
Humor Formed by Flouting the Maxim in Hawkeye TV Series

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Abstract

Since humor holds such an important role in our interactions, the topic related to the establishment of humor becomes important. This research was focusing on how humor was formed and why the flouting of maxim was affecting it. Descriptive qualitative method was used in this analysis. The objects of this research were the types of flouting maxim and the development of humor caused by it. The observation method was used in this analysis, combined with non-participatory technique in data collection. The data analyzed by using pragmatics identity method. The result of this research showed that all the maxims were violated throughout the episodes in order to create humor. Maxim of relation and maxim of quantity became the most flouted maxim in creating humor, and the sense of hostility became the most appeared humor in Hawkeye TV Series.

Keywords: Cooperative principle, Maxim, Humor, Hawkeye

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication, as any other activities in our lives, has its own term, it demands its user to communicate in the right way. It is about how the speaker and the interlocutor are being cooperative, which considered as the right way at giving and receiving information, where the speaker give the right amount of information, telling the truth, related into the topic of conversation and not ambiguous, in order to prevent misunderstanding and to make sure that the interlocutor is not misinterpreting the information.

To reach that term, Grice(1975) invented the rules of communication, it is aimed to keep communication on track as is required. The rules called cooperative principle. This principle consists of four rules, namely maxim of quantity which is to guide the speaker and interlocutor to give information in the exact amount of need, maxim of quality acts in guiding the speaker and interlocutor to give the

information that can be proven and based on reality, maxim of relation is to guide the speaker and interlocutor to deliver information that is relevant, and maxim of manner is to guide the speaker and interlocutor in giving clear information.

Though, in the practice of communication, it will not always be cooperative from start to end, this can be considered as a non-observant maxim. Grice(1975) mentioned that there are four actions towards cooperative principle. The first is observing the maxim, it considered as the observant maxim because in this act, the speaker is following the rules of cooperative principle. and three of the rest are considered as non-observant maxim, namely; flouting maxim which fail to observe maxim with the intention that the interlocutor is aware of it, violating the maxim which considered as fail to observe the maxim with the intention that the speech partner is not aware of it, this action intended to mislead the speech partner, and opting out the maxim which happens when someone refuses to be involved in a conversation.

Out of several actions that happen in conversation which can be the cause of non-observant maxim, humor is one of them. According to Attardo(1994) humor is generally described as laughter. And correlation of humor and laughter can also be seen in these terms; something funny will make you laugh and what makes you laugh is considered as funny. Laughter generally can be connected with humor, there are also other definitions of laughter that are quite different and have no relation with humor. One of them is the term of laughter in Africa which can be related with the sign of an embarrassment. In order to create humor in conversation, the speaker often to avoid the cooperativeness in communication. Grice as cited in Attardo (1994) mentioned that when the communication contains jokes it cannot be determined as cooperative because the speaker often to break the cooperative principle in order to create laughter. This act is highly associated with the flouting maxim. Because it is described by Grice as cited in Birner(2013) it is the inobservance of cooperative principle when the speaker is accidentally break the rule with the intention that their speech partners are aware of it.

With that being said, this research is mainly focusing on the types in flouting of cooperative principle proposed by Grice and its relation in developing humor through communication that are developed during communication. The reason of the researcher to choose flouting of maxim is because it is one of the most phenomena found in daily interaction, in some cases, the speaker and interlocutor did not even recognize that they are flouting the maxim. The source of data for this research will be TV Series, since TV Series contains the interaction that is similar with daily interaction because it is often to be portrayed by the character as if it is real. The TV Series that is going to be used as the data source entitled *Hawkeye* (2021). The series is chosen because this show contains unrelated conversation which drives to humorous aspect.

One of the phenomena that can be found related with the incooperation of cooperative principle related with humor can be found in Bab Moms Movie (Lucas & Moore, 2016):

- Gwendolyn : “Cute backpack you got there”
Jessie : “**Oh yeah, uh, I’m such an Elsa.**”
Gwendolyn : “Hahaha, you’re hilarious. You really are.”

On the conversation above, Gwendolyn as the hearer tried to compliment the speaker Jessie in order to gain his attention, by saying that the backpack in his back is cute. The speaker however, gives an uncooperative respond. He was trying to melt the situation and tension, by trying to build humorous atmosphere, instead of being thankful by the compliment, he responded by saying I’m such an Elsa with the intention that the speech partner will laugh as the respond. The act can be determined as the flouting of maxim relation in order to create laughter.

There is the second phenomenon which taken from the TV Series that is going to be the data source in this research, Hawkeye TV Series. The conversation below is taken from the first episode on the first season in the minute of 00:21:17:

- Laura : “You guys all good?”
Clint : “**Uh, yeah, it’d be easier if you were here. I’d be less likely to strangle these kids.**”
Laura : “The whole point was for you to spend time with the kids.”
Clint : “No, I’m kidding. We’re having a really good time.”

Clint Barton was spending his time with the kids. While they were eating dinner, Laura who happens to be Clint’s wife was calling to ask about their condition. Clint’s respond is the act of flouting maxim of quantity, because the respond he gave in the conversation is more than what his wife needed. The humor was developed in this conversation by Clint telling a joke that he would less likely to strangle the kids if Laura was there with them. That thing was not actually happen, but he said that in order to make the situation more relaxed.

In order to make it easier in defining the humor that happen in the conversation, Attardo(1994) mentioned that there are general classification of humor namely; incongruent theory of humor which happen when the expected thing does not the same with the occurrence, then there is hostility theory of humor which considered when in the development of humor there is the feeling of superiority which developed through the laughs created by mocking, humiliating or laughing at someone’s flaws, lastly is the release theory of humor which identified as the humor that developed by releasing the tension which related with social or psychological aspect.

There are several studies related to the topic of this research. Agustinia & Ariyanti(2016) discussed about how humor can be the result of flouting conversational maxim based on Grice’s theory in This

Means War movie. This research used qualitative method. The data of this analysis was taken from the humorous conversation occurred in the movie. The result of this analysis showed that in order to create humor in conversation, the character flouted all the maxims. Maxim of quality becomes the most flouted maxim in this movie in creating humor.

Amianna & Putranti (2017) analyzed the violations and flouting of cooperative principle proposed by Grice which can create humorous situation in *How I Met Your Mother* movie. This research focuses on humorous situations that are created by the act of violating and flouting the cooperative principle. This is a qualitative research. The data of analysis was taken from the conversation happened in the movie. The result of this research showed that the non-observant of maxim of quantity becomes the most used aspect in creating humor.

Compared to the studies that have been done related to this topic, the similarity is in the objective theory, which is the theory of cooperative principle by Paul Grice, while the difference is in the data source used. In this research, the researcher is using *Hawkeye TV Series* as the data source.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

As Sudaryanto(2015) mentioned, this research is categorized as a descriptive qualitative research. Observation method is used in collecting the data for this research which combined with a non-participatory technique. For the process of collecting the data, the researcher is firstly watch the data source, marking each of the flouting of cooperative principle with the tendency of creating humor, and taking note out of the data found in the data source.

The method used in this analysis is pragmatics identity method and it is combined with pragmatics competence-in-dividing technique. This method and technique are used in analyzing the types of flouting happen towards cooperative principle and how the humor is developed through the violation. In the process of analyzing the data, the research first interpret the data found by looking at the context of conversation, then classify the types of flouting, and make a discussion by explaining how the flouting can develop humor.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

This research figured out that in *Hawkeye TV Series*, there were 16 flouting maxim that were in relation with humor. The flouting was done by characters during the episodes. All the maxims were violated in this TV Series in order to create humor. The result of this research is displayed in the table below.

Table 1 The quantity of the flouting and humor

Cooperative Principle	Qty	Category of Humor	Qty
Maxim of Quantity	7	Incongruity	6
Maxim of Quality	1	Hostility	8
Maxim of Relation	7	Release	2
Maxim of Manner	1		
Total	16	Total	16

3.2 Discussion

Data 1

This conversation was taken from the second episode in the minute of 00:04:14

Clint : “Nice place for a kid.”
Kate : “Yeah, I inherited it.”
Clint : “**What are you, 18?**”
Kate : “I’m 22.”
Clint : “Yeah, same thing.”

The conversation happened as soon as both Kate and Clint arrive at Kate’s place. Clint was confused, by the fact that someone as young as Kate can have a place as good as that. So Clint started the conversation by stating that this place is nice for a kid, then continued by asking how old Kate was, was it 18? This was not true. Kate is 22 years old. Clint’s act in the conversation is the act of flouting maxim of relation. Instead of being grateful for Kate inheriting the place, Clint was asking the question which happens to be a joke as well as underestimating Kate by thinking that she was only a kid.

Data 2

This conversation was taken from the second episode in the minute of 00:03:09

Clint : “Look, I gotta find a place to stash you. Safe. So I can recover the suit and clean your mess.”
Kate : “Stash me? I’m not a bag of money.”
Clint : “**No, you’re not. A bag of money would be useful to me.**”

The conversation above was happened at the grocery after they were picking up some supplies and about to pay it. Clint who was pissed by the fact that the person behind the ninja suit was a young woman seemed to be sarcastic, also with the fact that he has to clean the mess in order to make sure nobody was looking for her because that would be dangerous. And that might ruin his Christmas plan with the family. As the first step, Clint had to find somewhere safe for her to stay until everything was under control, but Clint used the wrong word. Kate was offended because Clint used the word ‘stash’ as if she was not a

person. In responding to Kate's utterance, Clint flouted the maxim of quantity for providing the information more than what was needed. The humor was developed by the sense of superiority. Clint thought of Kate as a person who was ruining his quality time with the family.

Data 3

This conversation was taken from the second episode in the minute of 00:08:01

Ivan : "You were on fire."
Tomas : "I'm okay."
Ivan : "**Like a little shish kebab.**"
Tomas : "No."

The conversation happened in chaos. Ivan and Tomas are member of Tracksuit Mafia. They were attacking Kate Bishop's place by throwing some Molotov over the place to set fire. During that time, Tomas get burned but Tomas was able to remove the fire from his clothes as fast as he can. Ivan was violating maxim of relation in this conversation. He was teasing Tomas by making fun of the fact that he caught on fire. Ivan was making fun of Tomas' unfortunate by saying that Tomas was on fire like a little shish kebab.

Data 4

This conversation was taken from the second episode in the minute of 00:08:14

Clint : "We'll need some supplies."
Kate : "Hell yeah. Avenger supplies?"
Clint : "**Not gonna lie to you. This is a bit of a letdown.**"
Clint : "Sorry to disappoint you."

The conversation was happen after Clint and Kate made their way of escaping the Tracksuit Mafia. Kate had high expectation when Clint said that they were going to need some supplies. Kate expected that it was going to be Avenger supplies, full of technology and something cool. When the truth is they were just going to the pharmacy to buy first kit aid. Kate was flouting the maxim of quantity by giving the information that is unnecessary. And Kate did that in order to express her disappointment to Clint. The humor was created while Kate tried to picture that that was nothing like she was expected. This categorized as incongruity.

Data 5

This conversation was taken from the second episode in the minute of 00:14:48

Clint : "What is this?"
Kate : "Oh, I started to describe, um, what I could remember of the Tracksuit's faces."
Clint : "**I guess you're not an art major.**"
Kate : "Okay."

The conversation above happened when Kate and Clint arrived at Kate's aunt place. Since Kate's place has been burned down by the Tracksuit Mafia and Kate and Clint need a place to stay, so they decided to crash into Kate Aunt's place. Clint saw a very bad drawing on the book and asked Kate what that was. After Kate explained it to Clint, Clint judged the drawing by stating something that is unrelated to the topic of the conversation. Clint's act considered as the flouting of maxim relation. The humor developed when Clint was trying to give comment to a bad drawing by saying 'I guess you're not an art major', which means that the drawing is horrible.

Data 6

This conversation was taken from the second episode in the minute of 00:20:31

- Kate : "Hey, look, that one's you."
Clint : "No. That's Katniss Everdeen. Let's go."
Kate : "Your problem is branding."
Clint : "No, my problem is you. And this ninja suit and the people trying to kill you 'cause of it. It's a problem that I'm going to solve today, so I can go home to my family."
Kate : "**No, it's branding.**"

The conversation above happened in the street through Kate's workplace. They were meeting people wearing superhero costumes. Kate thought the woman with arrow was representing Clint as Hawkeye. Clint then responded that the woman was not representing him, but Katniss Everdeen, the character in The Hunger Games movie which also using arrow as her main weapon. Kate then stated that the problem with Clint being a Hawkeye is branding, because he never makes any specific identity that can differ him from general people. Clint then responded by listing the problem that he was actually facing at the moment, which actually Kate and the suit and the people who was wanting Kate to be dead because of the suit. Kate realized that, and she was a bit shocked by realizing it. In order in releasing the tension, she flouted the maxim of quality by re-stating that Clint's problem is branding. The humor was developed because Kate tried to release the tension after the shock. By flouting the maxim of quality, she was trying to make herself more relaxed by stating something that was not true.

Data 7

This conversation was taken from the second episode in the minute of 00:38:55

- Eleanor : "Can we just put all this behind us? Hon? Okay? Why don't you start by apologizing to Jack?"
Kate : "**Sorry for scaring you into telling the truth.**"
Jack : "Smart as a whip, this one, huh?"

The conversation above happen right after Kate asked Jack to show his fencing skill. Kate's did that because she was suspecting Jack on killing his own uncle. Eleanor, Kate's mom shocked by how Kate

treated Jack, since Jack was Eleanor's fiancée and they were going to get married soon. Eleanor asked Kate to apologize to Jack and put everything behind them. Kate then apologized by saying 'sorry for scaring you into telling the truth'. Kate's act considered as flouting of maxim quantity, because she was giving the information more than what is needed. The humor developed by Kate while she was flouting the maxim. Eleanor expected Kate to apologize in the right way, but Kate was apologizing and also accusing Jack in doing something terrible.

Data 8

This conversation was taken from the fourth episode in the minute of 00:02:31

- Eleanor : "Somebody used my laptop to sign onto my work account ten minutes ago. Any thoughts, Kate? Hawkeye?"
Kate : "**You'll never get anything outta him. See, CB-One has trouble opening up.**"
Clint : "Nobody calls me CB-One."
Kate : "I'm just trying it out for a second. **Probably some early childhood thing. He thinks hedoesn't tell me much, but he ends up telling me all of it.**"
Clint : "I tell her nothing."
Kate : "**I think it's 'cause I'm generally pretty chill. I'm not like, 'Oh, my God, Hawkeye!'**"
Clint : "Definitely not chill."

The conversation above happen after Kate and Clint was busted entering Eleanor's house, which also Kate's house. But they were entering the place as intruders. They tried to find information by breaking into Eleanor's work account. But Kate did not make it because her access was denied. They were caught by Jack and being interrogated by Eleanor. When Eleanor asked both Kate and Clint, Kate responded by stating many information, but none of them seem to answer Eleanor question. Kate is flouting the maxim of manner for causing ambiguity during conversation. The humor developed by Kate flouted the maxim, while Kate was stating the utterance which was not expected by Eleanor.

Data 9

This conversation was taken from the fourth episode in the minute of 00:26:39

- Clint : "Kate? Kate?"
Kate : "There you are."
Clint : "I told you, you're supposed to be lookout."
Kate : "Yeah, but of the two of us, who do you trust up there not to get distracted?"
Clint : "It's not fair, that your inability to act like a grown-up helps you get your way."
Kate : "No, it's not. But it is what it is."
Clint : "I need you to use your grappling hook arrow to anchor yourself in. propel down the side of the building to the window. If it's locked, break in quietly."
Kate : "**Yeah, love all of that. Great plan, just a slight tweak though.**"

The conversation above happened when Kate and Clint was planning on to entering an apartment. Clint instructed Kate to do what he said, but Kate refused to follow it. She chose to enter the apartment using her own way, which was using the main entrance. Kate flouted maxim of relation while Clint was guiding her way in. she responded to the instruction with unrelated statement. The humor was developed during the non-cooperation in the conversation. Instead of saying okay or indicate that she was going to do it, she was making fun of it as Clint's instruction was unnecessary. The humor was incongruent with what Clint might have expected. He was hoping that Kate will listen to it carefully.

Data 10

This conversation was taken from the fifth episode in the minute of 00:11:45

Yelena : "I made macaroni if you want some."

Kate : "I'm sorry. What?"

Yelena : "**Well, I was starving and you took forever. So I wanted to make food.**"

The conversation above happened when Kate was entering her place. Kate shocked that Yelena was there. Yelena on the other side was very calm and cheerful. In order to lower the tense in situation, she told Kate that she was using her kitchen to make macaroni. In shock, Kate tried to digest Yelena's utterance and asked Yelena to repeat what she just said. Instead of repeating the statement, Yelena flouted the maxim of quantity by giving information that was not important. In this non-observant maxim, Yelena created humor that was incongruent to what Kate expected.

Data 11

This conversation happened in the fifth episode in the minute of 00:12:31

Kate : "I am not gonna have dinner with you after you tried to kill me and then broke into my house."

Yelena : "**I did not try to kill you. A, I put you on a wire to remove an obstacle. And B, I did not break anything. I am way too talented than that. And C, stop being so defensive. Okay? You're so hostile.**"

Yelena asked Kate to join and eat macaroni together with her. Kate then refused Yelena's offer because they met before, and Kate had bad impression on her in their first assemble. To assure Kate that Yelena has no bad intention for Kate, Yelena explained to Kate that she was not trying to kill Kate, she tried to help her instead. Yelena also did not break anything in Kate's place. Yelena then continuing the statement by commenting on Kate's behavior. Yelena's act considered as flouting maxim of quantity, because she explained too much. The humor developed when Yelena commented Kate's behavior. Kate did not have to be so defensive around Yelena, because Yelena has no bad intention for her.

Data 12

This conversation was taken from the fifth episode in the minute of 00:15:42

- Yelena : “But, het, Kate Bishop, you grew up here, right? You must have some recommendations for me.”
Kate : “Yeah... Um... Yeah, I have. Let’s see. The High Line. High Line is great. Um... There’s Christmas market in union square. **Um...I’m not quite sure those are the right fit for the blood-thirsty vigilante type.**”
Yelena : “Hahaha! The bad blood-thirsty vigilante. Sometimes you’re funny Kate Bishop.”

In the conversation above, Yelena was asking Kate about place recommendations that she need to visit, because Kate grew up here and it was Yelena’s first time in New York. Kate began mentioning some places, but then uttered unnecessary statement by saying that Kate was not sure those places were the right fit for a person like Yelena. Kate described her as a blood-thirsty vigilante. Kate’s act in the conversation considered as flouting of maxim quantity. The humor developed while Kate was flouting the maxim of quantity. Yelena was not expected the statement that was come out of Kate’s mouth and burst into laugh because of that.

Data 13

This conversation was taken from the fifth episode in the minute of 00:17:22

- Yelena : “Stop pretending like you’re not surprised. It does not look cool.”
Kate : “You’re really Natasha’s Sister?”
Yelena : “Yes.”
Kate : “Wow. I did not see that coming. Thank god, I didn’t kill you up there.”
Yelena : “Hahahahaha. **You kill me? Again, oh, Kate Bishop, you are so funny. That’s hilarious. That one is the funniest.**”

After Yelena stated that Natasha Romanoff is her sister, Kate shocked and said that it was good that she did not kill her on their first meeting. Yelena again was burst into laugh when Kate uttered that statement. Yelena believed that it was impossible for Kate to kill her, because they were on different level. Yelena was way more dangerous compared to Kate. In responding to Kate’s statement, Yelena flouted the maxim of relation by commenting on how funny Kate was, thinking that she could kill Yelena. During the flout, humor was also developed, there was the sense of hostility in Yelena’s comment on Kate being funny.

Data 14

This conversation was taken from the sixth episode on the minute of 00:13:05

- Kate : “I don’t see my mom yet.”
Clint : “Why don’t you tell me what do you see? What are our assets, what are our threats?”
Kate : “**Mmm. Threats? That guy. That’s Gary. He fired me from one of the only jobs I ever had. Assets? Well, we have those all over the party.**”

Clint suggested Kate to tell him about the assets and threats that they might have, so that he can build a strategy for the mission. Instead of answering the question seriously, Kate was joking around by giving the information that was not relatable. With that being said, Kate was flouting the maxim of relation in this conversation. And the humor was developed since the non-observant act towards maxim done by Kate was aimed to make fun of the situation and to reduce the anxiety of what might happen.

Data 15

This conversation was taken from the sixth episode in the minute of 00:13:49

- Armand : “Hey Jack. I thought you were in jail.”
Jack : “I was, until your father bailed me out.”
Armand : “Mom said I was gonna get your wine collection.”
Jack : “**What? You’re not old enough to appreciate my wine collection.**”
Armand : “Well, I will be someday.”

The conversation occurred when Armand the 7th generation approached Jack. Jack was supposed to be in jail because he was accused of being killing Armand the 3rd generation, as known as Jack’s uncle. Turned out, Jack was being framed, so the police released him. Armand junior told Jack that his mom said he could get Jack’s wine collection. In responding that statement, Jack flouted the maxim of relation. Because he was commenting into Armand’s age. There was also the sense of hostility in the humor created by the flouting, because Jack was making fun of the fact that Armand is just too young to appreciate his wine collection.

Data 16

This conversation was taken from the sixth episode in the minute of 00:17:46

- Kate : “Oh, shit. I know you’re chummy with my mom, I didn’t think you’d make the cut for the Christmas party.”
Yelena : “**Kate Bishop. I’m not here to ruin anything. I’m just going to kill Barton, have some appetizers, and then I’ll go.**”
Kate : “I hope you enjoy the bruschetta, ‘cause it looks like you already lost him.”

Kate figured that Yelena was also in this party. Yelena was actually paid by Kate’s mother to kill Clint. Kate was already worried about Yelena’s presence. She might ruin the party at any time. While responding to Kate’s statement, Yelena flouted the maxim of quantity by saying that she was not going to ruin anything, but then continued the statement by mentioning some things that she was going to do. The humor was developed during the inobservance maxim, Yelena projected the sense of superiority through her utterance, as if killing Clint was an easy thing to do.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, from the data can be known that all the maxims were violated throughout the episodes in order to create humor. Maxim of relation and maxim of quantity became the most flouted maxim in creating humor, and the sense of hostility became the most appeared humor in Hawkeye TV Series. The uncooperativeness in Cooperative Principle is associated with humor. When someone is developing humor in conversation, there will be disobedience of cooperative principle. And that is one of the most common things to happen in our daily conversation. It makes the topic related to this topic becomes interesting and important at the same time in order to understand how the humor is created during conversation and how the non-observance of cooperative principle holds such an important role to it.

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