Conversational Maxims Analysis of Students and Lecturers at the Online Thesis Defense of the Economics Department, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta

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Abstract. The COVID-19 pandemic has occurred for almost two years and has had a significant impact in various sectors, one of which is the education sector. One of the pandemic impacts is the practice of thesis defense in Economics Department, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta. It changed from offline to online. It will be an interesting discussion on conversational analysis since the online thesis defense is just conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic only. This study aims to analyze the conversational maxims and their violations between students and lecturers in the Economics department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta at the online thesis defense. The recordings of the online thesis defense in the odd-even semester period of the 2020–2021 academic year become the research data. The main findings of the research show the fulfillment of cooperative principles by Grice. Yet, there are also the violation of the four principles (quantity principle, quality principle, relevance principle, manner principle). Furthermore, the research finds some maxims of the politeness principle, too, namely generosity maxim, modesty maxim and agreement maxim.

Keywords: conversations · lecturers · maxims · online · students · thesis defense

1 Introduction

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 to be a pandemic to be confronted by humanity. As a result, social isolation has become the norm in most countries, with the consequent replacement of face-to-face classes by classes mediated by information and communication technology [1]. Now, the COVID-19 pandemic has been present for about 2 years and has had a big impact on several disciplines this year, including the field of education. Teaching and learning, which were once done face-to-face in the classroom, have been transformed into online learning through virtual classrooms. Both the lecturers and students must get used to using the online system

by engaging in online teaching and learning activities as well as during the final-year students' thesis defense. Actually, the idea of online final defence had already been stated by Dwinagara et al. [2] in research entitled "*Tesis Online System, Sistem Pengelolaan Tesis Berbasis Online untuk Mempermudah SIstem Informasi Jarak Jauh.*"

Regarding the execution of the students' thesis defense, the Economics Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) also performed an online thesis defense throughout the pandemic. This is due to the fact that students can still finish their study on time. The Microsoft Teams platform, which has been provided by the Economics Department, is used for the online implementation of thesis defense.

Naturally, communication between students and examiners during this online thesis defense will differ from the offline. Hizriani et al. [3] added that both examiners and students cannot make a condition as offline situation, because the condition or the situation unpredictable in same time. Consequently, this will also have an effect on the discourse that allegedly occurred during the defense. Furthermore, it is not impossible that there will be a violation of the maxim of conversation in it.

In light of the aforementioned, the researchers are interested in studying conversational maxims that are used in the online thesis defense of Economics Department UMY. The conversations between students and lecturers became the subject of research because the conversations in the final defense were very likely to occur the violations of the conversational maxims. In particular, this study will indeed analyze the conversational maxims in the online final defense.

2   Literature Review

Pragmatic studies are a necessary component of any discussion of conversational maxims, which is what this research is all about. The following will therefore outline a number of theories that are associated to the study.

2.1   Pragmatic Study

Cited Alfiansyah et al. [4], pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that puts the focus on the conceptual meaning conveyed by the speaker or writer and interpreted by the conversation partner who acts as a listener or reader in order to understand the meaning of his speech.

Furthermore, as said by Leech (in [5]), pragmatics studies how language is used in communication, and pragmatics investigates meaning as a context, not as something abstract in communication.

Whilst, according to Wijana (in [6]), pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies the structure of language externally, specifically how linguistic units are used in communication.

According to some of the experts' opinions and descriptions above, pragmatics is the study of the use of real language in relation to the context in which it is used, where the context in question is all background knowledge possessed by speakers and speech partners that accompanies and accommodates a speech.

2.2   Conversational Maxims

The pragmatic principle has its own maxims, including the cooperative principle, which includes the maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. Furthermore, the principle of politeness includes the maxims of wisdom, humility, acceptance, compatibility, generosity, and sympathy [7].

2.3   Online Conversational Maxims

Conversational maxims can be found in both offline (face-to-face) and online (virtual room) conversations during the current Covid-19 pandemic. In this research opportunity, the authors will focus on discussing the online conversational maxims, specifically conversations between students and lecturers of the Economics Department UMY in the online thesis defense.

Although the conversational maxims to be analyzed are online conversational maxims, the theory used is the same theory used to analyze it is general, namely Grice's theory of conversational maxims.

The analysis of Grice's cooperation and cooperative principles will be the focus of this research. According to Grice (in [8]), the cooperation principle is divided into four principles:

1. Quantity Principle; implemented by providing the appropriate amount of information
2. Quality Principle; implemented using information in the form of logical facts and supported by evidence
3. Relevance Principle; this is accomplished by delivering speeches on topics and conversations related to one another.
4. Manner Principle; it is ensured by giving clear, short, and regular speech.

It will also be examined in relation to the politeness principle. According to Leech (in [5]) and Wijana & Rohmadi [9], the maxims included in the principle of politeness are as follows:

1. Tact maxim; expressed in indirect or directive and commissive speech.
2. Generosity maxim; expressed in expressive speech, expresses or informs the speaker's psychological attitude toward an illocutionary statement.
3. Approbation maxim; minimize the expression of beliefs which express dispraise of other; maximize the expression of beliefs which express approval of other.
4. Modesty maxim, meaning to minimize praise or to maximize dispraise of self.
5. Agreement maxim; the expression of disagreement between self and other; maximize the expression of agreement between self and other.
6. Sympathy maxim; each speaker must maximize sympathy and minimize antipathy toward the speech partner.

3   Method

This study is a qualitative descriptive idea. As said by Jazeri [10], the purpose of this descriptive study is to reveal various qualitative information with careful descriptions

and nuances to describe events, symptoms, and phenomena individually or in groups. This study carried out in the online meeting room for the Economics Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY).

The data for this study came from a conversation between students and lecturers from the Economics Department of UMY during the online thesis defense. In this study, the documentation method was used to collect data by recording the implementation of the online thesis defense. To complete the data, the researchers also take notes and, if necessary, conduct interviews with the students or lecturers involved. This method is used to locate the determined data. Researchers can use free sentences with this method. Data were collected during the odd and even semesters of the 2020/2021 academic year.

4 Findings and Discussion

The purpose of the research is to explain how Grice's cooperation principle is used. The Grice cooperation principle is separated into two categories in this application: (a) the fulfillment of the principle; and (b) the violation of the principle. The findings of the investigation on how the cooperative principle is applied are listed below.

4.1 Application of Quantity Principle

The first principle of cooperation is the principle of quantity. The quantity principle has two applications: when it is upheld and when it is violated. The analysis's findings regarding the use of quality principles are listed below.

4.1.1 The Fulfillment of Quantity Principle

Delivering the appropriate amount of speech and being as informed as feasible as requested satisfies the quantity principle. The analysis's findings are illustrated in the following.

> **[Data 1]**
> **Speech Context:**
> A lecturer asks a student about the topic of her thesis.
> Lecturer: What is the meaning of resilience according to your understanding and how you relate this resilience with the UMKM in Malioboro? Could you please explain it!
> **Student** **Definition of resilience is the ability to 'bertahan' in the pressure.**

The utterance complies with the quantity principle in the analysis's data 1 component.

By communicating utterances that have the qualities of information in the proper quantity and information that is informative, fulfillment is achieved. In the speech, a scenario in which the student defines a word of reseilience. The speech is instructive and presented in the proper quantity. Like Grice's [7] assertion that speech must satisfy the quantity principle by providing the appropriate amount of information and being informative Three utterances are present in the data, neither in excess nor insufficiently.

4.1.2 The Violation of Quantity Principle

Delivering utterances with numbers that are inappropriate (excessive or insufficient) and utterances that lack the necessary level of information constitutes a violation of the quantity principle. Speaking in a way that goes against the quantity principle will be ineffective and may hinder the audience's ability to understand. The study of the quantity principle's violation in the example below is just one example.

[Data 2]
Speech Context:
    As part of her thesis, a student is required to read one of
    the verses about a market.
    Student: *Ini... Arabnya, Pak?* (This … the Arabic,
                    Sir?)
    Lecturer: *Iya dibaca. Masak Inggrisnya*. (Yes, read
                    it. Not the English)

In the 2nd part of the data analysis, the speech of the speech partner violates the quantity principle. Violations are committed by providing speech or information beyond what the speaker wants.

The context that occurs is that the speaker, the student, asks whether she needs to read the Arabic of one of an Al Qur'an verse. The lecturer, however, answered "*Iya dibaca*". Additionally, he added the phrase "*Masak Inggrisnya*". There seems to be too much here.

The "Iya dibaca" utterance is sufficient and does not violate the quantity principle. These violations can be categorized as complete but excessive.

The purpose of providing more information that is not desired by the speaker has a function to clarify information. Jazeri [10, p. 57] states that the violation of the quantity principle in interaction is not only to obscure information, but also to clarify information. This way of providing information that is excessive is what makes the speaker understand what the speech partner wants.

4.2 Application of Quality Principle

The second cooperative principle is the quality principle. It has two applications: when it is upheld and when it is violated. The analysis's findings regarding the use of quality principles are listed below.

4.2.1 The Fulfillment of Quality Principle

Delivering utterances in the form of facts that can be rationally or logically proved carries out the quality principle. The impact of following these guidelines prevents misconceptions for the speech partner. The findings of the study of the quality principle's fulfillment are shown in the example below.

[Data 3]
Speech Context:

A lecturer comments on a student's sentence writing in her thesis.

Lecturer: *Kemudian kalau menulis the influences of.. of, in, or, itu hurufnya kecil ya depannya. Bukan O-nya bukan kapital. Itu O-nya jangan kapital. ...* **(Then if you write the influences of.. of, in, or, it's in lower case, yes, at the beginning. It's not O, it's not capital. That's the O, don't capitalize. …)**

Student: (Nod her head, giving a sign that she understands)

In data 3, the results of the analysis show that the speech of speakers and speech partners meets the quality principle. Fulfillment is done by giving speech based on logical evidence.

The fact is that the first letters of grammatically correct English sentences, the prepositions, and conjunctions are written in lowercase, not capital letters.

4.2.2 The Violation of Quality Principle

By saying things that are false and cannot be logically supported, one violates the quality principle. Participants will not get factual information about the consequences of this action. The findings of the analysis of the quality principle violation are listed below.

[Data 4]
Speech Context:

A lecturer comments on a student's research questions.

Lecturer: And the third one, your research questions.. er should it be started with *how* rather than *what*. Yeah.. should.. should it be started with *how* not *what*. Research questions. **Err..because if the question is *what* so the answer should be yes or no.**

Student: Yes, Sir.

According to the data 4 analysis findings, the lecturer's speech violated the quality principle. Speeches that are illogical or not in accordance with the facts that should be.

The speech of the lecturer who said that a question that begins with the question word "what" then the answer will be "yes or no", is not entirely true.

The fact is that in English, the answer "yes or no" can be obtained if the question begins with the word "to be (is, am, are, was, were). Below is the example:

Question: Are you okay?
Answer: Yes, I am okay.

So, it means that the data 4 shows a violation of the quality principle since the speaker 1 telling something that is not true according to the fact.

4.3 Application of Relevance Principle

The third principle of cooperation is the relevance principle. The application of it is divided into two, namely the fulfillment of the quality principle and the violation of the quality principle. The following are the results of the analysis of the application of the quality principle.

4.3.1 The Fulfillment of Relevance Principle

Fulfillment of the relevance principle is carried out by conveying speech with the same topic and the existence of a relationship between the speech before and after it. Speech participants should concentrate on having conversations, so that they can fulfill the principle. Following are the results of the analysis of the fulfillment of the relationship principle.

> **[Data 5]**
> **Speech Context:**
>   A lecturer asks a firther question on student's answer.
>   Lecturer: *Lingkaran setan*. What is the meaning of
>   *lingkaran setan*?
>   **Student: This is the circle of poverty.**
>   Lecturer: Okay. What is that? What is the meaning of
>   circle of poverty?
>   **Student: … if we have low income, we have a low
>   capital and we have a low investment. So,
>   we cannot have eerr high supply.**

In data 5 analysis results, the utterances conveyed by students meet the relevance principle. Fulfillment is done by giving speeches that discuss the same topic and the speeches given are related to each other.

The topic being discussed is the definition of *lingkaran setan*. At first the student can only give the English term of *lingkaran setan*, that is circle of poverty. Yet, when the lecturer asks further about its definition, the student can still on topic to define it clearly.

That is why, the data 5 above show the fulfilment of relevance principle.

4.3.2 The Violation of Relevance Principle

Violation of the relationship principle is carried out by conveying speech that does not match the topic of conversation and there is no relationship between speeches. This violation may be intentional. The following is the result of the analysis of the violation of the principle.

[Data 6]
Speech Context:

A lecturer asks about a specific term called demographic bonus to the student.

Lecturer: *Apa sih bonus demografi itu?* (What is demographic bonus?)

Student: *Penduduk yang sudah meledak, Bu.* (Explosive population, ma'am.)

Lecturer: *Trus? Mati semua no nek meledak. Hehee..* (Then? All dead if exploded. Hehe..)

In data 6 analysis results, the speech delivered by the lecturer in the last line violates the relevance principle. Violations are committed by giving speech that does not match the topic of conversation.

The situation is when the lecturer asks what the demographic bonus is. Furthermore, the students answered that it means the population exploded. The point is that the population is very large and he uses the metaphor word "explode". However, the lecturer's response is to interpret the word "explode" literally. If it explodes, it means that all the inhabitants die. So, here there is a violation of the principle of relationship. The speech does not match with the topic of conversation.

4.4   Application of Manner Principle

The fourth principle of cooperation is the manner principle. The application of the method principle is divided into two, namely the fulfillment of the method principle and the violation of the manner principle. The following is the result of the analysis of the application of it.

4.4.1   The Fulfillment of Manner Principle

Fulfillment of the manner principle is carried out by conveying clear or not vague speech, not taxa or has two meanings, concise, and speaking regularly. This fulfillment is done so that the speech can be understood more quickly by the participants.

[Data 7]
Speech Context:

A lecturer asks the student about the contribution of the research topic.

Lecturer: What is your main contribution from this topic to the UMKM in Malioboro basically?

Student: I'm not only eerr I'm not only do the research the micro small medium enterprises, but I already go to the UPT for balance what suppose UMKM do.

Lecturer: Okay. I think that's all my comments. I will put the detail in my form.

In the data 7 analysis results, the speech delivered by the lecturer in the last line of the conversation above, has fulfilled the manner principle. Fulfillment is done by giving clear, meaningful, concise answers, and speaking regularly. In the speech, students get two clear information. The first one is that the lecturer has already done giving his comments and the second one is that the detailed comment will be written in the provided form of examination.

4.4.2   The Violation of Manner Principle

Violation of the principle of manner is carried out by presenting speech that is vague, ambiguous or taxa, not concise, and speaking irregularly. This violation can lead to a less artistic conversation produced. Following are the results of the analysis of the violation of the manner principle.

[Data 8]
Speech Context:
A lecturer asks the student to explain one theory of economic development.
Lecturer: Just mention one theory which is eerr explaining about the growth or economic of growth or economic of development. One kind of it. One theory.
Student: Eerr.. eerr.. ec.. eco growth.. that.. that eco growth
Lecturer: Eco growth. What is it? Would you mind to explain that?
Student: Okay. I.. I.. sorry the definition I don't really understand but there is our eerr other one drive to eerr what drive to matrix.

In data 8 analysis results, the utterances conveyed by students violate the principle of manner. Violations are committed by giving vague speech or ambiguous.

The student does not answer the lecturer's question clearly. His answer is full of pause and meaningless words and phrase. That is why the violation of manner principle happened in this situation.

In a conversation, when the principle of cooperation is fulfilled, it is not impossible that it is also related to the fulfilment of the principle of politeness. The following are findings related to the politeness principle found in the research.

4.5   Generosity Maxim

[Data 9]
Speech Context:
A student just joining the online room for the thesis defence. Yet, the chief of the examination has not already joined in it.

Student: *Assalamu'alaikum*

Lecturer: *Wa'alaikumsalam warrahmatullahi wa barrakatuh.* Since our eerr the chief of our the examination have to spoken in one the mmmmm event, so.. would you mind to wait for minutes, okay?

Lecturer: Yeah.. never mind.. it's okay. We'll wait.

The generosity maxim is clearly seen in data 9 above. It can be seen from the sentence "Yeah.. never mind.. it's okay. We'll wait". The student expresses his generosity by willingly to wait the chief of the examination for minutes, because the person has urgent speech in other event in the same time of the defence. So, it can be concluded that the generosity maxim is fulfilled in this conversation.

4.6   Modesty Maxim

[Data 10]
Speech Context:
A lecturer greets a student that met so many obstacles before having his thesis defence. So, before asking questions to him, the lecturer greets, appreciate his efforts and encourages him.

Lecturer: *Assalamu'alaikum, brother Wal****

Student: *Wa'alaikumsalam.* How are you, Sir? I'm.. I'm so nervous.

Lecturer: Yeah I'm so happy and proud you can sit there and we cannot imagine before for that you finally complete this long journey. It very challenges and dynamic mmmm things. So …

Student: Thank you so much.

In data 10, it can be seen the modesty maxim in the last sentence. The situation is when the lecturer really understands the many obstacles faced by the student before the defence. So, the moment of his thesis defence makes the lecturer feels proud of him. Even so, the student did not become big-headed. On the other hand, he showed his modesty by answering "Thank you so much" to the lecturer. Hence, this sentence shows the completeness of modesty maxim.

4.7 Agreement Maxim

[Data 11]
Speech Context:

A lecturer greets a student that met so many obstacles before having his thesis defence

Lecturer: *Assalamu'alaikum, brother Wal****

Student: *Wa'alaikumsalam.* How are you, Sir? I'm.. I'm so nervous.

Lecturer: Yeah I'm so happy and proud you can sit there and we cannot imagine before for that you finally complete this long journey. It very challenges and dynamic mmmm things. So …

Student: Thank you so much.

Lecturer: This is not the end of the journey, thisis the early of your carrier, your dreams and others in the future.

Student: *InshaaAlloh*

Data 11 shows an agreement maxim of politeness principle. The phrase "InshaaAlloh" is stated by the student to show that he agrees with the idea mentioned by lecturer in the previous line. It is stated that the final defence is not the end of the journey. Yet, it is a beginning for his future. So, the maxim of agreement is fulfilled in this conversation.

5 Conclusion

The main findings of the research show the fulfilment of cooperative principles by Grice. Yet, there are also the violation of the four principles (quantity principle, quality principle, relevance principle, manner principle). Furthermore, the research finds some maxims of the politeness principle, too, namely generosity maxim, modesty maxim and agreement maxim.

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