

## AN ANALYSIS ON CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE OF THE VERBAL HUMOUR OF THE SELECTED *MIMI AND EUNICE* COMIC STRIPS

### (SEBUAH ANALISA IMPLIKATUR PERCAKAPAN HUMOR VERBAL DALAM KOMIK SETRIP PILIHAN *MIMI AND EUNICE*)

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#### Abstract

Humour is a verbal and visual stimulation that spontaneously provoke smiles and laughter; listener or viewer. Humour can be presented in various forms such as fairy tales, riddles, folk poetry, folk songs, nicknames, caricatures, cartoons, even the name of the food that is funny. In this research, the humour is presented in the form of cartoons with the character Mimi & Eunice. The cartoon characters have utterances and actions that contain everyday life activities. The utterances of the comic are presented in the form of humour through the non-observance of the cooperative principle with the implication in the words, which cause the utterances of the characters are not easy to understand. This research explains about the analysis of flouting maxims of the cooperative principle, to analyze the type of maxim most widely violated by the character of Mimi and Eunice who violate the maxim. This study is based on Grice's theory of infringement proverbs and Halliday's theory about the context of the situation. The purpose of this study is to describe the location of the humorous speech Mimi and Eunice seen from the aspect of language tools and describe whether there is any violation of the principle of cooperation in the cartoon Mimi and Eunice to achieve cuteness. In the comic, the cartoonist applies the creation of humour that based on three aspects of the theories including incongruent, superiority, and relief. The methods used in this research are a study using qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative methods are used to describe the data in the form of sentences and quantitative methods used to determine the percentage of the research results. The results show that the four maxims violated by the character of Mimi and Eunice. In this research, implicature analysis used as the theoretical review as a unit of analysis in the form of utterances whose meaning is bound by context. Therefore, in the data analysis, the method used is the pragmatic method. At this stage of the presentation of the data analysis is done informally that the exposure using ordinary words.

**Keywords:** Implications, Cooperative Principle, proverbs offense, the context of the situation, Humour.

#### Abstrak

Humor merupakan rangsangan verbal dan visual yang secara spontan memancing senyum dan tawa pendengar atau orang yang melihatnya. Humor dapat disajikan dalam berbagai bentuk seperti dongeng, teka-teki, puisi rakyat, nyanyian rakyat, julukan, karikatur, kartun, bahkan nama makanan yang lucu. Dalam skripsi ini, humor disajikan dalam bentuk kartun dengan tokoh Mimi & Eunice. Tokoh kartun Mimi & Eunice banyak menampilkan tuturan dan tindakan yang mengandung ujaran yang mengungkapkan kehidupan keseharian. Ujaran-ujaran di dalam komik tersebut disajikan dalam bentuk humor melalui penyimpangan prinsip kerja sama dengan menggunakan implikasi dalam ucapannya yang menyebabkan ujaran – ujaran tokoh Mimi and Eunice sulit untuk dipahami maksudnya. Penelitian ini menguraikan jenis-jenis peribahasa yang dilanggar oleh karakter, untuk menganalisa jenis peribahasa yang paling banyak dilanggar oleh karakter Mimi and Eunice yang melanggar peribahasa. Penelitian ini berdasarkan teori Grice tentang pelanggaran peribahasa dan teori Halliday tentang konteks situasi. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah mendeskripsikan letak kelucuan tuturan Mimi and Eunice dilihat dari aspek piranti kebahasaan dan mendeskripsikan ada atau tidaknya pelanggaran prinsip kerja sama dalam kartun Mimi and Eunice untuk mencapai kelucuan. Di dalam komik tersebut, pengarang memanfaatkan teknik penciptaan humor pada 3 aspek teori meliputi incongruent, superiority, relief. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dan kuantitatif. Metode kualitatif digunakan untuk menggambarkan data dalam bentuk kalimat dan metode kuantitatif digunakan untuk mengetahui persentase dari hasil penelitian. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa keempat peribahasa dilanggar oleh karakter Mimi and Eunice. Dalam penelitian ini, analisa implikatur digunakan sebagai acuan karena satuan analisisnya berupa tuturan yang maknanya terikat konteks. Oleh sebab itu, dalam analisis data, metode yang digunakan adalah metode pragmatis. Pada tahap penyajian analisis data dilakukan secara informal yaitu pemaparan dengan menggunakan kata-kata biasa.

**Kata kunci:** Implikasi, Prinsip Kooperatif, pelanggaran peribahasa, konteks situasi, Humour.

## Introduction

Language as a tool of communication used by people to talk is an important aspect in conversation which is used as a tool to convey what the speaker wants to say and what inference that the addressee probably made. The functions of the language used by people make the addressee easily know what the speaker means. However, not all people talk in such a way, some of them utter something that needs other's inference. Sometimes some people want to get and share humorous utterances from the using of language, it is possible for people to say the truth softly, and elegantly, without disturbing someone else's feeling. However, in daily conversation, the use of humor does not always run well. Some people may misunderstand and draw a wrong inference. Therefore, the more comprehensive the study on humor language in linguistic perspective, the better it will be, particularly from pragmatic outlooks; that is the use of implicature.

Levinson (1983:100) stated about Gricean implicature, it is a theory that belongs to pragmatics, that covers the way that people recognize meaning of communication even though it is not actually said or written. What the speaker expresses or says actually has more meaning than that. It requires the other's inference in the conversation. Unfortunately, not all addressees can get the speaker's intended meaning and it leads to misunderstanding of speaker's utterances and wrong inference that the addressee probably made.

Such kind of language phenomenon also happens in comic strips. That is *Mimi and Eunice* comic strip. *Mimi and Eunice* is a comic strip that presents 2 characters who use implicature in their humorous utterances. The main characters in this comic are Mimi with pointy ears and Eunice with floppy ears. The use of the implicature leads to the wrong inference that the other character made.

The kind of implicature analyzed in this research is particularized implicature. Particularized implicature is an implicature which requires such specific context. The speaker's intended meaning is obtained from the use of an utterance within a particular context rather than from the utterance alone.

The theories of humour generally used are Incongruity theory which is considered as a linguistic theory, superiority which is considered as a sociological approach to humor and relief which is considered as a psychological one (Hassan, 2013).

The utterance of the speaker can be confusing when the addressee does not consider the context. The use of implicature by the characters of *Mimi and Eunice* comic strip leads them to flout the maxims of Cooperative Principle. The research is held to find out;

1. What makes the utterances in the comic strips humorous? And why?
2. What Cooperative Principles are flouted?
3. What is the implied meaning and the real meaning in the comic strip utterances?

## Research Methodology

This research applies mixed-method as research strategy. According to Descombe (2007:107) that a mixed methods strategy is one, that uses both qualitative and quantitative methods. It is must be highlighted that implicature analysis of the utterances in this comics is done through description and interpretation. Denscombe (2007:254) defines quantitative data acquire the form of numbers. They are associated primarily with strategies of research such as surveys and experiments, and with research methods such as questionnaires and observation. This thesis clearly shows the statistical calculation on the number of each kind of flouting of maxims found in the *Mimi and Eunice comic strip*. The research data are obtained through website pages [www.mimiandeunice.com](http://www.mimiandeunice.com) and then they are used for the output as a document to supporting the research.

The comic strip has 23 utterances that flout the maxim of Cooperative Principle, consisting flouting the maxim of Quantity, maxim of Quality, maxim of Relation, and maxim of Manner. After the type of flouting maxim is discovered, the utterances that flout the maxim are categorized into what type of maxim they are flouted. The nature of analysis of this study applies descriptive method which is used to apply the theory of Cooperative Principle and the maxims proposed by Grice on the selected sentences taken from the characters' dialogue in *Mimi and Eunice* Comic strip. Finally, interpretative method is used to find out the reason of the characters flouting the maxims based on the flouting maxim theory proposed by Grice and the context of situation theory proposed by Yule.

## Result

Based on the result of the flouting maxims analysis, there are 22 utterances that flout single maxim and 1 utterance that flouts double maxims. There are 11 utterances flout the maxim of Quality, 2 utterances flouts the maxim of Quantity, 4 utterances flout the maxim of Relevance and 7 utterances flout the maxim of Manner.

## Discussion

The analysis illustrates that the characters in comic strip tend to flout the maxim of Relation. As Yule (1996:37) stated that to fulfil maxim of Relation, the speaker should make relevance contribution to the topic being talked about. Some characters in this movie are regarded flouting the maxim of Relation because they give unrelated responses. The least flouted maxim is maxim of Quality. Yule (1996:37) argues that to accomplish this maxim, the speaker is required to tell the truth, he is not allowed to say something he knows it is false. The character is regarded flouting the maxim of Quality since she tells a lie. Maxim of Manner is also flouted by the characters because they give excessive or unclear contribution. Yule (1996:37) explains that to fulfil maxim of Manner, the speaker should make his utterances unambiguous, concise and neat to execute this maxim. Last, the characters are considered flouting the

maxim of Quantity because they give less or more information than is required. It does not follow what Grundy (2000:74) stated that to fulfill maxim of Quantity, the speaker should make the utterances as informative as required for the topic being discussed.

The flouting maxims analysis can be seen in the following examples.

### 1. Flouting maxim of Quantity

Eunice: *have some money!*

Mimi: *Do not give it to me*

Mimi: *give it to a giant faceless corporation that claims to represent me*

Eunice: *forget it, then*

Mimi: *you're killing music.*

(<http://mimiandeunice.com/2010/11/23/killing-music/>)

#### Context of situation

Mimi holds and plays a guitar. Eunice wants to give Mimi some money. Mimi says yes but she says her utterance too informative than is required. Eunice cannot resist her patience of Mimi's utterance so she just abandons Mimi and not gives her money.

According to the theory of cooperative principle, Mimi's utterance "*Do not give it to me, give it to a giant faceless corporation that claims to represent me*" is regarded as flouting maxim of quantity because Mimi gives information more informative than is required. Based on the theory of cooperative principle, Mimi should give the quantity of the information as informative as it is required by saying literally for example "*yes, thank you*" rather than "*Do not give it to me, give it to a giant faceless corporation that claims to represent me*". The implication of Mimi's utterance is that she is a musician; it is welcome to give the expression "yes" in the way of musician by using poetry.

This comic is being funny because Mimi's utterance "*give it to a giant faceless corporation that claims to represent me*" that means Yes, generates laughter. According to the theory of humour, especially the superiority theory, which states that laughter is provoked by our pleasure of being superior to the people we laugh at. Eunice cannot resist her patience of Mimi. Eventually, she abandons Mimi and not gives her money. Mimi does not achieve money from Eunice. It shows how unlucky Mimi.

### 2. Flouting maxim of Quality

Mimi: *you have borderline personality disorder* Eunice: *no, you have borderline personality disorder*

Mimi: *that's exactly what someone with borderline personality disorder would say!*

(<http://mimiandeunice.com/2012/07/26/borderline/>)

#### Context of situation

Mimi accuses Eunice as a person with borderline personality disorder. Eunice replies Mimi's accusation. Mimi does not have any other proof to say that Eunice has

borderline personality disorder, so she makes other statement that is identical to the previous statement but her statement is different from Eunice idea. Finally, Eunice has no words to encounter Mimi's statement.

According to the theory of cooperative principle, Mimi is flouting maxim of quality, because she says something untrue. Mimi utters implied meaning in utterance "*that's exactly what someone with borderline personality disorder would say!*". Mimi does not have a proof that someone with borderline personality disorder would say like that. Based on the theory of cooperative principle, Mimi should say literally by saying "*I don't have any argument, but I can still blame you*" to Eunice. The implication of that utterance is that Mimi has no idea to blame Eunice, so Mimi creates utterance that Eunice cannot refuse "*that's exactly what someone with borderline personality disorder would say!*". Mimi does not have any argument to encounter Eunice but Mimi still has enough idea. Mimi takes her advantage of Eunice's utterance by saying "*that's exactly what someone with borderline personality disorder would say!*". It shows how ridiculous Eunice in this case.

According to Superiority theory, a theory of humour that claims a laugh is from our superior feeling over those we laugh at. This comic is so funny, because we feel superior when Eunice does not be able to answer or encounter Mimi's utterance. In this case, Eunice seems poor because Eunice as if seems being the one with borderline personality disorder.

### 3. Flouting maxim of Relevance

Eunice: *penny for your thoughts?*

Mimi: *one lousy penny? What kind of incentive is that?*

Mimi: *I do not think without proper compensation!*

(<http://mimiandeunice.com/2010/07/27/incentive/>)

#### Context of situation

Eunice wants to know what Mimi is thinking. Mimi takes Eunice's expression too literally. Mimi believes her thoughts are worth more than 1 cent (a penny). She will not tell Eunice what is on her mind (what she is thinking) without more money (proper compensation).

According to the theory of cooperative principle, Eunice's utterance "*one lousy penny? What kind of incentive is that? I do not think without proper compensation!*" is regarded as flouting the maxim of relevance because Eunice's response is out of the topic being discussed. Based on the theory of cooperative principle, Eunice should give a response which is relevant to the topic being discussed by saying for example "*I am thinking of you*" to Mimi. Therefore, it would be relevant if Eunice says it. The implication of Mimi utterance "*penny for your thoughts?*" is that Mimi wants to know about what Eunice are thinking, but Eunice does not know the phrase that Mimi utters. Mimi is incapable to understand what Eunice talks about, it shows how ridiculous Mimi in this case. According to Superiority theory, a theory of humour that claims a laugh is from our superior feeling over those we laugh at.



The utterance is so funny, because we feel superior when Mimi does not think and understand correctly of Eunice's utterance. This generates laughter because it makes Eunice seem poor because she does not get the point from Mimi's utterance.

#### 4. Flouting of maxim of Manner

Eunice: *you promised to be civil*

Mimi: *I am being civil!*

Mimi: *you didn't specify which civilization*

(<http://mimiandeunice.com/2012/07/10/civil/>)

#### Context of situation

Mimi holds a knife and tries to hit Eunice. Mimi is being very scary and rough with Eunice. Eunice asks Mimi to be "civil", it means, Mimi has to be nice and polite. Telling Mimi to be "civil", this means to behave with good manners and to follow social norms, therefore, this can be called civilized. Asking someone to be civil is the same way as asking them to be polite and respectful. In fact, Mimi is not behaving nice. However, she is still being civil.

According to the theory of cooperative principle, Mimi's implied utterance "*I am being civil*" is regarded as flouting the maxim of manner because Mimi gives ambiguous response to Eunice. Eunice asks Mimi to be "civil". Mimi's response is unclear. This makes Eunice curious about what Mimi actually means by saying that. Based on the theory of cooperative principle, Mimi should say literally, by saying "*I am barbaric*". The implication of Mimi's utterance is that Mimi wants to cheat Eunice by saying that she was being civil but she was choosing to be civil in certain culture that allows someone to be less gentle or barbaric. Mimi took the word civil and used its meaning to her advantage. Mimi chose to be civil in the civilization of her choosing. Mimi can do this because Eunice never said which form of civil she wanted Mimi to be. That why this comic is being funny.

According to incongruity theory, the humour focuses on the element of surprise. The humour is built from a conflict between what is expected and what actually occurs in the joke. Here, Mimi is expected to be not civil because of her act. In fact, she is still being civil but civil in other context.

In this comic, the addressees understand some flouting maxims, but some are not. The characters who cannot understand the implied meaning of the flouting maxims become confused. The confusion can be solved if the addressees understand the context of situation. While the confusion of the addressee that cannot be solved leads to wrong inference.

#### Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the data and the result in chapter IV, It is found that the dialogues of *Mimi and Eunice* comic strips have failed to observe cooperative principle. The result shows that there are 11 utterances of

flouting maxim of Quality, 2 utterances of flouting of maxim of Quantity, 4 utterances of flouting maxim of Relevance and 7 utterances of flouting maxim of Manner.

In the comic, both the character *Mimi and Eunice* tend to create funny utterances by flouting the maxim of the cooperative principle. The cartoonist shows the intended message of the comic in the way of implying the humour of the comic; therefore, it is not easy to get laughter if the readers do not understand the context and do not have any sense of humour.

The characters *Mimi and Eunice* flout the maxim of Relevance because they want to hide or declare something. Flouting maxim of Quality, the characters prefer to pretend not knowing the truth or to tell a lie. The characters flout the maxim of manner to emphasize their implied meaning. Last, the characters flout the maxim of Quantity to give more information they think important to deliver their implied meaning or they give less information to let other characters to infer what they mean.

The flouting of the maxims of the cooperative principle makes the utterances of the characters being funny. It needs comprehensive understanding to know the intended meaning what the comic talks about because the cartoonist implies most of absurdities of the comics. Therefore, Implicature analysis gives significant help in interpreting the humour of the comic strips.

The failure of the addressees in understanding the implicature causes confusion, but it can be solved by understanding the context of situation in the conversation. The confusion which cannot be solved makes the addressee infer in a wrong way. Therefore, understanding implicature is important to minimize the possibility of misunderstanding and wrong inferences occur in the conversation.

Finally, to interpret easily the humour of the comic, there are some steps that can be followed: first, identify when and where the comic take place (the context of situation). Second, identify the implied message of the cartoonist; the cartoonist wants to declare the intended meaning to the readers.

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