



Conversational Implicature Used in *Gone Girl* Movie Script by Gillian Flynn

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to describe the implied meaning of conversational implicatures found in the film *Gone Girl*. The method used in this research is content analysis with the object of study on conversational implicatures in film dialogue. The technique used is note-taking. Based on the results of the study, it was found that the most frequent maxim found by the writer is the maxim of quantity in which it means that the characters in the movie failed to observe it as the contribution of the information is insufficient and less-informative than it is required. After that, it is followed by the maxim of manner in which it means the characters of the movie failed to observe, consequently it creates the sense of ambiguity and proximity. Then, the maxim of relation in which it shows that the characters of the movie give irrelevant information. Lastly, there is maxim of quality in which that means the characters of the movie failed to notice due to false information.

Keywords: conversational implicature, film dialogue, maxim of quantity, maxim of manner, maxim of relation, maxim of quality

INTRODUCTION

Without even realizing, human as social creatures occupy most of their times to communicate one to another. Communication is a social activity which takes a major part in human life. This particular social activity happens verbally through either speech or body language. Communication among people can run smoothly because of the existence of language. People use language in order to communicate with others, to greet, to ask for permission, and to express feeling. Language is used as a tool to connect two people or more. According to Holtgraves and Kashima (2008: 73), people use language to communicate to one another (and to researchers) their attributions, perceptions, and stereotypes, for example, with language use sometimes shaping the very products being communicated. Therefore, language is also considered as one of the most crucial parts of life which is inseparable in

human being. Communication can be more understandable and easier by language.

Nevertheless, people sometimes are not aware that by the time they communicate they reveal something deeper through their utterances (Chotimah, 2015: 1). To understand how the process of communication works is, no doubt, as important as to have a good communication skill. Though the process and outcome of communication or conversation among people do not always go well. Sometimes there is a lie, ambiguity, an irrelevant or uninformative conversation which leads to confusion or even misunderstanding among the participants of the communication or conversation. Hence, good communication between speakers and listeners is required in order to make the interaction run effectively. It is what is called by conversational implicature in pragmatics (Mafulla et al., 2020).

In studying linguistics, which is a study of language, there will be a set of branches of linguistics (Istiara et al., 2022). Branches are there for learners to easily understand the specification of studying certain languages. Pragmatics is one of branches in linguistics. The term “pragmatics” is precisely more popular in linguistics nowadays in comparison to years ago. According to Leech (1983: 123), pragmatics can be usefully defined as the study of utterances have meaning in situations.

Pragmatics becomes interesting to linguists or mere language learners since its concerned is meaning in an interactional context. Many people would argue that to understand the true nature of a language is by understanding how the language is used in communication through pragmatics itself (Wahyuni et al., 2020). It does not necessarily imply to other branches such as semantics, phonetics, syntax, and many more.

As pragmatics concerns with meaning contextually, therefore pragmatics, in general, is dealing with meaningful elements namely ‘conversation’ or ‘discourse’. The instrument of a particular conversation or discourse is sometimes difficult to understand or is misunderstood since there is a hidden meaning. Henceforth, meaning is the subject addressed by pragmatics in a narrow definition.

The concern of pragmatics is the meaning aspects in which that cannot be guessed through linguistics knowledge alone. In fact, it takes into account of knowledge about the physical, social world, situation, as well as the individual’s background. Therefore, studying a language through pragmatics has an advantage which is one is able to tell people’s intended meaning, their real assumption, their purpose or aims, also their typical action.

Pragmatics itself deals with the study of language use in different contexts. It started to be an independent branch of linguistics in 1960s and 1970s. As a branch of pragmatics, the theory of conversational implicature

experienced a long history and can be tracked back to relations Semiotics and the Theory of Deviation. From 1967, the theory of conversational implicature has been growing rapidly along with the spreading of pragmatics (Wang, 2011: 1162).

The term and theory of conversational implicature was first initiated by Herbert Paul Grice. He is an American linguistics philosopher. In conversation, either in a movie or a general daily conversation, the actual meaning is not always being stated. The speaker often does not express the meaning explicitly. Therefore, the meaning becomes implicit and it is the hearer's job to figure out the hidden meaning. Grice (1989: 25), states that an utterance can imply a proposition (a statement) that is not part of the utterance and that does not follow as a necessary consequence of the utterance. Grice named such implied statements as implicature. Basically, implicature is an outcome of a hearer after making an intervention as the most likely meaning of an utterance of statement might have in a particular context.

In accordance with Grice (1989: 13), the interpretation of utterance is not merely a matter of decoding messages but also comprises: taking the meaning of the sentences together with the contextual information; using interference rules; and working out what the speaker means on the basis of the assumption that the utterance confirms to the maxims.

The main advantage of Grice's approach is that his point of view which provides explanation in regards to pragmatics on a broad scale, specifically for conversational implicature- a sort of implicit or hidden meaning which is not directly included in the utterance.

As implicature is defined as a hint in which the speaker indicates intentionally by means of language, the real message that the speaker utters may not be understood completely by the hearer. Hence, in order to understand the meaning of conversational implicature, we definitely have to link the conversation to the situation and context where the conversation takes place.

It is stated by Grice (1975: 7) that conversational implicature exists because of the cooperative principle and a set of maxim. Grice (1975: 19) said that in communication, we have to make the conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage where it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange which are being engaged. In other words, according to Grice, conversational implicature is comprehended through the four maxims under general cooperative principle of conversation. The cooperative principle is extended by four maxims in which each maxim has their own rules correspondingly, these are called Gricean maxims: 1) The maxim of Quality, 2) The maxim of Quantity, 3) The maxim of Relevance or

Relation, 4)The maxim of Manner (Avoid obscurity of expression, Avoid ambiguity, Be brief, Be orderly)

The term implicature means a distinctive case of situations which is perceiving meaning extends beyond the precise meaning from a dictionary. Therefore, conversational implicature is something which is implied in conversation, that is, something which is left implicit in actual language use (Wang, 2011: 1162). The notion of conversational implicature is one of the most ideas in pragmatics. An implicature itself is something meant, implied, or suggested distinct from what is said. There will be a problem when the speaker's concept of utterance meaning as opposed to sentence meaning is unable to be understood by people. This kind of problem might possibly be found in the industry of entertainment, such as a movie.

Nowadays, the film industry has become more and more developed. People from different age ranges are familiar with movie. Some people even consider watching movies as their hobby because of several different underlying reasons. On the other hand, producers and actors enjoy doing their job to entertain people and make money at the same time.

According to Wikipedia, film, also called movie, motion picture or moving picture, is a visual art-form used to stimulate experiences that communicate ideas, stories, perceptions, feelings, beauty, or atmosphere through the use of moving images. These images are generally accompanied by some other elements such as sound, and more rarely, other sensory stimulations.

Films or movies cultural artifacts created by particularly specific cultures. They reflect those cultures, and, in turn, affect them. Moreover, movies have not only one but various genres. Some of the popular genres of movie to watch are horror, science fiction, musical, melodrama, romantic comedy, action/adventure, fantasy, biopic, war, historical, teen comedy, animation, biblical, mystery, crime thriller, suspense, parody, mockumentary, Blaxploitation, disaster, political, court drama, social problem, and also pornography. Nevertheless, the basic and initial purpose of movies is for entertaining people, regardless of the genre of the movie itself.

A movie is a sequence of picture projected on a screen from a developed and prepared film especially with an accompanying soundtrack. It is also said to be one of the human literature term products. A movie has been human's favorite entertainment since a long time ago as it has various genres such as horror, romance, comedy, thriller, and many more. In general, there are some conversational statements in a movie that have particular or implicit meaning. This at times causes confusion of people as not all people are able to get the hidden meaning of a conversation in a movie.

Grice (25) stated that an utterance can imply a proposition (a statement) that is not part of the utterance and that does not follow as a necessary consequence of the utterance. It implies that we have to interpret what people's implicit meaning in their utterance. In most cases, people as speakers are usually not aware that they do not clearly and directly mention what they want to say, and at that time implicature arises, to help the hearer understand what the speaker means so that the conversation does not lead to misunderstanding between the speaker and the hearer.

In movie, this kind of thing is not always considered as a matter. Sometimes, it exists as its purpose is to create some variation of a language that is being used. Also, conversational implicature also often appear used in movie to make the movie itself interesting as the audiences are invited to freely take part in guessing the hidden meaning of certain conversations.

There have been some previous related studies which examined the conversational implicature specifically in movies namely Chotimah (2015) with her thesis title *an Implicature Analysis in the Conversation of "The Little Rascals Save the Day" Movie*, Huda (2013) with her thesis title *Conversational Implicature Found in Dialogue of Euro Trip Movie*, also Akmal and Yana (2020) with their journal entitled *Conversational Implicature Analysis in "Kingdom of Heaven" Movie Script by William Monahan*.

Though several related studies have been conducted before, the writer also wants to conduct a study on conversational implicature in one of many popular movies titled *Gone Girl* as the writer loves to watch movie. Therefore, by conducting this study, the writer wants to get the experience in examining and exploring a movie while also interpreting meaning in precise conversation of the movie.

In regards to this situation, people might tend to guess the meaning of utterance which depends contextually. From this kind of phenomenon, the writer aims to conduct a study of conversational implicature used in *Gone Girl* movie. Then, purpose of this study is based on the question above which is to analyze the implicature meanings of *Gone Girl* movie through pragmatics analysis. Therefore, the objectives of the study can be stated as follow: To describe the implied meanings of the conversational implicature which are found in *Gone Girl* movie.

METHOD

This study is a descriptive study in which the writer used qualitative approach as the research design to conduct this study. The qualitative approach enabled the writer to analyze and describe all conversational implicature which appeared in *Gone Girl* movie. It was stated by Creswell (1994: 15) that qualitative study as an inquiry process of understanding a

social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducting a natural setting. In this study, the writer collected the whole data from the primary source.

The primary source which is used to collect data is the document from the script of 2013 *Gone Girl* movie. "Gone Girl" is a movie which was based on a novel written by Gillian Flynn. The movie was released in 2014 with approximately 148 minutes of duration. The secondary data were taken from related studies, journals, articles, as well as websites.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

There are some number of utterances that occur in the script of *Gone Girl* Movie. However, after analyzing the data, the finding and discussion of this study will be particularly focused on the cooperative principles in conversational implicature as well as its non-observance maxim (violation and flouting) and thus, leave another implicature like conventional implicature out of the context of the study.

Table 1. The data finding is served in Table 1.

No.	The Non-observance	Types of Maxim Violation	Time played in the movie
1	Violation	Manner	4:14 – 4:31
2	Violation	Manner	4:41 – 5:13
3	Multiple Flouting	Manner and Quantity	6:58 – 7:10
4	Violation	Relation	9:37 – 9:50
5	Violation	Quantity	9:51 – 9:55
6	Violation	Quantity	9:51 – 9:59
7	Violation	Quantity	12:23 – 12:29
8	Flouting	Quantity	12:30 – 12:39
9	Violation	Quantity	14:24 – 14:28
10	Violation	Quality	39:43 – 39:53
11	Flouting	Relation	39:54 – 40:00
12	Flouting	Quantity	53:17 – 53:31
13	Violation	Quantity	1:59:30 – 1:59:46
14	Violation	Quantity	2:06:45 – 2:06:52
15	Flouting	Relation	2:09:28 – 2:09:40
16	Flouting	Manner	2:13:53 – 2:13:59

As it can be seen in the table 1, there are sixteen particularized implicatures that were found in the movie. It is served clearly in the table 1

regarding what type of non-observance maxims was found more frequently. It can also be seen in the table 1 that the characters of the movie most frequently violated the maxims of quantity with six occurrences from total 16 data, then followed by violating the maxim of manner with two occurrences, violating maxim of relation with one occurrence, flouting maxim of quantity with two occurrences, violating maxim of quality with only one occurrence, flouting maxim of manner with one occurrence, flouting maxim of relation with two occurrences, and there is also one conversational implicature which flouted multiple maxims- manner and quantity.

Discussion

1. Violating maxim of manner

The violation of maxim of manner is the one which is happened and found twice in the data based on the movie ass what has been stated in the finding. It started with the conversation that occurred between the main actors, Nick and Amy, which took place in a party (4:14 – 4:31).

Nick : "Let's see who's your type? I can't picture you sitting still while he bloviates about his postgraduate thesis on Proust. Is that him? Ironic hipster so self-aware he makes everything a joke?"

Amy : "I prefer men who are funny, not "funny"."

From the conversation above, the utterance of Amy "I prefer men who are funny, not "funny"." represented an implicature which violated maxim of manner. Amy's answer to Nick's question about Amy's type is truly ambiguous. Amy was being not clear to Nick. A related context was also found still in a conversation between Amy and Nick (4:41 – 5:13). Here is the conversation.

Nick : "So tell me, Amy. Who are you?"

Amy : "A. I am an award-winning scrimshaw hander. B. I am a moderately influential warlord. C. I write personality quizzes for magazines."

Nick : "Okay, A. Your fingers are far too delicate for real scrimshaw work. B. I am a charter subscriber to Middling Warlord Weekly-I'm sure I'd recognize you. So, I'm gonna go with C."

In the context, Amy's reply again violated maxim of manner as she was not being brief. The implication of Nick's question is simply about Amy's job or profession. Amy, instead of telling Nick directly that she writes personality quizzes for magazines, asked Nick to guess by giving him three choices. Nick responded to such kind of implicature by guessing it correctly along with the reason.

2. Violating maxim of quantity

The violation of maxim of quantity was found most frequently in the *Gone Girl* movie. As what is stated in the Table 1. that there are six occurrences in total. However, the discussion only covers some interesting ones. The following conversation between Detective Boney and Nick (9:51 – 9:55) was assumed to have violating maxim of quantity.

Detective Boney: “How long you two been here?”

Nick : “Two years. In September. We used to live in New York.”

From the conversation above, the utterance of Nick “Two years. In September. We used to live in New York.” Was proving that Nick violated maxim of quantity. The writer assumed that Nick gave an answer which was more than Detective Boney required. The question is about the period of time Nick and Amy live in their house in Missouri while Nick’s answer was adding more information about the time when they moved from New York to Missouri. Another conversation which was assumed to have violating maxim of quantity was found in the dialogue between Nick and Amy (14:24 – 14:28).

Nick : “You also bought Nick his very first pair of scissors. Correct?”

Amy : “And matching stapler.”

From the conversation above, the utterance of Amy “And matching stapler.” Was assumed to have violating maxim of manner. She answered Nick’s question more than is required. She was supposed to reply “correct” or “yes” without adding more unrequired information. She meant to remind Nick about the stuff she got for him is not only a pair of scissors. Another interesting context regarding violating maxim of quantity was also found in the conversation between Amy and Desi is (1:59:30 – 1:59:46). Here it is:

Desi : “You’re not bored?”

Amy : “Desi how could I be bored? You can discuss 18th-century symphonies, 19th-century Impressionists, quote Proust in French. Nick’s idea of culture was a reality TV marathon with one hand down on his boxers.”

From the conversation above, Desi asked Amy whether she is bored or not, and yet Amy answered to the question by enhancing more too much information which was considered unnecessary. Therefore, the writer assumed that Amy was uncooperative by violating the maxim of quantity. Instead of replying “yes or no”, she said “Desi how could I be bored? You can discuss 18th-century symphonies, 19th-century Impressionists, quote Proust

in French. Nick's idea of culture was a reality TV marathon with one hand down on his boxers."

3. Violating maxim of relation

The violation of maxim of relation arises once in the movie. It was found in the conversation between Nick and Detective Boney (4. 9:37 - 9:50). The conversation was as follows:

Nick : "I don't know where my wife is. And I came home to this. Now, I don't panic easily but it's weird, right?"

Detective Boney : "Mind if I look around?"

Nick : "Please."

From the conversation above, the utterance of Detective Boney "Mind if I look around?" clearly demonstrated the conversational implicature. Detective Boney responded to Nick's question by asking for permission. From Detective Boney's utterance, it is assumed that she violated the maxim of relation as she did not answer Nick's question whether the case of Missing Amy is weird or not, instead, she ignored the question by asking if she was allowed to look around the house for investigation.

4. Violating maxim of quality

There was only one violation of maxim of quality as seen in the data. It was found in the dialogues between Nick and his twin sister, Go (39:43 - 39:53). Nick was stopping by Go's house to have a beer with Go as he came from searching clues of Amy's whereabouts along with Amy's parents, police officers, and all Missing Amy volunteers. Here is the conversation:

Go : "How are you doing?"

Nick : "Terrific."

Go : "How's Marybeth?"

Nick : "She's a wreck."

Go : "And you?"

Nick : "Awesome."

From the conversation above, the writer assumed that Nick obviously violated maxim of quality. Go was first asking how Nick was doing and Nick said "Terrific". The conversation continued with Go asked about Marybeth, and again, Go asked how Nick was feeling as she could tell that Nick was not terrific at all. However, Nick kept saying that he was awesome even if Go could see everything written all over Nick's face.

5. Flouting maxim of quantity

The flouting maxim of quantity was found twice in the movie based on the data. The first one was a conversation between Nick and Amy in

a function held by Amy's parents for the launching of Amazing Amy series (12:30 – 12:39). The dialogue is as follows:

- Nick : "When did you have a dog?"
 Amy : "She got a dog. Puddles made her more relatable."
 Nick : "Wow. I love your parents. But they really can be assholes."

From the conversation above, the utterance of Amy "She got a dog. Puddles made her more relatable." obviously flouted maxim of quantity. Amy meant to tell Nick how her parents made up a story about how amazing Amy is in which it was not similar with Amy in real life. It can be implied that not even once in real life Amy ever had a dog, but in the story of Amazing Amy, it was said that Amy got a dog, puddles.

The context was also found in the movie. It was a conversation between Officer Gilpin and Detective Boney in their office (53:17 – 53:31). Here is their dialogue:

- Officer Gilpin : "I can't believe that we haven't arrested this guy."
 Detective Boney : "We are not going to arrest anybody just because some blonde dunce says so."
 Officer Gilpin : "Why are you going so easy on him? You got a crush?"
 Detective Boney : "One, I am conducting an investigation, not a witch-hunt. And, two, don't talk to me that way, ever."

From the conversation above, Detective Boney's reply "One, I am conducting an investigation, not a witch-hunt. And, two, don't talk to me that way, ever." indicated that she flouted maxim of quantity. From her utterance, we know that she has no crush on Nick at all as what Officer Gilpin thought. It was assumed that she wanted to tell Officer Gilpin to stop talking nonsense and stay professional. She also meant to ask Gilpin to respect her.

6. Flouting maxim of relation

This kind of flouting maxim of relation appeared twice in the movie based on the data. The first conversation referred to between Go and Nick while having a sit down with beer (39:54 – 40:00). Here is the conversation:

- Go : "Hey, have you told me everything?"
 Nick : "Of course."
 Go : "Everything?"
 Nick : "Why would you even ask me that?"

From the conversation above, Nick's utterance "Why would you even ask me that?" was assumed to have flouting maxim of relation. Go wanted to know if Nick told her everything by asking him question twice, while Nick's first answer implied that he already told Go everything. Then Go, who was not sure about Nick's answer, asked for confirmation regarding her first question.

Nonetheless, Nick replied Go's by giving her a question. It was assumed that Nick was not uncomfortable with Go's questioning him again.

The second conversation implicature referred to conversation between Officer Gilpin and Nick while waiting for Amy being asked questions by FBI and some police officers when she finally came home after being reported as a missing person for days (2:09:28 – 2:09:40). See the following conversation:

Officer Gilpin : "She slit his throat with a box cutter."

Nick : "How did she manage to get a hold of a box cutter if he had her tied up the whole time?"

Officer Gilpin : "Can't you just be happy your wife is home and safe?"

From the conversation above, the utterance of Officer Gilpin "Can't you just be happy your wife is home and safe." clearly flouted maxim of relation. Officer Gilpin did not answer Nick's regarding how Amy managed to murder Desi with a box cutter if Amy was tied up, instead, he meant to ask Nick to not concern about that matter and just be happy that Amy is finally home and in a safe condition.

7. Flouting maxim of manner

There was only one data found as a representation of the flouted maxim of manner. It was the conversation between Nick and Amy in the bedroom (2:13:53 – 2:13:59). See the dialogue below:

Nick : "Was there ever a baby?"

Amy : "There can be."

From the conversation, the utterance of Amy "There can be" was assumed to have flouting maxim of manner. Amy was not being brief by saying yes or no, instead, she was being ambiguous. It is also implied that she meant to say if Nick wish to have a baby, that was possible.

8. Multiple flouting (Manner and Quantity)

There was one special case found in the movie which is a multiple flouting in a conversation. The conversation between Go and Nick was assumed to have flouted maxim of manner as well as maxim of quantity (6:58 – 7:10). Here is the conversation:

Go : "So, is Amy going to do one of her anniversary-whaddaya call it? Treasure hunts?"

Nick : "You mean the forced march designed to point out what an uncaring, oblivious asshole I am."

Go : "Wow."

From the conversation above, the writer assumed that Nick flouted multiple maxims which are manner and quantity. The utterance of Nick "You mean the forced march designed to point out what an uncaring, oblivious

asshole I am." Was both ambiguous and more informative than Go required. First, it can be interpreted that Nick meant to say that the idea of treasure hunt on the wedding anniversary was not his thing. Amy made him do that every year on their wedding anniversary by force. Second, he meant to tell Go that the treasure made him look like he was a clueless husband to Amy.

CONCLUSION

The present study purposed to identify the non-observance maxim of conversational implicature frequently occurred in *Gone Girl* movie. According to the finding and explanation in the discussion chapter above, it can be concluded that the conversational implicatures found in the *Gone Girl* movie are various. It almost covered all types of flouting maxims as well as violating maxims, except the flouting maxim of relation.

The most frequent maxim found by the writer is the maxim of quantity in which it means that the characters in the movie failed to observe it as the contribution of the information is insufficient and less-informative than it is required. After that, it is followed by the maxim of manner in which it means the characters of the movie failed to observe, consequently it creates the sense of ambiguity and proximity. Then, the maxim of relation in which it shows that the characters of the movie give irrelevant information. Lastly, there is maxim of quality in which that means the characters of the movie failed to notice due to false information.

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