

Types of Flouting Maxim in “No Hard Feelings” Movie

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How to cite (in APA style):

Pratiwi, P. R. Y., & Maharani, P. D. (2024). Types of Flouting Maxim in “No Hard Feelings” Movie. *Retorika: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 10(3), 901-909. DOI: <http://10.55637/jr.10.3.10386.925-933>

Abstract- This study analyzes the types of flouting maxim conveyed by the characters in the movie *No Hard Feelings*. *No Hard Feelings* is a movie about a desperate woman who almost loses her house and decides to date a wealthy couple's son to solve the problem. Flouting maxim occurs when the participant disobeys Grice's conversational maxims in a conversation. This study used the theory from Grice (1975) concerning the cooperative principle to discover the types of flouting maxims. The types of flouting maxims were collected by qualitative method through an observation of the utterances done by the characters in the movie. This study also used theory from Halliday (1989) to analyze the context of the situation based on the conversation. The result of this study revealed that there are 4 types of flouting maxim found in 25 data, namely flouting maxim of quantity, flouting maxim of quality, flouting maxim of manner, and flouting maxim of relevance. The highest flouting maxim in the No Hard Feeling movie is the flouting maxim of quantity because most of the characters added more or less unnecessary information to their statement. The main character disregarded most of the maxim of quantity. The main character flouted the maxim by providing excessive detail to stress the audience hence the character wanted to control the conversation to achieve her goal as a main character. This study focuses on demonstrating the dialogues that were considered flouts in the movie and correlates the flouts with linguistic theory.

Keywords: Conversation, Cooperative Principle, Flouting Maxim, Movie

L INTRODUCTION

Each and every one of a people has an innate urge to communicate with other people, both in order to gather information and to express ourselves, as social beings. Human interactions in society are built upon communication. One must possess strong communication skills in order to elicit the desired information from others. Through

conversation, people are able to connect with one another, share ideas, and learn new things. In order to minimize misunderstandings and finish the talk quickly, good communication must be cohesive. (Akilandeswari et al., 2015) defined effective communication as two-way street, where the sender gets feedback to improve

future communications and the recipient gets what the sender is attempting to say. Additionally, it is essential that everyone taking part in the discussion grasp the subject at hand. But in actuality, human communication does not run perfectly all the time. To have an effective conversation, both the speaker and the listener need strong cooperation skills.

In order to create an efficient conversation, the participants must be able to adhere to the rules that have been set to reach a successful conversation. Cooperative principle is the theory in pragmatics that explains the rules to make the conversation between the speaker and listener run smoothly. (Grice, 1975) defined the cooperative principle as one in which to generate

a communication process to be coherent, the participants must follow ascertain maxims. In this theory, there are four principles of the maxim, namely maxim of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of relevance, and maxim of manner. According to (Leech, 1983), communicating with the presumption that others are being cooperative is made by cooperative principles. However, not all participants are able to follow those principles, some participants possibly disobey the maxims. The conversations may not achieve the intended goals of the speaker and listener. On condition that the participants flouted the maxims commonly used to convey hidden meaning or implicature in a conversation. (Gustary & Anggraini, 2021) stated the participants disobeyed the maxim to make their declaration's implied meaning explicit. This also explains that the participants flout the maxim when the utterances are not directly stated as it is. This study focuses on the maxim being flouted in some of the utterances of the speakers. Grice stated that the flouting maxim is divided into four types of maxims, those are flouting maxim of quantity, flouting maxim of quality, flouting maxim of manner, and flouting maxim of relevance.

According to Grice cited in (Cutting, 2002), flouting maxim of quantity arises if someone purposefully gives too little or too much information during the conversation. Grice argues in (Cutting, 2002) that flouting maxim of quality occurs when a participant might state something that blatantly does not reflect what they think. According to Grice in (Cutting, 2002), flouting maxim of manner happens if someone utters something ambiguous in their statement. Grice argues in (Cutting, 2002) that maxim of relevance is being flouted if someone utters something that is not relevant to the audience.

To support the analysis flouting maxim's types, a theory from (Halliday & Hasan, 1989) about context of situation is used. The theory explains that it is essential to understand the language function in different circumstances while analyzing conversation. Three concepts can be used to explain the context of the situation in a conversation, those are field, tenor, and mode.

According to (Halliday & Hasan, 1989), field relates to the social behaviors and the events that take place. The field describes the activity whereby the is involved and language takes a significant role in conveying meaning to reach

the goal in communication.

Tenor explains the characteristics and identity of individuals (Halliday & Hasan, 1989). Individuals need to communicate to maintain their relationships and tenor takes an important role in the grammatical choices individuals create in the conversation.

According to (Halliday & Hasan, 1989), the concept of mode refers to the function of language being used and the integration of spoken and written language. Mode focusing how the language is conveyed to the audience in interaction.

The absorption of the cooperative principle (Grice, 1975) and context of the situation (Halliday & Hasan, 1989) present a nuanced framework for analyzing conversation dynamics, particularly when the participant's interaction in conversation deviates from expected rules. Some of the conversations may fail to adhere to the cooperative rules due to the context of communication in daily life. Furthermore, this phenomenon not only can be found in daily life but also in a movie. In the movie, the dialogues expressed by the characters are based on real-life conversations. The dialogues often employ utterances containing flouting maxim to enhance the experience of the audience with humor, tension, and insight into the characters.

A movie is designated as a reflection of the real-life activity of humans based on their social phenomena. (Puspaningrum & Utami, 2023) said the dialogue occur in the movie is based on real life conversation. Movie contains many conversations spoken by the actors who play as a character. A movie entitled *No Hard Feelings* has been chosen as the study's data source. This movie is a teen romantic comedy from America. *No Hard Feelings* movie directed by Gene Stupnitsky is about a desperate woman named Maddie Barker who almost lost her house and she found an interesting job which to date a wealthy couple's introverted young son named Percy. The dialogues among the characters in *No Hard Feelings* movie were analyzed by examining closely the flouting maxim to discover the indirect message of each utterance using the theory from (Grice, 1975).

Some previous studies have explained similar topics, the article entitled "The Production of Conversational Humor by Flouting Gricean Maxims in the Sitcom *The IT Crowd*" by (Krisdwiyani & Hanidar, 2022) analyzed the four types of flouting maxims using cooperative principle theory from Grice. This study and their

study are comparable as they both examined the flouting of maxims in a discourse. This study uses the *No Hard Feelings* movie as a data source, they used a British television sitcom entitled *The IT Crowd*.

(Made et al., 2024) with his research entitled "An Analysis of Politeness Maxims in the Movie *"The Adventure of Tintin"*" found 17 utterances of politeness maxims. The results indicate that the characters from the movie *The Adventure of Tintin* flouted six types of politeness maxims. This study is related because both took the data from characters' conversations to examine the types of maxims. However, his study analyzed the types of politeness maxims and this study focuses on the analysis of the types of flouting maxims.

The research written by (Kadek et al., 2022) entitled "Flouting of Grice's Maxims in *The Mitchells vs. The Machines Film*" found the maxim of relation is the most flouted. The data shows the characters often flouted the maxim of relation as they stated something that is not relevant to create another subject since they wanted to minimize the unfavorable relation that the speakers wanted to achieve in the movie. Both studies used the cooperative theory from (Grice, 1975) in analyzing the types of flouting maxims. The previous study used *The Mitchells vs. The Machine* movie as the data source, while this study used *No Hard Feelings* movie.

(Wulantari & Maharani, 2023) found 28 data of flouting maxim in her research entitled "Exploring Maxim Flouting in "A Man Called Otto" Movie: Pragmatic Study". The purpose of their research is to analyze the types of flouting maxim based on the context of situation. This study and their study are comparable since both studies used (Grice, 1975) theory concerning the cooperative principles and theory from Halliday (1989) concerning the context of the situation to classify which utterances were classified as flouting maxim. However, both studies employed different movies as the data source.

(Marlisa & Hidayat, 2020) also wrote an article entitled "The Analysis of Flouting Maxim in Good Morning America (GMA) Talkshow". Her research found 15 utterances of flouting maxim. The participants in the talk show tends to flout maxim of quantity and manner because the conversation occurs between hosts and guest. They flouted these maxims the most because the participants actively talked and they tended to use expressive words since they gave more information than required to the audience. The

difference between this study and the previous study is the data source. The previous study utilized a talk show with this study focuses on a movie. Both of this study analyzed the types of flouting maxims found in the utterances of the speakers.

This study which has previously had research according to the prior study, verified there were flouting maxims in some of the conversations that were expressed by the speakers, the speakers may give more or less information, untrue information, ambiguous information, or even expressions that are not related to the topic being discussed. Based on the phenomenon above, this study aims to analyze what are the types of flouting maxims in the dialogue expressed by the characters in the movie *No Hard Feelings* based on the context of the situation.

II. METHODS

This study used a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the types of flouting maxims from the movie. The observation method was used to collect the data by downloading the movie on Netflix, watching the movie repeatedly until 11 times to observe the utterances of the characters, and note-taking some conversations containing flouting maxim in some of the dialogues conveyed by the characters in the movie entitled *No Hard Feelings* using Microsoft Word. The utterances found were tested using the cooperative principle theory while re-watching each scene according to the context of the situation. The theory used to analyze the types of flouting maxim is the theory of the cooperative principle by (Grice, 1975). This theory gives an explanation of how effective communication is when the participants cooperate well during a conversation to achieve a rational goal. In this study, the cooperative principle theory is used to analyze some conversations containing utterances that disobey these principles. The cooperative principle is used to analyze each one of the utterances in the movie *No Hard Feelings*. To determine whether an utterance contains a flouting maxim, this study used a theory from (Halliday & Hasan, 1989) regarding the context of the situation to analyze the conversation that occurred in the movie. The data of this research was taken from the conversations of the characters in the movie *No Hard Feelings*. The movie has 103 minutes of duration. The data originated from the utterances from the characters that comprised flouting the maxim.

Each utterance was examined to be able to understand how the characters utilized maxim flouting in the conversation as a strategy of communication. The discussion of the analysis explored both the utterances and the context of the situation. The analysis uncovered the meaning more profound and underlying motive behind the utterance delivered by the character through intentional flouting of required rules.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This part revealed the data when the characters flouted the maxim by the utterances taken from the *No Hard Feelings* movie. The characters flouted 4 types of maxim, flouting maxim of quantity, flouting maxim of quality, flouting maxim of relevance, and flouting maxim of manner. These types of flouting maxims were analyzed by theory from (Grice, 1975) concerning cooperative principles. This study found 25 data of flouting maxims that contain all types of maxim flouting in *No Hard Feelings* movie. The data findings are types, frequency, and percentages in the table below:

Table 1. The types of Flouting Maxim in No Hard Feelings Movie.

No	Flouting Maxim	Frequency	Percentages
1.	Flouting Maxim of Quantity	10	40%
2.	Flouting Maxim of Quality	5	20%
3.	Flouting Maxim of Manner	8	32%
4.	Flouting Maxim of Relevance	2	8%
Total		25	100%

The table above reveals that there are 25 data of utterances containing flouting maxim. All types of flouting maxims were found in the movie *No Hard Feelings*. The highest frequency of the flouting maxim is the flouting maxim of quantity which has 10 occurrences or accounted 40% of the total. The character who mostly flouts the maxim of quantity is Maddie. She is the main character in the *No Hard Feelings* movie who is hired by a rich family to date their one and only son. She flouted the maxim of quantity the most

as a communication strategy to achieve her goal as a main character.

Discussion

The characters' statements during the conversation in *No Hard Feelings* movie served as the data for the analysis in this study. The flouting maxims types were analyzed using the theory of (Grice, 1975) are discussed through descriptions predicated on the dialogues spoken by the characters. This theory shows that the plot is driven by the character's ability to do the conversation even if the situations are not always clear and literal. Characters flouted the maxim and expressed their statement inappropriately which can cause the emergence of new topics or misunderstandings during the conversation. There are four types of flouting maxims based on the findings of this study. The discussion above is representative data of each type of maxim flouting analyzed in *No Hard Feelings* based on the context of situation.

1. Flouting Maxim of Quantity

According to Grice, as referenced in (Thomas, 1995), flouting maxim quantity arises when the participant provides an excessive or insufficient amount of information in their statement, compared to what is necessary in the given situation. The speakers usually disregard maxim of quantity to achieve a certain communication outcome in their conversation. The image below shows a conversation that employs a character that flouted the maxim quantity in *No Hard Feelings* movie as follows:

Data 1



Maddie : "How am I supposed to pay their taxes just bartending?"
 Gary : "My problem is that you just went radio silent on me."
 Maddie : "Is that what this is about?"
 Gary : "No, I also have a contract with the county, **but I am saying, a little explanation about why I never heard from you again**"

would've been nice. You can't just ghost people. Three months is not nothing."

(*No Hard Feelings Movie, 00:01:21*)

The conversation that occurred between Maddie and Gary took place in Maddie's yard. Maddie had a relationship with Gary in the past and she ghosted him since she did not want to have a serious relationship with anyone yet. Gary as a tow truck driver came to confiscate her car. This happened because Maddie failed to pay her property taxes previously. Maddie and Gary argued a bit about this confiscated problem, but Gary did not offer a solution to the problem Margot was facing at that time. Gary had discussed their problems in the past when Maddie didn't answer Gary's calls. Margot then asks if the confiscation of her car was because of Maddie's problem of ignoring Gary.

Considering the conversation above, Gary's statement belongs to the flouting maxim of quantity. This happened since Gary provided too much information in answering Maddie's question. Maddie asked about the problem of her car being confiscated and Gary provided more information. Gary added more information to his statement because he wanted to quip Maddie about their prior relationship. Gary as the role of Maddie's ex-boyfriend still feels disappointed with Maddie since she ghosted him. The statement from Gary contained more information than necessary for the conversation at that time to remind Maddie about their relationship.

Another representative data for flouting maxim of quantity in the data 2. The image below shows the conversation took place in the pet shelter.

Data 2



Percy : "Um... Spouse?"
 Maddie : "Um, currently single. **Thank God too. You can just have more fun. Be spontaneous.**"

(*No Hard Feelings Movie, 00:21:18*)

This conversation above happened inside

the office of the pet shelter where Percy works. There were Percy and his friend as the staff in charge. Maddie as a customer came to adopt a dog and she did not want to be assisted by the other staff, she wanted to be assisted by Percy. When Maddie said that she wanted to adopt a dog, she had to be asked specific questions related to her personal identity and the reason for her plan to adopt a dog. Percy who was in charge must fill out the form for the adoption process in the office. The ambiance in the office made Percy act stiffly in asking questions to Maddie. Maddie has a straightforward personality and she answered the questions casually, but Percy was awkward with the situation because he did not like to socialize much.

Maddie's statement shows the example of flouting the maxim of quantity. In that case, Percy just wanted to know the status of Maddie. She could simply answer the question by saying "Um, currently single" or "Unmarried." However, Maddie answered by adding more information that was not needed by saying "Thank God too. You can just have more fun. Be spontaneous." She flouted the quantity maxim because she wanted to get close to Percy. Maddie tried to captivate and ask him out. Her statement is classified as flouting maxim of quantity to achieve a particular goal by answering the question with more information than what was needed by Percy.

2. Flouting Maxim of Quality

According to Grice as cited in (Thomas, 1995), flouting quality maxim occurs when a participant states a statement that is blatantly not true or which he or she does not have sufficient evidence for. The image below shows a conversation that employs flouting maxim of quality done by the character in *No Hard Feelings* movie as follows:

Data 3



Sara : "Hey, it would be the fastest way to get a car."
 Jim : "Oh, yeah. **Kid would cream**

his shorts as soon as he saw you. Then you can just drive right home haha."

(*No Hard Feelings Movie*, 00:10:41)

In the conversation above, Sara, Jim, and Maddie were in front of the beach and they discussed the interesting job they found online about dating a young boy. They were considering the job for Maddie. The job was posted by the boy's parents who wanted their son to make a relationship with someone since the boy was going to college shortly. The date in question was to have sex with him and if the plan works, Maddie will get a car as a gift from the boy's parents. Currently, Maddie's situation shows that she needs a car because her prior car was confiscated due to the house tax problem.

Jim's utterance in the conversation above belongs to the flouting maxim of quality. When Jim gave his statement, he did not give sufficient evidence. Particularly, when Jim said, "Oh, yeah. Kid would cream his shorts as soon as he saw you." His statement does not enclose any evidence that the boy would have creamed his shorts when he saw Maddie. Jim uttered that statement because he believed that Maddie would do well in the job and succeed in getting the car. He tried to convince Maddie to take the job because he believed Maddie could handle the job well and take advantage of the situation to get a car immediately. The statement indicated flouting the maxim of quality because he said something that he did not know about the fact to create a little hint of comedy when the scene shows a stressful situation.

Another representative data for flouting the quality maxim in data 4. The image below shows a conversation that employs flouting maxim of quantity that took place near the harbor by the main character, Maddie.

Data 4



Maddie : "Anyway, I'll need the van tonight for my big date."

Jim : "No. It's gonna take me a week

to air that thing out. Sara's pregnant. I can't have her breathing those fumes. Ask Fern to borrow that claw car."

Maddie : "That'll drop his panties."

(*No Hard Feelings Movie*, 00:27:38)

Maddie, Sara, and Jim were talking about Maddie's job they found online which is trying to date Percy, the son from wealthy parents. This job was ordered by Percy's parents to help him in getting friends later in college. The conversation took place in the harbor. Maddie said the job was not as she expected because Maddie felt that Percy's parents treated him like a baby, thus hard for Maddie to get closer to Percy. Maddie was stressed because the parents spoiled their son too much. In order to know him better, Maddie planned a date for them. Maddie needed a car for the date. Previously, she borrowed Jim's van to visit Percy and she meant to ask Jim to borrow the van again. Jim refused to let Maddie use the car at that time.

Maddie's statement to respond to Jim's suggestion is flouting quality maxim. She answered by saying "That'll drop his panties", that statement flouted this maxim because she uttered something without any sufficient evidence. No evidence showing Percy will drop his panties when he sees that claw car. Maddie refused to follow the maxim of quality because she knew Percy would feel uncomfortable if Maddie brought that claw car. She tried to say that Percy would scared when he saw her taking him for a ride using that car. Therefore, Maddie's statement was not true and she refused to follow the maxim of quality. Her utterance makes the situation more lively by presenting a metaphor about the situation that she has not proven right. The scene makes this movie more interesting according to its comedy genre.

3. Flouting Maxim of Manner

As stated in Grice as cited in (Cutting, 2002), flouting the maxim of manner occurs when the participant says something ambiguous. This flouting maxim left the audience to interpret the intended meaning of the utterance. The image below shows a conversation that employs this flouting maxim uttered by Gary, the character in the movie *No Hard Feelings* as follows:

Data 5



Maddie : "You think you're so perfect? You're indecisive, which is annoying. Okay Gary, I'm sorry. Will you drop me off? I'm bartending at the Claw today."

Gary : "God... You know... I just can't decide."

(*No Hard Feelings Movie, 00:04:13*)

In the dialogue above, Maddie and Gary were having an intense conversation. It occurred in Maddie's yard. He came to take Maddie's car. At first, they debated about Maddie's car being confiscated because she did not pay the tax on her house until the conversation splayed to the problem about their relationship in the past when Maddie stopped contacting Gary. Their conversation was complicated until Gary entered his car. He was preparing to carry away Maddie's car. However, she did not seem to accept that situation. She kept talking to Gary and made him feel even more upset.

Gary flouted maxim of manner since his statement did not explicitly declare the right answer. He did not give his answer in an orderly manner to Maddie. His statement was not clear since he did not determine whether it was possible or not for Maddie to get a ride to the place where she worked. At that time, Gary should have stated his statement firmly to Maddie. Gary could answer by saying "Yes" or "No", but he said "God... You know... I just can't decide." Gary flouted this maxim with his statement as he refused to help Maddie and he did not want to say no right away since he was already upset by their previous argument. The statement was not clear enough because of those ambiguous words and flouted the maxim of manner as a result to create politeness in refusing requests.

Another representative data for the maxim of manner being flouted in the data 6. The image below shows a conversation that employs flouted maxim of manner by the main character.

Data 6



Allison : "I meant to ask this on the phone, but how old are you?"

Maddie : "Well... I know you were looking for someone early to mid twenties. I'm slightly older."

Allison : "Right. How old?"

(*No Hard Feelings Movie, 00:14:33*)

The dialogue above occurred among Laird, Allison, and Maddie. It was in Percy's living room. Maddie was interested in the job she found online about dating a 19-year-old boy posted by a wealthy couple. The couple is Percy's parents. She applied for that job and they invited Maddie to come to their house. If she managed to do the job, she would get a car as a gift from Percy's parents. Hence, she wanted to succeed in the job that was offered because her car was confiscated due to a tax problem. She came to their house to meet the couple for a short interview. They initially introduced themselves and started asking several questions to Maddie.

Maddie's statement belongs to flouting maxim of manner. When Allison asked Maddie about her age, she did not specifically mention her age. She should have answered by saying her age in number, but she said "Well, I know you're looking for someone early to mid-twenties. I'm slightly older." Maddie did not answer the question briefly and she made Allison repeat the same question to her. Maddie refused to obey the maxim of manner because she knew that the parents were looking for a woman in the age of early to mid-twenties to do the job and Maddie's current age was far from the specified age. Maddie was very eager to succeed in getting that job. She did not want to miss the opportunity because she thought that by managing the job nicely, she would be able to get a car as soon as possible. Therefore, she answered the question ambiguously to trick the audience. Based on her statement, she cannot concisely answer the question. Maddie was proven to flout the maxim of manner when she tried to achieve her goal to

pass the interview.

4. Flouting Maxim of Relevance

According to Grice as cited in (Thomas, 1995), the maxim of relevance being flouted when the response or else observation is irrelevant to the topic in hand. This flouting maxim arises when the utterance in the conversation does not match with the topic. Participant usually refused to obey this maxim to imply something that carry a hidden meaning in their speech. The image below shows a conversation that employs flouting maxim of relevance by the character in *No Hard Feelings* movie as follows:

Data 7



Maddie : "So... how does this work? honor system or...?"
 Laird : "**That, and we know his passcode.**"
 Maddie : "And he's not gay?"
(No Hard Feelings Movie, 00:17:12)

The preceding dialogue above happened between Maddie and the parents of Percy. The event took place in the living room of their residence. Maddie visited that location with the intention of meeting Percy's parents in order to submit her employment application. The job entailed challenging Percy, their son, to step outside his comfort zone. Percy's parents undertook this endeavor because Percy was going to college soon, with the aim of fostering his social skills and facilitating the formation of friendships. Maddie arrived at their residence while Percy was engaged in voluntary work at the pet shelter. The parents asked several questions to Maddie. Maddie also asked the parents about job-related matters. She anticipated receiving responses that were relevant to the subject under discussion.

According to the conversation, Laird is seen as flouting maxim of relevance. This instance of flouting the rule occurred when Laird provided Maddie with a response that was unrelated to her inquiry. When Maddie inquired about the

employment and the honor system, Laird responded by stating, "That, and we know his passcode." His response should have been pertinent to the job and the honor system, but it was unrelated to Maddie's query. He disregarded the principle of relevance in order to inform Maddie that his son was not gay and to assure her that his plan would be as successful as intended. Laird's response evaded the question and redirected the conversation towards a different topic.

IV. CONCLUSION

Grice's cooperative principle shows an understanding of how people communicate with others effectively. The cooperative principle helps in analyzing the character's communication strategies by showing how the characters follow or flout the principles in the movie. Flouting maxim can occur both in real-life conversations and movies. The intention of the participants to flout the maxim became a tool to create meaning beyond the true meaning discussed. According to this study, all types of flouting maxims based on the cooperative principle theory from Grice were found in the *No Hard Feelings* movie. The characters in this movie uttered expressions contained flouting maxim of quantity, flouting maxim of quality, flouting maxim of manner, and flouting maxim of relevance. Based on the results and discussion in this study, the most dominant maxim flouted by the characters is the flouting maxim of quantity. The total data of flouting maxim quantity in the conversation in this movie are 10 data. The character who flouted most of the maxim of quantity is Maddie. She played as the main character in *No Hard Feelings* movie. Maddie as the main character in this movie has a target to date Percy. Percy is the son of a wealthy couple who does not have many friends. His parents wanted their son to learn how to make friends before college started. His parents hired Maddie to help their introverted son. Maddie's character in the *No Hard Feelings* movie tries to persuade Percy to get close to Maddie. In order to make the plan work, Maddie tends to flout the maxim quantity as a strategy of communication to achieve her personal goals as a main character. She talked actively by providing more information than was needed. The possible technique to detect this flouting maxim of quantity is to be able to recognize when the participants produce more or less information than is needed during the conversation.

The researcher expects this research could

be useful for everyone who analyzes the same topic, especially those majoring in linguistics and learning about film studies and communication, related to daily conversations. Furthermore, the researcher aspires this research could serve as a reference in guiding subsequent inquiries and contributing to future research, especially for those who want to analyze the flouting maxim in a movie.

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