

INVESTIGATING THE USE OF MAXIMS IN THE EFL CLASS PRESENTATION: A PRAGMATIC STUDY

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Abstract

Maxim is one of the aspects studied in pragmatics, a relatively new field in linguistics. It is used in social interactions, especially in the form of conversations. In this study, the researchers conducted maxim analysis in an EFL class. The research data were collected from the WhatsApp-group communication of an online class in the English language education department of a public university in Central Java. This study employed a qualitative descriptive design using pragmatic analysis as its framework. There are maxim of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of manner and maxim of relevance. The result shows that there were 22 occurrences of maxim of quantity with 5 cases of flouting of the maxim. Then, 28 occurrences belonged to maxim of quality and the researchers did not find any flouting of the maxim. Next, 26 occurrences were labelled as maxim of relevance with 2 cases of flouting of the maxim. Besides that, 22 occurrences were categorized as maxim of manner with 3 cases of flouting of the maxim. In general, 110 maxim occurrences were identified from 16 conversations recorded in this research.

Keywords: Maxim analysis, EFL, pragmatics study

INTRODUCTION

The concept of education is closely related to the notion of learning. It is due to the fact that human behaviour, attitudes and intellect can be enhanced through the learning process and this, according to Rahmawaty (2020), is the thing that defines education. In order to ensure that the learning process goes in the right direction, the learning method utilized in the process should also be considered carefully. In this case, a careful examination of the learning environment should be conducted. However, the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic has forced educators to teach through the online mode. It is hoped that the spread of the coronavirus can be minimized through the implementation of physical distancing. In the conventional class, a sig-

nificant number of students will learn together in a room. Thus, the learning process using the conventional class system should be replaced by online education because this method is very suitable for physical distancing. In online education, students and teachers will be connected anywhere and anytime through technology. Therefore, they do not need to learn together in the same room as in conventional classes.

Considering this current circumstance, the learning process in most of English education departments in Indonesian universities also utilize the online education system. Online learning can occur through several supporting applications such as WhatsApp, Zoom, Google Meet, and other e-learning platforms. Various activities such as presentation, discussion, and completion of several tasks can still be carried out in the online class.

This paper focuses on analysing the types of maxims in an English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) setting, more specifically in an online class in the English language education department of a public university in Central Java. Subsequently, the data would be obtained from the interactions that occurred during presentation activities through WhatsApp as the primary learning tool and then analysed using a qualitative descriptive method. This method was used with the purpose of giving a description of the phenomenon from the exact data which had been collected.

Maxim is a regulation that makes communication go well. Syafryadin, Chandra, Apriani, & Noermanzah (2020) argued that maxim can also be denominated as the cooperative principle, and this term refers to a principle used by both speaker and hearer when interacting in a conversation so that the conversation can flow nicely. Sobhani and Saghebi (2014) stated that there are four conversational maxims that become the building blocks of cooperative principle that emerge from natural language pragmatics. Furthermore, Young (2019) argued that the majority of researchers approve the idea of pragmatics as the study of the correlation between the meaning of an utterance and the context in which the utterance is created. Based on Yule (2014), the maxims, which are often called the “Gricean maxims”, can be classified into the maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner.

The Maxim of Quantity

According to this maxim, the context of conversation should not be exaggerated or more informative. Grice (1975) as cited in Ariyanti, Setiawan, & Wedawati (2020) stated that this maxim requires interlocutors to be as informative as required, and not make the contribution more informative than is required. Furthermore, Sari, Chairunnisa, Gultom, & Sitio (2020) stated that a speaker is supposed to produce ample, relatively adequate, and as informative information as possible in the maxim of quantity.

The Maxim of Quality

The maxim of quantity relates to the accurate and precise information of the conversation. Hidayat, Nurlia, Alek & Setiawan (2020), stated that the maxim of quality orders participants to speak something true in their conversation, and they can only rely on something they say in the conversation to be accurate. It means that the information which is uttered should have clear evidence and be truthful.

The Maxim of Relevance

According to Hutahaean, Purba and Herman (2020), the maxim of relation or maxim of rele-

vance dictates that the utterance must be relevant with the topic that is being talked about. It means that the information which someone is going to say should be suitable and relevant to the topic of the conversation.

The Maxim of Manner

Jiatong (2020) stated that the maxim of manner means that one is compulsory to be perspicuous, orderly, and shorter than being obscure, ambiguous and unnecessary. It means that information should be shared in a clear manner so that the conversation can be effective.

Flouting of the Maxims

Flouting of a maxim is the condition when an utterance does not comply with the rule of the maxim. Lasiana and Mubarak (2020) highlighted, that flouting of the maxim is a deliberate effort to declare hidden meanings and guide the listener to discover the inserted meaning from the maxim flouting. It means that the information may actually reflect the intention of the speaker. Subsequently, the flouting of the maxim of quantity refers to any utterance that is more informative than is required. In this case, the speaker provides information in a way that is more than what the speaker is supposed to give. Flouting of the maxim quality means that the speaker does not give accurate information with lack of actual evidence. He or she may use hyperbole, metaphor or irony in uttering the information. Then, when the speaker says something irrelevant to the topic, it means that he/she is flouting the maxim of relevance. However, the speaker might still expect the interlocutor to understand the meaning of what he or she says, although it is uttered implicitly. Moreover, the flouting of the maxim of manner means that the speaker says something ambiguous, unnecessary and obscure.

In a communication, the success of a conversation really depends on how the speaker and interlocutors interact. In the case of a conversation, there must be some benefits or meaning which can keep the conversation going. The importance of understanding is a key in a conversation. A conversation must have sufficient information as needed and must not be uninformed. According to Asri (2015) in his paper entitled “An Analysis of Flouting Maxim in EFL Classroom Interaction”, the speaker and the interlocutor must give opinions and assumptions when talking to each other so that the conversation is more meaningful and can be regarded as following the cooperative principle. Maxims can occur, be investigated and be observed through conversations between students, or between students and teachers.

METHODS

The qualitative descriptive method was used in this research. With this design, the research must be based on facts by looking at or being in accordance with circumstances that are happening or have occurred (Fitriani, 2015). By using this method, the researchers could study and provide an overview of a phenomenon regarding the use of maxims in presentations in an EFL class. Furthermore, this study employed a pragmatic approach because pragmatic is part of linguistics which studies the meaning and purposes of the speaker. Pragmatics considers the intent of the speaker and the situation in which both interlocutors communicate (Purwo, 1990).

The data collection technique to obtain information in this study was done by observing students' conversation in the WhatsApp group during online learning. In conducting the investigation, the authors collected the data and examined the use of four types of maxims in the

conversations in an EFL class. Those four types of maxims are the maxim of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of relation, and maxim of manner. The data analysed in this study was based on the conversations that occurred during the presentation activities. The research participants are the students of an online class in the English language education department of a public university in Central Java. Investigations were carried out while learning was taking place or when the students were presenting during the online learning.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

In this study the researchers took 16 conversations as a sample. The researchers analysed the maxim types contained in each conversation. Then, the maxims were presented in the form of tables. The first table contains the maxim number contained in each conversation. Then, for each maxim number in the conversation the total is added up. In addition, the second table is a presentation of maxim in the conversation.

The result shows that there were 22 occurrences of maxim of quantity with 5 cases of flouting of the maxim. Then, 28 occurrences belonged to maxim of quality and the researchers did not find any flouting of the maxim. Next, 26 occurrences were labelled as maxim of relevance with 2 cases of flouting of the maxim. Besides that, 22 occurrences were categorized as maxim of manner with 3 cases of flouting of the maxim. In general, 110 maxim occurrences were identified from 16 conversations recorded in this research. Further details of the result can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. The Distribution of Maxim Types in Each Conversation

Conversation	Types of Maxim								TOTAL
	Quantity		Quality		Relevance		Manner		
	Maxim of Quantity	Flouting of Maxim of Quantity	Maxim of Quality	Flouting of Quality Maxim	Maxim of Relevance	Flouting of Relevance Maxim	Maxim of Manner	Flouting of Manner Maxim	
1	1		1		1			1	4
2	1		1		1		1		4
3	2		2		1	1	2		8
4		2	2		2		2		8
5	1		1		1		1		4
6	1		1		1		1		4
7	1		1		1		1		4
8		1	1		1		1		4
9	1		1		1		1		4
10	2		2		2		2		8
11	1		1		1		1		4
12		1	1		1		1		4
13	1		1		1			1	4
14	3	1	4		4		4		16
15	4		5		4	1	4		18
16	3		3		3		2	1	12
TOTAL	22	5	28		26	2	22	3	110

In the second table, the maxim percentages of data from each conversation are shown. Each conversation has a different maxim number. It shows the intensity of the assessment that was done during the presentation in class. The distribution can be described as follows:

Table 2. Data Percentage of Maxim Types in Each Conversation

Conversation	Types of Maxim							
	Quantity		Quality		Relevance		Manner	
	Maxim of Quantity	Flouting of Maxim of Quantity	Maxim of Quality	Flouting of Quality Maxim	Maxim of Relevance	Flouting of Relevance Maxim	Maxim of Manner	Flouting of Manner Maxim
1	v		v		v			v
2	v		v		v		v	
3	v		v		v	v	v	
4		v	v		v		v	
5	v		v		v		v	
6	v		v		v		v	
7	v		v		v		v	
8		v	v		v		v	
9	v		v		v		v	
10	v		v		v		v	
11	v		v		v		v	
12		v	v		v		v	
13	v		v		v			v
14	v	v	v		v		v	
15	v		v		v	v	v	
16	v		v		v		v	v

Discussion

In the tables above, the distribution and percentage of each maxim in the conversation when the students were making their presentations in the class were described. In the data analysis, the researchers used the letter Q to name the presenter. Meanwhile, to mention the respondent, the researcher used the letter A. The following is an explanation of the maxim in the conversation:

Conversation 1: Greeting

Q: Ass. Good morning. Hope all of you in GREAT condition. Keep healthy and happy.

A (s): **Morning mam**

In the first conversation, the researchers found three maxims and one maxim abandonment. Firstly, there was the maxim of quantity, because in the conversation Q answered the opening greeting from A. Secondly, the researchers found the use of the maxim of quality. This can be seen from the answer of person A which was clear and in accordance with the facts. Thirdly, there was a maxim of relevance seen from the response of A to the Q's utterances. The neglect of the use of the maxim of manner was seen from the attitude of Person A who only answered greetings and ignored the next message from Person A.

Conversation 2: Greeting and give information

Q: Assalamualaikum. Good morning all. Today we will discuss about teaching reading. Here is the power point.

A (s): **Good morning, alright**

Subsequently, from the second conversation above, the researchers found that the maxim rule was used. The four maxim types were used in the conversation. The use of the maxim quantity was indicated by the appropriate response of person A. Maxim of quality was also indicated by the response of person A which gave a clear answer without making Q feel ambiguous. Furthermore, the maxim of relativity could also be seen from the answer that was in accordance with the utterance given by the Q. The last one was the use of maxim of manner, in the conversation it could be seen that A responded to the two feeds given by the Q. The first bait was the opening by giving a greeting, providing the second feed which was information related to the material to be discussed in the presentation.

Conversation 3: Asking and giving clarification

Q: Can we go to the next slide?

A1 (s): **Yes you can**

A2 (s): **Yes please**

In the fourth conversation, the researchers found a complete maxim use and one maxim violation. The violation was seen from the maxim of relevance. However, the response from A2 could be used or it could be said that it was normal as long as it did not create an ambiguous meaning.

Conversation 4: Asking and giving clarification

Q: Can we go to the next slide?

A1 (s): **Sure**

A2 (s): **Yuhuuu**

Afterwards, in the fourth conversation, the third maxim was used except for maxim of quantity. This was determined from the response of the A1 and A2 which were too short. It was a violation of the maxim quantity. Conventionally, they should have answered "Yes, we can".

Conversation 5: Asking and giving clarification

Q: Can we move to the next slide?

A (s): **Yes sure, we can**

After that, in the fifth conversation, researchers found no violations of maxim use. all maxims were used according to the rules. Maxim of quantity, quality, relevance and manner were used by person A without causing an ambiguous response. This response was the right response according to the bait given by the Q.

Conversation 6: Asking and giving clarification

Q: Can we move to the next slide?

A (s): **Yeah we can**

The sixth conversation was also perfect, all maxims were well used.

Conversation 7: Giving instruction

Q: Let's go to the next slide

A (s): **Let's goo**

The same as the fifth and sixth conversations, in the seventh conversation all maxims were used perfectly without breaking the maxim's rule of use.

Conversation 8: Giving instruction

Q: Let's go to the next slide

A (s): **Go**

In the eighth conversation, the researchers found a violation of the maxim quantity. This was from Person A's short response. Maxim of quantity requires the respondent to answer using the conversation rule. The information provided was neither too much nor too little. In this condition, A could give a "let's go" response.

Conversation 9: Giving instruction

Q: Let's move guys

A (s): **Okay let's move**

In the ninth conversation, the researchers found that all maxim rules were used correctly. Firstly, the maxim quantity by giving a suitable response that is neither too long nor too short. Then, maxim quality, namely the presence of a response from presenter A that is clear and does not cause confusing conditions because it can be concluded that the two dialogues are truth. Thirdly, the maxim use of relevance seen with the response given has a relationship with the bait given by the Q. Finally, the use of the maxim manner can be seen by giving an appropriate response without creating ambiguous conditions.

Conversation 10: Asking and giving clarification

Q: Can you catch the point?

A1 (s): **Okay point taken**

A1 (s): **Point cached**

The tenth conversation shows that all maxims are used according to the rule without only subscribers. Giving clear responses; not overly responding; giving honest responses and not creating ambiguous conditions.

Conversation 11: Giving instruction

Q: Let's jump to the next slide

A (s): **Of course**

Just like conversation 9 and 10, conversation 11 also qualifies for the use of the fourth maxim. In the conversation, A answers with the word "of course" which indicates that A agrees that Q continues the presentation to the next slide.

Conversation 12: Giving instruction

Q: Let's move guys

A (s): **Okay**

In the 12th conversation, researchers found that the maxim quantity was neglected. This is from A's response, which was too quick. Even though it can be indicated that person A is following the instructions in Q. However, the response still indicates that person A does not ignore the maxim quantity. Person A should be able to answer by adding the word "okay, let's move" a little.

Conversation 13: Inviting question

Q: Alright, guys. That's all our presentation today. Do you have any questions or suggestions?

A (s): **Yes I have**

Furthermore, in the 13th conversation the researchers found that the conversation met the requirements for all maxim use. Person A's response in the conversation did not make Q feel confused. Then, the response also showed the real situation, which means that A answered honestly. Besides that, the answer of person A also had a correlation with the question of the Q.

Conversation 14: Asking and giving answer

Q: Good morning, I'm Mercya. First thing first, I'd like to say thank you very much to today's presenters which have already explained the material about teaching reading. According to your slide, I notice that we have already passed those courses, particularly in intensive and extensive reading. In this part, I'm interested in extensive reading. In your POV, what kind of technique you can apply to teach students in extensive reading? Because the core of extensive reading is 'let's students read what they wanna read'. For that, what can we do to make our class, esp in extensive reading be more effective? That's all thank you

A1: In our opinion, **we can use reading log like we have done before in extensive reading class, we can read what we want to read based on our interesting topic, so we can learn while knowing many information.** Then, I think it is effective to use reading log.

Q: Ah I see, thank you. However, do you think that students will gain the same knowledge in terms of vocabulary richness?

A1: IMO, yes. Because like what you said, they will read as many easy books. Although it's an easy book, there will be some vocabulary that they find on that reading source.

A2: Good morning, my name's Febriana. I would like to answer Mercya's question. In my opinion we can give a freedom for the student what they want to read. However we also have to give some line or border, so that they also can read in the line.

Q: I see, so there are some rules we need to consider, right?

A2: Yes Mer, we can give the students a freedom what they wanna read. However we also give the line what they have to read.

In conversation 14, the researchers found a violation of the maxim of quantity. This can be seen from the response of A2 "... we can give the students a freedom what they wanna read. However we also give the line what they have to read". The response was a repetition of the answer he gave previously. The response was not quite right, A2 should just say "yes Mer, you're right". The short sentence was sufficient to respond to the question from the Q's "so there are some rules we need to consider, right?" because the question was only a confirmation of the answer given by A2. In addition, researchers found no other violations of maxim.

Conversation 15: Asking and giving answer

Q: Ah I see, thank you. However, do you think that students will gain the same knowledge in terms of vocabulary richness?

A1: In our opinion, they won't. Because every student have their capacity to grasp the vocabulary and the meaning implied in the text.

A2: In my perspective the knowledge of vocabulary in one with each other is different. Why? It is because the capability of someone in receiving and recognize words is also different.

A3: Actually, I am still confused in the line "read what students like to read". How if students only like to read something like short story, novels or something like this? Is it still okay?

A1: In my opinion, it is ok. As long as students are able to do kind of reading assessment such us: skimming, summarizing, etc.

A2: So basically, ER encourage students to read those kind of text.

Next, in the 15th conversation, the researchers found violations of maxim of relevance. The maxim of violation can be seen from the response of A3's "Actually, I am still confused in the line" read what students like to read ". How if students" which showed the irrelevance of the response. In this conversation Q asked about increasing the vocabulary of each individual through reading. However, the question was responded differently by A3. The response of A3 is a form of question not answer. The A3 should have asked a question to the presenter. However, in the conversation A3 asked the question to Q who was the questioner in the presentation.

Conversation 16: asking and giving response

Q: Any other questions? If not. Thank you for all the presenters

A1 (s): No mam, thanks for today's lessons and information guys. Such a great presentation and discussion

A2 (s): **No mam**, thank you guys for sharing and discussing new information, big love.

A3 (s): **Warmest thanks for today's presenters.**

In the last conversation, the researchers found a violation of maxim of manner. The violation can be seen from the response of A3's "Warmest thanks for today's presenters". They were inaccurate and could lead to confusing or ambiguous conditions. The essence of Q's question is to confirm whether there were still questions about the material. However, A3 did not give the right answer, A3 only gave a response from the last sentence of Q. Conventionally, A3 should have given the answer "Yes/No".

In the discussion above, the maxim rules were still used. In this category, the maxim of quantity was ranked first with 5 cases of flouting. Then, the flouting was also committed in 3 cases for the maxim of manner and 2 cases for the maxim of relevance. In fact, maxim violations often occurred in one presentation of the class. It could be caused by several factors, such as; environmental factors, material mastery factors, internal factors such as vocabulary mastery and many more. A violation must always occur in a conversation. However, how these violations can be tolerated is the main thing to be focused on. The tolerance that can be given in conversation is how the message can be conveyed appropriately. Violations in conversation inevitably occur, whether it's in conventional or particular conversations (Syafryadin, et all. 2020).

The mastery factor of the material being explained was one of the main factors before the respondent gave his response. In maxim use, contextual factors need to be considered when understanding the implications of conversation. In making conversation appropriately, presenters and respondents must share knowledge which includes speech from the implications of the material discussed, the context of the conversation to the interactions in the presentation (Grice, 1975).

On the other hand, flouting of the maxim of quantity usually happens when the speaker intentionally provides more or less information than the situation requires. Afterwards, the condition when what the speaker contributes to the conversation is untrue or fake information is a flouting of the maxim of quality. Next, flouting of the maxim of relevance happens when the speaker's input is not relevant or lacks response for the context being discussed. Lastly, flouting of the maxim of manner occurs when the speaker's input is not translucent and it may be incomprehensible, ambiguous and not reasonable, making the situation so confusing. In essence, a maxim occurs when the speaker fails to observe the maxim on purpose and without the intention of deceiving the listener (Dwi, 2015).

CONCLUSION

Maxim becomes an integral part of pragmatics and language studies, including in the field of EFL learning. Grice (1975), stated that the adage is a reference and helps how a person positions himself in an interaction. The maxim is a regulation with the purpose of making communication goes well. Syafryadin, Chandra, Apriani, & Noermanzah (2020) argued that maxim can also be denominated as the cooperative principle, and this term refers to a principle used by both speaker and hearer when interacting in a conversation so that the conversation can flow nicely.

The findings of this research show that there were 22 occurrences of maxim of quantity with 5 cases of flouting of the maxim. Then, 28 occurrences belonged to maxim of quality and the researchers did not find any flouting of the maxim. Next, 26 occurrences were labelled as maxim of relevance with 2 cases of flouting of the maxim. Besides that, 22 occurrences were categorized as maxim of manner with 3 cases of flouting of the maxim. In general, 110 maxim occurrences were identified from 16 conversations recorded in this research. It is hoped that by reading this research, students and lecturers can become more aware of their own utterances and how they affect the meaning-making process during conversations.

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