda mengenai suatu hal, mereka memberikan petunjuk mengenai suatu hal lain, dan mereka meminta tolong secara tidak langsung. Alasan-alasan dibalik sikap mereka mengambangkan maksim juga bermacam-macam, seperti; mereka tidak merasa nyaman untuk mengutarakan langsung apa yang ada dalam pikiran mereka, mereka ingin menekankan tentang pandangan atau ide mereka mengenai suatu hal, dan mereka mengekspresikan rasa kecewa atau rasa terganggu terhadap hal tertentu.

Kata kunci: implikatur (makna implisit), maksim, pragmatik

Introduction

Valentine Princess is a young-adult novella published in 2006. It was written by an American author Meg Cabot and being the fourth of the *Princess Diaries* series. This novella tells about the life of a young girl named Mia Thermopolis-Renaldo who happens to be a princess of Genovia. She struggles with encouraging her boyfriend to celebrate their first Valentine's Day together as a couple. The characters of this novella are mostly

young people with their tendency of stating something that opposes their true intentions. This way of speaking is called implicature.

Grice as cited in Levinson (1983: 97) stated when a speaker means more than what is actually said, it is called implicature. Speakers say sentences with hidden intention behind them and it is the listeners' duty to catch the hidden intentions or messages. Related to this issue, Grice, in the series of lectures in 1975 proposed a tool called cooperative principles which became the basic

thought of the creation of four maxims. Those maxims were created in order to help people to manage a good communication and achieve their communication goal of understanding each other. Those four maxims are:

“1. Maxim of quality (to make your contribution to be true one), 2. Maxim of quantity (to make your contribution sufficient as needed), 3. Maxim of relevance (to make your contribution relevant with context), 4. Maxim of manner (to make your contribution clear and specific)” (1991 : 26).

Unfortunately in social life where language can be much more complicated, the four maxims are not always obeyed. This style of communication is called non-observance of maxims. It is divided into five types: flouting a maxim, violating a maxim, infringing a maxim, opting out a maxim, and suspending a maxim (1991: 33).

This study focuses on only flouting maxim happens in the *Valentine Princess* novella. Flouting maxim is the type of non-observance maxims that dicobeys the “rule” of Grice's four maxim. People give responses not according the “law” of four maxim with various reasons of doing so and they expect the opponent to notice their real intentions.

This study is conducted in order to answer these three questions:

1. What maxims are flouted in Meg Cabot's *Valentine Princess*?
2. What are the implied meanings behind the characters' utterances in Meg Cabot's *Valentine Princess*?
3. Why do the characters use implicature instead of stating their minds bluntly in Meg Cabot's *Valentine Princess*?

This study is also made to fulfil three goals that we do hope will give contribution in communication world as well as education world. Those three goals are:

1. to figure out the maxims flouted in Meg Cabot's *Valentine Princess*.
2. to figure out the implied meanings behind the characters' utterances in Meg Cabot's *Valentine Princess*.
3. to find out the reasons of why the characters flout the maxims in Meg Cabot's *Valentine Princess*.

Research Methodology

This research is classified as a qualitative research. Blaxter stated that qualitative research is a research that is conducted based upon words analysis and it describes the data as they are found in the object of a study without numerical forms (1997: 60). The data are in the form of utterances in the novella of *Valentine Princess*. There are 27 out of all 244 utterances found that are considered flout the maxims.

Those utterances are analyzed first using Grice's non-observance of maxims to find out what maxims are flouted in *Valentine Princess* novella. Then they are analyzed with Brown and Yule's theory of context of situation (1983: 36) in order to figure out the implied meanings of the characters' utterances and the reasons behind their actions bound with context.

Result

After doing the data sorting and analyzing, we figured out that all of four maxims; maxim of quality, quantity, relevance, and manner, have been flouted in Meg Cabot's *Valentine Princess*. We also find out that there are multiple reasons of why they flouted the maxims. There are hidden desires, meanings, and ideas implied behind the utterances they utter. They implied meanings behind their utterances because they are not comfortable with stating their minds yet they hope people will understand what they mean. The reasons behind their actions are also various. They did that because of anger, disappointment, and they are trying to make some points.

Discussion

This study employs two theories of Grice's theory of flouting maxim and Brown and Yule's context of situation. However, when it comes to the actual analysis, those theories blend, therefore create a complex explanation of the kind of maxims flouted, the implied meanings behind them and the reasons behind the actions all at the same time. The utterances which are regarded flouting the maxims themselves are 27 utterances out of 244 utterances stated on Meg Cabot's *Valentine Princess* novella. There are 25 utterances that are regarded flouting of single maxim while the other two are regarded flouting multiple maxims. It means that there more than one kind of maxims flouted in the single utterance.

After it has been analyzed, it is found that all of the maxims are being flouted; maxim of quality, quantity, relevance and manner. In fact, there are also cases with more than a maxim that is flouted in one utterance. There are two cases of flouting multiple maxims.

Here are the sample of data analysis of flouting of single maxim:

a. Flouting Maxim of Quality

Context description:

In the afternoon during lunch break, Mia and Lilly are in the line on getting something to eat. It was a sunny afternoon and the cafeteria is indeed crowded. The line is so long and they have to be patient to be served. They use the time to talk about things when suddenly their friend, Lana Weinberger, shouts: “OH MY GOD, COULD THIS LINE BE GOING ANY SLOWER?”

(2006: 26-27)

Analysis:

Lana's remark in this situation is regarded as flouting maxim of quality for stating untrue. The response that will probably not flout the maxim could be “*Oh my God, the*

line's going do slow. Can you guys go faster?" and that would not be sarcasm. That is the point of sarcasm, people say different thing to the situation just to emphasize how unfortunate the situation is to them. The line in the cafeteria is so long in a busy and sunny day, that is not possible that she actually hopes that the line will go slower. The statement is blatantly untrue. The utterance Lana utters has an implied meaning that she is hungry and she cannot wait to get her food. The reason why the utterance is implied is because she wants all people in the line to hear. She hopes that they would move faster so she can get what she wants soon.

b. Flouting Maxim of Quantity

Context description:

It was 7 PM in the evening. The limousine is already waiting in front of Mia's house to take her to Genovia, but Mia is not yet ready. She is busy looking for her journal and finally her mother, Helen Thermopolis, decides to help. Helen finds a black-and-white Mead composition notebook that wedged between Mia's bed and the wall.

Helen : Isn't this it?

Mia : No. Mom. This is an old one. This is from- Hey! This one is from way back in my freshman year, a year and a half ago! I've been looking all over for this! Gosh, I feel like it was a DECADE ago that the stuff in this journal went on. I mean, so much has happened since then. I'll be starting my junior year when I get back from Genovia at the end of this summer. God, it's like I'm a totally different person now, you know? I mean, I'm writing actual PLAYS now instead of novels. I'm so much older and more sophisticated and -OH MY GOD, THIS IS THE JOURNAL IN WHICH I WROTE ABOUT MY FIRST VALENTINE'S DAY WITH MICHAEL AS A COUPLE!!!! OH MY GOD, I CAN'T BELIEVE I LOST THIS!!!! I CAN'T WAIT TO READ IT!!!!

(2006: 2)

Analysis:

In that conversation, Mia is regarded as flouting maxim of quantity. She gives information more than is required. Her mother asks whether the journal she finds is the right journal Mia has been looking for or not. Mia gives her mother a long answer instead with unnecessary information. Her mother only asks "Isn't this it?" The response that will probably not flout the maxim could be "Yes" or "No". That is all her mother needs, but apparently the journal that her mother finds is the long lost journal in which the beautiful memories of her freshman year of high school is kept. The utterance Mia utters implies her deep gratitude to her mother who finds it. It means a lot for her. The reason why the utterance is implied, making her response to Helen's question unnecessarily long, is because she wants to emphasize how important and meaningful that journal is to her. Certain words are even printed in capital letters which means to tell about her excitement on finding her lost journal. Mia disobeys the rule of cooperative principle for flouting maxim of quantity.

c. Flouting Maxim of Relevance

Context description:

Continuing Mia and Lilly's conversation on instant messenger earlier, Mia finally asks Lilly a question. Although Lilly already has a bad feeling about Mia's question, she allows Mia to ask.

FTLOUIE : Why does Michael hate Valentine's Day so much?

WOMYNRULE : Oh, God. Not this again.

(2006: 36)

Analysis:

Lilly flouts maxim of relevance by stating "Oh, God. Not this again". She gives irrelevant answer to her friend's question. The response that will probably not flout the maxim could be "Mia please, we've had enough of this conversation earlier. Just drop it". Instead of giving her that answer, she implies her answer. Lilly's utterance implies that she does not really want to talk about that topic but she cannot do anything to stop Mia. The reason why the utterance is implied is she gives Mia hints that her question annoys her and Lilly thinks they already have enough talk about this topic earlier yet Mia still wants to talk about it.

d. Flouting Maxim of Manner

Context description:

It was 10 PM in the evening. Mia comes home and asks her step father who happens to be her algebra teacher, Mr. Gianini, whether he has any plan for Valentine's Day or not. It turns out that he is currently planning on something to do on Valentine's Day with Mia's mother. Being confused about why Michael does not want to take any part on Valentine, Mia throws her body on her bed. Then suddenly her phone rings, Lilly sends her an instant messages:

WOMYNRULE : Hey. I need help constructing my diorama depicting the hijra. Can I borrow your old Ken dolls?

FTLOUIE : Is this for your self-mutilation thing?

(2006: 35)

Analysis:

Mia's answer in this instant message conversation is considered as flouting maxim of manner. She gives an unclear answer towards her friend's question whether she lets Lilly borrow her dolls or not. Mia's reply implies that she is suspicious of the reason why Lilly borrows her dolls. The reason why the utterance is implied is that she tests the water by asks her friend back instead of answer yes or no. She already has an idea of what Lilly would use the dolls for and apparently it is not a good thing. She smells something fishy.

The characters flout the maxims for quite various reasons. People are regarded flouting maxim of quality because they say something blatantly untrue or giving an information they lack of knowledge about (Grice 1991:33). The characters in Meg Cabot's *Valentine Princess* flout the maxim of quality three times out of 27 flouting maxim cases found. They tend to do that in an unfortunate or annoying situation that makes them do that to express their feelings. They also implied different things behind their actions of flouting the maxims of quality and they want their opponent to figure out what they really mean without having to explain them. As for the reasons of doing so, they all have the same

reasons of why they flout the maxims of quality in *Valentine Princess* novella: they want to show their anger, disappointment, and annoyance by stating things that is completely the opposite of their real feelings.

There are 6 cases of flouting maxim of quantity found in *Valentine Princess* novella. People are considered flouting the maxim of quantity when they give information more than what is required (Grice, 1991: 33). The characters tend to flout this maxim mostly because they want to emphasize their points on something they believe in, speak what are inside their minds and try to make their opponent understand about some things. They implied that everything they say in long explanation is important to them and they want to be respected or understood.

The second most-flouted maxim in the *Valentine Princess* novella is maxim of relevance. The characters flout maxim of relevance 7 times out of 27 cases of maxim flouting. People are considered flouting maxim or relevance when they do not give a relevant contribution or answer towards the previous statement (Grice, 1991: 33). The reasons behind this maxim flouting are usually they are annoyed with things that their opponent has said or they want to avoid uncomfortable situation by giving them irrelevant answers.

The last maxim being flouted in Meg Cabot's *Valentine Princess* novella is flouting maxim of manner. This kind of non-observance maxim occurs 9 times out of 27 cases of maxim flouting. According to Grice, people are regarded flouting maxim of manner when they give a confusing or ambiguous answer towards their opponents' statement or question (1991: 33). The reason the characters use here for flouting the maxim of manner is because they hide something therefore they give unclear answers.

The unique case we also found is flouting multiple maxims. The characters in Meg Cabot's *Valentine Princess* flouted more than a single maxim in one utterance. There are two cases of flouting multiple maxims. The first one they flout both maxims of manner and quantity into a single utterance. They flout the maxim of manner because they give an unclear answer towards their opponent's statement and also give information more than required -which makes them flout the maxim of quantity as well. The second case is that the characters flout three maxims: maxims of quality, quantity, and manner in one statement. They give an untrue statement towards their opponent's words, give a contribution more than required.

Here are the data which are considered as flouting multiple maxims:

a. Context analysis:

In the afternoon at their lunch break, Mia tells her other best friend Tina about what happens in the limousine with Lilly and Michael. Mia tells Tina that those two are against Valentine's Day celebration. Tina thinks it is a bad thing that Michael does not want Valentine like Mia does. She thinks Michael might suffer from a certain bad thing during Valentine's Day in his past, therefore he does not want to take any part on it. She even suggests Mia to give him a special

Valentine gift made by herself since Michael and his sister Lilly have their view that Valentine's Day will only give profit for greeting and floral industries.

Tina : You don't need to spend money to make a gift special. That's the part Lilly and Michael are right about. Don't let the greeting card and candy companies –and jewelers and florist –make you think that unless you purchase something spectacular for your loved one, you obviously don't love them very much. Homemade gifts are more meaningful, because they truly come from the heart. Why don't you *make* Michael a Valentine?

Mia : Oh, right. You mean because I'm so crafty? Remember when I got that second-degree burn putting my tile in the oven at Our Name Is Mud? Besides, it's going to be lame if I give him something and he doesn't give me anything. It's just going to make him think his girlfriend is so weak, she's succumbed to the pressure of a commercial holiday.

(2006: 25)

Analysis:

Mia's reply in the conversation above is regarded as flouting of three maxims: quality, quantity, and manner. Mia flouts the maxim of quality because she states something untrue, in order to be sarcastic and that means completely the other way. She says "Oh, right. You mean because I'm so crafty?" while it is completely untrue. She is being sarcastic by stating that. What she really means is she is not at all crafty, that is why she gets burned in her second-degree. The other maxim Mia flouts is maxim of manner. Mia does not give the clear answer whether she will or will not make a homemade Valentine gift for her boyfriend. Instead, she gives her friend a sarcastic remark about her and homemade things. She implies that her friend is not supposed to even ask about that because she already knows the answer that there is no way Mia can make such homemade things that require creativity. Mia also flouts the maxim of quantity by giving too much information than what is required. Mia's answer implies that she is very bad in handycraft making. That would be a bad idea to make a homemade gift for Michael. She flouts the maxim to remind her friend about her horrible past related to craft-making. The reason why the utterance is implied is because she wants to emphasize that she is not good at all with anything related to handycrafts and to tell her friend that it would not be a good idea to give Michael anything made by her.

Although the maxims are flouted, we can conclude that the communication among the characters is well understood. The characters understand the context where the communication takes place very well.

Therefore the most important thing to master in a communication is the context. If both of the communicators understand the context well, the case of pragmatic failure will never happen.

Conclusion

The characters' flout four Grice's maxim; maxim of quality, maxim of quantity, maxim of relevance, and maxim of manner. utterances have various implied meanings and the characters have many reasons on flouting the maxims. The implied meanings of the characters' utterances are quite various; they implied another meaning that is completely different from the spoken utterances, they hide disappointments towards the other communicators, and they contain hidden desires. They flout the maxims because they want the other communicators to dig further about their true intention behind their utterances.

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