

IMPLICATURES GENERATED FROM NON-OBSERVANCES MAXIM IN THE INTERVIEW OF THE PRESIDENT OF REPUBLIC INDONESIA

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Abstract

The aims of this research are to find out the conversational implicatures generated by President Jokowi during an interview with BBC News Indonesia. Additionally, it aims to identify which cooperative principles are disregarded to produce these implicatures. The research data consists of dialogues from the interview. To analyze the data, the researcher applies the theory of implicature and the non-observance maxims by Grice. In data analysis, the researcher employs the qualitative data method by Miles and Huberman (2014). The research findings reveal that there are 16 specific implicatures identified out of 18 data instances in the conversation, while the other 2 are general implicatures. Furthermore, the researcher identifies various forms of non-observance maxims, with the most frequently found was the flouting of the maxim of quantity.

Keywords: *Conversational implicature, non-observance maxims, interview*

Introduction

Presidential interviews stand as a significant avenue for understanding the communication strategies employed by world leaders. The study of language use in such high-stake contexts goes beyond the surface of mere words and delves into the realm of implicatures and maxims violation, shedding light on the intricate interplay between language, politics, and discourse.

In the landscape of political discourse, presidential interviews serve as crucial platforms through which leaders communicate with the public, the press, and the international community. These interactions are multifaceted, encompassing not only the content of the responses but also the strategies employed to convey messages, uphold diplomatic relations, and project a particular image. To comprehend the dynamics at play in presidential interviews, it is imperative to analyze the pragmatic implicatures and the potential breaches of Grice's conversational maxims.

In Kwarteng (2021), Aitchison emphasizes that in a narrow sense, pragmatics investigates how listeners get the intended meaning of their speakers, whereas in a broader sense, it concerns with certain principles that interlocutors consciously or unconsciously adhere to communicating. Implicatures are deeply embedded in the field of pragmatics. The concept of conversation implicature was introduced by pragmatics expert Paul Grice in his 1975 Cooperative Principle theory. This principle stipulates that during conversations, both speakers and listeners assume adherence to four cooperative maxims: quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. However, in real communication scenarios, the Cooperative Principle may be breached due to diverse reasons, giving rise to conversational implicatures and non-observance of maxims. According to Brown and Levinson and Yule, conversational implicature is derived from a general principle of the conversation plus a number of maxims that speaker normally obeys (Chotimah, 2015).

Non-observance of maxims occurs when speakers deviate from the cooperative maxims during communication (Thomas, 1995). This can manifest in various ways, such as flouting, violating, infringing, opting out, or suspending a maxim. As stated by Grice (1975), there are five main types of non-observance maxims, they are: flouting, violating, infringing, opting-out, and suspending. Flouting maxims happens when the speaker fails to fulfill the maxims because their utterance might have a different meaning than what is being said. Violating maxims are happened when the speaker breaks the maxims intending to mislead the hearer. Infringing maxims happens when the speaker fails to observe the maxims because of their imperfect performance of linguistic. Opting-out maxims is a case when the speaker unwilling to cooperate as the maxims urge. Suspending maxim is the situation where there is no expectation that the maxim should be reached which sometimes causes by cultural reasons (Gunatika et al., 2022).

There are some previous studies that are relevant to this research. The first study is conducted by Nuzulia (2020). The study examines flouting maxims in Donald Trump's TIME interview. Similarities include the political focus and reliance on Grice (1975) theory, yet Nuzulia's research differs by not categorizing implicature types and asserting that politicians breach maxims to showcase power and interests.

Febriyani (2019) conducted a similar study focusing on two main objectives: identifying conversational implicature types in a CNN World Exclusive Interview with Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and analyzing the maxims flouted by Erdogan in the interview. Grice's theory (1975) and Yule's (1996) approaches were used for analysis, specifically Grice's theory for analyzing flouted maxims. Similarities between this and the current study lie in their objectives. However, Febriyani's research lacks conclusions on the purpose behind observed maxim violations.

Also, Supriyanto (2020) conducted a similar study on conversational implicatures by President Jokowi using Grice's theory. This research found that Joko Widodo's speech mainly consists of generalized conversational implicatures (inferred without specific context), with only 21% being particularized conversational implicatures (in his English speech). However, there are differences between this study and Supriyanto's, such as the research subject (speech vs. interviews). This study focuses solely on implicature types, not the process of their formation.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher chose to analyze types of particular implicatures and non-observance of maxims occurring in the interview on BBC News Indonesia with Joko Widodo. The researcher selected this subject due to encountering difficulties in understanding messages during communication, particularly in political interviews. The rationale behind this choice is Joko Widodo's current presidency, and the interview's topics encompass recent issues that have taken place.

Method

This research used qualitative research design. According to Cresswell (2018) Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Qualitative data analysis is a process of structuring and interpreting data to understand what it represents. Analysis is described as of three flows of activities simultaneously which is data condensation, data display and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles, M. B., & Huberman, 2014). The research data are the utterances or sentences of the transcript in a video interview in BBC News Indonesia with Joko Widodo. The researcher took the data from a video interview published on the BBC News Indonesia's YouTube channel entitled Joko Widodo's special interview: Kanjuruhan Tragedy, kidney failure and the 2024 elections - BBC News Indonesia.

To collect the data there are several steps to do including: (1) Watching the video interview entitled Wawancara khusus Joko Widodo: Tragedi Kanjuruhan, gagal ginjal dan pemilu 2024 – BBC News Indonesia. (2) Downloading the video interview and make the transcript based on the video interview.

(3) Identifying type of implicature and non-observance maxims in the dialogue interview. (4) Analysing the utterances that contain implicature and categorize them based on the types of conversational implicature.

Result and Discussion

In this section, the researcher presents identified and classified data based on the type of conversational implicature and non-observance maxim based on Grice’s theory. The following table summarizes the type of conversational implicature and non-observance maxim in the video interviewed.

Table 1.
(The frequencies of implicature and non-observance of maxims produced by
Joko Widodo during the interview)

	Types	Total
Implicature	Generalized	2
	Particularized	16
	Total: 18	
Types of non-observance maxims	Violating of quality	2
	Violating of quantity	1
	Violating of relevance	2
	Violating of manner	-
	Flouting of quality	-
	Flouting of quantity	6
	Flouting of relevance	3
	Flouting of manner	-
	Opting out	5
	Suspending	1
	Infringing	-
Total: 20		

Types of Non – observance maxims

1. Violating of Maxim

Data 1

Interviewer : *How much worse do you think the cost-of-living crisis is going to get around the world and here in Indonesia as well?* (05:43-05:48)

Pr.Jokowi : *That is really worries us a lot, and Indonesia is also experiencing more or less the same thing. However, because our production and supply are available, we can manage to secure food supplies. But for the imported goods, their prices will definitely increase, and that's what I'm concerned about. All countries will experience the same thing, and the most frightening part is the occurrence of political and social instability. That's the dangerous one.* (05:48-06:28)

In this conversation President Jokowi states that "All countries will experience the same thing" without providing concrete evidence or more detailed information to support the statement. The statement is a generalization that may not be entirely accurate, as economic and social situations can vary in each country. The **violation of the maxim of quality** occurs because President Jokowi does not provide adequate clarification or more specific information regarding the statement. Noertjahjo et al. (2017) explain that violating towards maxim of quality is a situation where a speaker is not sincere and gives wrong information to a hearer, which can be said as a lie.

The response is considered a **particular implicature** because, although the interviewer's initial question was about how much worse the cost-of-living crisis will get worldwide and in Indonesia, Jokowi answered by focusing on the issues of rising prices of imported goods and the potential for political and social instability. His answer did not provide direct information about how bad the cost-of-living crisis will become but instead directed attention to specific aspects that Jokowi considers important, namely the increase in prices of imported goods and the potential for political and social instability. Therefore, it is considered a particular implicature because it responds with a focus on specific aspects that may be Jokowi's primary concerns in the context of the cost-of-living crisis.

Data 2

Interviewer : *Mr President according to at least one report you've spent you've tripled I should say the energy subsidy to more than 30 billion dollars. I know you've brought subsidized subsidies down recently, but that led to protests as well. People were upset that they had to pay for more fuel domestically. Will you be forced to reduce subsidies further because of the higher cost of field? (03:34-03:57)*

Pr. Jokowi: *Our subsidies have reached 52 trillion Indonesian rupiah, which, when converted to dollars, is around 34 billion USD. This is a significant amount, considering the substantial price gap between the selling price to consumers and the actual price. Currently, our state budget can still maintain and control prices, but we don't know for how long. The most important thing is to ensure that the lower-income population is not heavily affected by price increases, whether it's energy or food prices. This is what needs to be safeguarded. We must avoid burdening the people with it. That's why our subsidies have reached such a large scale. (03:58-4:54)*

The Quantity maxim involves providing sufficient and relevant information as needed. In this dialogue, when asked to answer the question of whether energy subsidies will be further reduced due to fuel price hikes, the President provides information about the number of subsidies that have been allocated (52 trillion rupiahs or approximately 34 billion USD) and justifies why such subsidies are needed. However, they do not directly answer the question of whether subsidies will be further reduced due to fuel price hikes. Their response is more focused on explaining why such subsidies are necessary and why it is important to protect low-income citizens from price increases. According to Pratiwi et al., (2015) violation of maxim quantity occurs when a speaker gives unclear or exaggerated information to his speaking partner. Therefore, there is a **violation of the Quantity maxim** in this dialogue because the information provided does not directly address the question asked.

In the dialogue, the implied meaning tends to be **general**. General implicature refers to implications that can be drawn in a broad sense based on the context and information provided. A generalized implicature is a conversational implicature that is inferable without reference to a special context (Natasya et al. 2022). It arises without any particular context or special scenario being necessary. The implicature that can be inferred from this dialogue is that the government is concerned about the welfare of low-income citizens and is making efforts to protect them from the impact of price increases. This implicature is general in nature because it does not explicitly mention specific actions that will be taken in response to the situation.

Data 3

Interviewer : *But a lot of that is out of your hands, isn't it? I mean if the global economy is in the situation where you are seeing fuel and food prices go up around the world, that's going to and that already has in fact had an impact on prices in Indonesia as well?* (02:39-02:55)

Pr. Jokowi: *Yes, that's why we have to be vigilant and prepared. I have told the ministers to always 'remember and stay alert', as everyone needs to be cautious. That's why fiscal health is crucial. Monetary policies must also align with fiscal policies to ensure that the economic situation runs smoothly. And most importantly, essential commodities must continue to be available and their prices maintained.* (02:56-03:33)

The dialogue in question **violates the maxim of relevance**. According to the principle of relevance, speakers should contribute information that is pertinent to the topic and purpose of the ongoing conversation. In the dialogue, the interviewer raises a point about external factors affecting the prices of fuel and food in Indonesia. The response from President Jokowi, however, seems to deviate from the interviewer's point and focuses on general statements about being vigilant, prepared, and maintaining fiscal health. While these statements may be important considerations for managing the economy, they do not directly address the interviewer's point about external factors influencing prices. By not directly addressing the interviewer's question and instead providing a general response, President Jokowi fails to adhere to the maxim of relevance.

The conversational implicature present in this dialogue is of a particular. President Jokowi indirectly suggests that they are aware of the potential impact of global price hikes on prices in Indonesia, and they are taking measures such as staying cautious, maintaining fiscal health, and ensuring the availability of essential commodities. This **particular implicature** is not explicitly stated in their statement but can be inferred from the context and actions they mentioned.

2. Flouting of Maxim

Data 4

Interviewer : *I want to move on to the economy. How worry do you about the cost of living in Indonesia specifically?* (02:01-02:08)

Pr. Jokowi: *In Indonesia, prices are still under control. The latest inflation rate stands at 5.9%. Additionally, the economic growth in the second quarter remains at 5.44%, which is still very good. The IMF has stated that Indonesia is a bright spot amidst the bleak global economic conditions.* (02:08-02:39)

The **flouting of the maxim of quantity** can be seen in President Jokowi's statement. Quantity maxim flouting means that the speakers of a conversation fail to fulfil the maxim of quantity which includes whether the speakers are not as informative as is required or more informative than is required (Fatmawati, 2015). Although the interviewer specifically asked about concerns regarding the cost of living in Indonesia, President Jokowi intentionally provides excessive information regarding price control and economic growth. His statement does not fully provide a specific answer to the concern about the cost of living but rather focuses more on providing general information about Indonesia's economic condition.

The form of conversational implicature that occurs in this dialogue is a particular implicature. President Jokowi deliberately flouting the maxim of quantity to emphasize and strengthen his argument. President Jokowi implies that despite the inflation and economic growth occurring in Indonesia, prices are still under control, and the economic growth is considered positive. This implicature is more **specific (particular)** in nature as it is not directly stated in his statement but can be inferred from the context and the information conveyed.

Data 5

Interviewer : *You've got the G20 coming up. Potentially this is one of the most diplomatically delicate g20s that's ever been held with some of the world's most polarizing leaders, hopefully expecting to be there. How important is it for these countries to meet and to resolve some of these issues?* (00:10-00:33)

Pr. Jokowi: *The rivalry is actually normal as long as it can be managed well to avoid open conflicts. If there is communication, it will also have a positive impact on global recovery, especially economic recovery. There will be no peace without communication.* (00:33-00:55)

In this dialogue, we see President Jokowi's disregard for the principle of relevance. Jokowi was aware of an interviewer's question about the importance of the G20 countries coming together to address existing issues, but he declined to answer the question directly. Instead, he takes a more general approach, addressing the importance of communication in managing normal conflict relationships and conflicts. In this case, President Jokowi deliberately ignores the maxim of relevance in order to present a broader perspective and message. As cited in Wardana & Anayati (2018) The maxim of relation is flouted when a speaker is giving a response or making an observation that is deliberately not relevant to the topic that is being discussed. Usually this happens because they have something to hide or they are conveying a message indirectly. Therefore, this approach can be viewed as **flouting the maxim of relevance**. The potential implications of this dialogue are that the G20 could help countries in conflict communicate and find ways to resolve conflicts. This implication is more specific (**particularized implicature**) because, although not directly expressed in his statement, it can be inferred from the context and the meaning of his response.

3. Opting out of maxim

Data 6

Interviewer : *But some European countries have said it's because Indonesia is continuing down the path of creating coal-powered plants that they're holding back or certainly there's the suggestion that they're holding back.* (10:09-10:20)

Pr. Jokowi: *It's not like that. If the funding doesn't start, then how can we proceed? We need that funding. This energy transition must begin immediately, and we need to do it together. Let's not just blame Indonesia. However, without investment and international funding, how can we begin? It will be very difficult.* (10:20-10:44)

In the dialogue, Jokowi employs the strategy of "**opting out**" as a form of conversational implicature to indirectly address the allegations made by the interviewer regarding European countries' reservations towards coal-fired power plants in Indonesia. By "opting out," Jokowi avoids providing a direct response to the accusations and instead redirects the conversation towards a different aspect. According to Thomas 1995, this situation occurs when the speaker cannot directly state or does not want to create false implicatures due to ethical reasons (Nur, 2022).

The particular implicature arises from Jokowi's choice to focus on the importance of funding and international cooperation for the energy transition. He refrains from directly addressing the allegations made by the interviewer. Instead, he emphasizes the significance of securing funds and collaborating internationally to facilitate the shift towards alternative energy sources. Through this **particular implicature**, Jokowi conveys a message beyond the explicit words spoken. He signals that the issue of European countries' reluctance is not the primary concern, but rather the need for financial support and global partnership in Indonesia's energy transition efforts. By doing so, Jokowi effectively avoids engaging directly with the allegations while still conveying his perspective on the broader topic of energy transition and international collaboration.

Data 7

Interviewer : *and would you run for vice president? (15:32-15:33)*

Pr. Jokowi: *What was that? (15:33-15:35)*

Interviewer : *Some people said it was supposed to be possible (15:36-25:38)*

Pr. Jokowi: *Once again, let people express their opinions. But it's enough for me. (15:39:15:43)*

In the dialogue, there is a violation of the "**opting out**" maxim by President Jokowi. When asked whether he will run for vice president, President Jokowi avoids giving a clear or direct answer to the question. He deflects the conversation with a follow-up question, "What was that?" and then states that it is sufficient for him.

The conversational implicature of this violation of the "opting out" maxim is that President Jokowi does not provide a concrete answer or commitment to the question about running for vice president. He avoids giving clear information about his intentions or desires regarding that position. As stated by Putri (2015) They cannot reply on the way they are expected, sometimes for legal or ethical reasons and they say so. In addition, Black (2006) explains that opting out the maxim means making clear someone is aware of the maxim but she is prevented for some reason from observing it. Politicians and reporters observing an embargo on the publication of news are often in this situation. Expressions such as I cannot say more and my lips are sealed are the example of this kind of non-observance of maxims Grice (1975).

4. Suspending of maxim

Data 8

Interviewer : *So, you would not advocate changing the constitution, so that you could be president for a third term? (15:19-15:24)*

Pr. Jokowi: *Well, if there are many issues outside of that, it's true. But once again, I am obedient to the constitution. (15:24-15:30)*

The dialogue involves a violation of the "**suspending**" maxim because President Jokowi avoids giving a clear answer regarding the question of whether he would support a constitutional amendment to become president for a third term. He does not directly express support or rejection of the constitutional amendment but states that he abides by the constitution. Suspending a maxim occurs when there are culture-specific or particular events that force the speaker not to say something directly, for instance, taboo words (Hanifah, 2013).

The conversational implicature of this violation of the "suspending" maxim is that President Jokowi does not provide a definitive or explicit answer regarding the question about the constitutional amendment. Here, Jokowi intentionally violates the maxim of cooperation by withholding information or creating curiosity for the interviewer. He avoids giving a direct commitment to the issue and implies ambiguity or uncertainty regarding his stance. In this case, the conversational implicature is **particular** because it applies specifically to President Jokowi in the context of the dialogue.

Conclusion

This research examines an interview between BBC News Indonesia and Joko Widodo, identifying various instances of non-observance of maxims and implicatures. Violations of the maxims of quantity, quality, and relevance were identified, with no violations of the maxim of manner. Flouting of the maxims of quantity and relevance was found in the analyzed video interview. Other forms of non-observance included suspending and opting out of maxims, but no instances of infringing maxims were found. The most common form of non-observance was the flouting of the maxim of quantity. Implicatures were also identified in the interview, with President Jokowi frequently implying implicit

messages in his responses. Particularly, 88% of implicatures in his responses were particular implicatures.

In conclusion, despite expectations for politicians, especially the President, to provide clear and accurate information, violations of maxims are unavoidable. Politicians may violate maxims to achieve specific communication goals or to provide answers that align with political norms. These findings have significant implications for enhancing communication skills and understanding in human interactions, as understanding implicatures can enrich interpretation and uncover deeper meanings beyond explicit statements. Additionally, recognizing non-observance of maxims can help identify complex communication strategies, reducing misunderstandings and revealing the true intentions behind seemingly contradictory statements.

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