Pragmatic Diversity in Dialogue: Analyzing Maxim Violations and Communication Strategies in The Batman (2022)

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the pragmatic phenomenon of maxim violations in the 2022 movie The Batman, employing Grice's cooperative principle as the theoretical framework. Understanding how characters intentionally deviate from conversational norms is crucial for appreciating the complexity of human communication, particularly in diverse social contexts where individuality and group dynamics shape dialogue. This research fills a gap in the literature by focusing on a contemporary cinematic text that portrays multifaceted characters from varying social strata, thus contributing to studies on communication diversity, minority-majority interactions, and identity expression through language. This study used descriptive qualitative analysis to interpret the data. Following that, the data were analyzed using the Matching technique and the Pragmatic Identity Method to examine the data refers to the context. There were 15 violations of total in the data. It was found, that the results which violates maxim quality with 5 data, 2 data for violations of maxim quantity, 5 data for maxim of manner violations, and violations of maxim relation with 3 data. Both violations of maxim quantity and manner were violated the most in The Batman movie. The results shows that the film's portrayal of diverse communicative behaviors and enriches our understanding of how pragmatic competence is exercised in complex social interactions. In short, this research underscores the importance of cooperative principles in everyday communication and their strategic manipulation in storytelling to convey nuanced character traits and social tensions.

INTRODUCTION

Cooperative principle is a foundation to have a good conversation. In order to have a good conversation, the message that the speaker convey, must be delivered to the hearer. However, sometimes people choose to hide the message from the hearer. They choose to hide the message and try to mislead the hearer. This phenomenon is what we called a maxim violation. According to Grice (1975), maxim violation is happened on the event where the speaker intentionally fail to cooperate to the conversation with the aims to mislead the hearer. One of the violations of the maxims can be found from the conversation on the YouTube channel "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert". This talk show was published on March 16, 2022. The Conversation is as below. Penulisan sudah jelas dan cukup menarik, walau penulis belum menunjukkan urgensi dan signifikansi penelitian ini secara tertulis

Stephen : "we're back here with the star of the new series "we crashed", Anne Hathaway. Do you dabble in the method? Did you method at all with this?"

Anne   : **"I do not know. I do not know. I kind of do, I kind of do, but I have kid."**

This conversation is occurred from the talk show at the beginning of 00:00:01-00:00:12 minutes. Based on the example of the conversation above, it can be seen that there is a violation of the maxim quality, when hearer decided to answer speaker question, hearer actually answered differently and not given the answer he wanted. Hearer says she did not know and she said had kids. Here it is very clear that the hearer has violated the maxim of quality. According to Cutting (2002), violation of maxim quality is someone who given wrong information and does not tell what really happened.

The existence of another violation can be seen in the dialogue from the movie "Batman". The movie was released on March 1, 2022 and was directed by Matt Reeves. One of the violations of maxim manner utterances found in the movie is as follows.

Pete   :"What's going on here?"

Gordon   : **"I asked him to come, Pete"**

This conversation is occurred from the movie at 00:15:04-00:15:09 minutes. The dialogue above shows that there is a violation of the maxim relation, because the hearer was not answered what the speaker asked. This can be seen when the speaker asked the hearer what was going on at that time, but the hearer answered with something else. The hearer decided to answer but he changed the subject by saying that he has asked someone to come. Here it can be seen that there is a violation of maxims where the hearer does not answer according to the topic being discussed. Cutting (2002) stated that the maxim relation occurs when someone who is irrelevant in communication caused the speaker to say something out of topic.

Some previous researchers have studied relevant research with this research. First, the researcher Yulianti and Ambalegin (2021) analyzed the violation of maxims in the TV series entitled "Pretty Little Liars". This article used Grice's theory in analyzing and the researcher found a violation of the maxims quantity, quality, relation and manner. The result showed that the violation of relation maxims was the most common in their research.

Second, the researcher Ningsih and Ambalegin (2022) conducted a study that described the violation of maxims in the movie "The Lion in winter". This researcher has taken the theory from Grice. The researcher found violations of the maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner. The result of this research showed that in their research the maxim quantity dominated the violation in their research.

Dohans and Ayomi (2024) analyzed flouting of conversational maxims in The Kissing Booth 2, focusing on the types and reasons behind maxim flouting with an emphasis on collaborative communication strategies that allow characters to negotiate social and illocutionary goals. Their study highlighted the predominance of quantity maxim violations and collaborative motivations but did not specifically address how these violations reflect social identities, group dynamics, or diversity among characters. Similarly, Sari et al. (2019) examined maxim violations in Confessions of a Shopaholic, identifying the frequency of different maxim violations and their impact on communication effectiveness. Their research underscored the importance of maxim violations in maintaining effective communication but primarily concentrated on communicative outcomes rather than on the sociocultural or identity-related implications of such violations. Aryanto and Kholis (2023) investigated

violations of cooperative principles in Extraction II, categorizing types of violations and exploring speakers' motivations, such as convincing or diverting topics. While their study provided insights into pragmatic functions of violations, it lacked a focus on how these violations interact with minority-majority relations, individuality, or group identity within the narrative context.

As mentioned previously, there were some differences and similarities between the current study and previous research. For the difference, this research applied the movie Batman 2022 as an object of research that is different from previous research and in this research conducted Cutting theory to analyze the violation maxims. Then the similarities from this research are that they discussed the types of maxim violations. This research specifically aimed at investigating the types of maxim violations committed by the characters in the Batman movie. Therefore, this research is expected to help the reader in understanding the hidden meaning in the conversation.

Maxim violation is a pragmatic part which utilized the violation of the rules from participation in a dialogue. Maxim violation is a term for the condition where the speaker deliberately does not speak by following the maxims (Yule, 2010). The maxim is not observed in a purpose so that the hearer cannot find the information in the utterance. Grice (1975) defined violation of maxims is when the speaker unostentatiously violates the rules of cooperation in the dialogue and aims to mislead the hearer. Violation maxims in conversation can lead to misunderstandings and awkward impressions. Based on Grice's theory, there are four types of violation of maxims in the principle of cooperation. The violations are violation of maxim quantity, Violation of Maxim Quality, Violation of Maxim Relation, and Violation of Maxim Manner

Maxim quantity is about when speaker has if too much or too little information (Grice, 1989). Meanwhile, according to Cutting (2002) maxim quantity might happen if the speaker does not give the hearer enough information on what they are saying because they do not want the listener to know more about what is being said.

Example:

Doctor West   : "Haven't seen you in a while".

Stephen   : **"Well, I was a little preoccupied being dust there for five years".**

(Mareta & Zuraida, 2022)

Maxim quality is about providing the reality of information conveyed (Grice, 1989). Violation of the maxim quality can occur when speaking intentionally if information that is not supported by evidence or lies (Cutting, 2002).

Example:

Henry II : "He's a good young man."

Alais   : **"He has acne and stinks like dung."**

Henry II : "He's only sixteen years old! He can't seem to get rid of the pimples."

(Ningsih & Ambalegin, 2022a)

Maxim relation is when information conveyed is related to the topic being discussed (Grice,1989). Whenever a speaker answers in a way that goes against the topic of discussion with the intent of switching the subject, he or she is violating the maxim relation (Cutting, 2002).

Example:

Peach: "Why are you wearing Benji's watch?"

Joe: **"You're right. You're right. I stole your laptop. I found all the files".**

(Maulin & Sembodo, 2022)

Maxim manner is a way to avoid getting too much information so as not to cause ambiguity (Grice, 1989). Violation of the maxim manner can occur when the speaker given too much information that is not important to the hearer in an unclear manner, so that the information conveyed is not related to the topic of conversation (Cutting, 2002).

Example:

Cecil : "Larry, do them in order, do them all and do them quick. And the most important thing of all to remember: **Don't let anything in or out."**

Larry : "Out?"

Cecil : "Good luck, son."

(Andy & Ambalegin, 2019)

The objective of this research is to identify and analyze the types of maxim violations committed by characters in The Batman (2022) movie using Grice's cooperative principle as the theoretical framework. Specifically, the study aims to categorize the observed violations into the four maxims—quantity, quality, manner, and relation—and to interpret these violations within their conversational contexts through a descriptive qualitative approach. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the understanding of pragmatic phenomena in cinematic discourse, particularly how maxim violations reflect complex communicative behaviors and social interactions among diverse characters. This research enhances the comprehension of how conversational norms are intentionally breached to serve narrative functions such as secrecy, deception, or identity concealment. Moreover, it provides practical implications by highlighting the importance of recognizing maxim violations to avoid misunderstandings in communication, both within media texts and real-life interactions.

METHOD

The research employed a descriptive qualitative method to thoroughly explore and interpret the pragmatic phenomenon of maxim violations in the 2022 movie The Batman. This approach was chosen because qualitative research, as Creswell and Creswell (2018) highlight, enables an in-depth understanding of meanings that individuals or groups associate with social or human issue. In this case, the communicative behaviors of characters within a cinematic context. The data source, The Batman movie, was selected due to its rich and complex dialogues that provide plenty illustrations of maxim violations, offering a productive ground for analyzing how conversational norms are strategically breached to convey implicit meanings and character intentions.

The observation method, as introduced by Sudaryanto (2015), was utilized for data collection because it allows systematic and detailed examination of naturally occurring language use without researcher interference. Specifically, a non-participatory observation technique was applied, where the researcher did not engage with the data sources but instead carefully watched the movie, transcribed relevant utterances, and identified maxim violations based on Grice's (1979) cooperative principle. This method is appropriate for linguistic and pragmatic studies as it preserves the authenticity of the data and minimizes bias.

However, this method carries inherent limitations. Since it relies solely on observable dialogue from a single film, it may not capture the full range of pragmatic variations across

different contexts or genres. Additionally, the interpretation of maxim violations is subject to the researcher's judgment, which may introduce subjectivity. The non-interactive nature of observation also precludes clarification or follow-up questions that could deepen understanding of ambiguous utterances.

For data analysis, the research employed a structured three-step procedure. First, the contextual background of each highlighted utterance was identified to understand the situational factors influencing the dialogue. Second, the types of maxim violations were categorized into quantity, quality, manner, and relation according to Grice's framework. Finally, the findings were systematically organized using tables to present the frequency and distribution of each violation type clearly. For instance, Table 1 in the study summarized the total of 15 maxim violations found, distributed as 5 violations of quality, 5 of manner, 3 of relation, and 2 of quantity. This tabular presentation enhances transparency and replicability by allowing other researchers to trace the analytical process and verify the classification of data, thereby strengthening the methodological rigor of the study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Findings

In Table 1, there are 15 utterances that contain maxim violations. The violations were divided into 4 types of violations. These are the violations based on the types of violations, Violations of maxim quality (5), maxim of quantity (2), maxim of manner (5), and maxim of relation (3).

Table 1 Types of Maxim Violation

Types of Maxim Violations	
Maxim	*Frequency*
Quantity	2
Quality	5
Manner	5
Relation	3
Total	15

Maxim of Quality
Data 1

Batman come into Penguin's Hideout and talks with Penguin's henchman
This conversation occurred in minute 00:27:45:

     Batman   : "I want to see the penguin"
     Henchman : "**I don't know what you're talking about pal**"

The conversation above shows a violation of the maxim quality. The hearer answer was violating maxim of quality. The henchman knows exactly who is penguin and what the speaker is talking about, however he wants to avoid him therefore, he said lies by saying that he doesn't know what Batman was talking about.

Data 2

Batman chased Penguin who was suspected as the informant that both Batman and The Riddler were looking for. When Batman finally caught Penguin, he asked a few questions to Penguin to find out who is The Riddler is.
This conversation occurred in minute 01:25:08:

Batman   : "Who's The Riddler?"

Penguin : "**Riddler? How should I know?**"

The conversation above contains the violation of maxim quality. The hearer answer was violating maxim of quality. He knows who The Riddler is but chooses to not telling the speaker anything about it. Maxim of quality demands the speaker to be truthful and informative to the conversation, whereas the hearer does not do it in this conversation. Therefore, he was violating maxim of quality.

Data 3

The detective and Batman keep pushing Penguin to reveal the identity of The Riddler, whereas Penguin keeps this information to himself.

This conversation occurred in minute 01:25:52:

Batman   : "Who is he?"

Penguin : "**Boy, you guys are a hell of a duet here. Why don't you start harmonizing?**"

There is a violation of the quality maxim in the utterances above. The hearer does not want to answer the question. He changed the topic by mocking the Speaker saying that they were a duet and should start harmonizing. His answer in this conversation shows that he violated maxim of quality where it should be truthful and informative to the conversation.

Data 4

Selina met Batman to talks about revenge and the situation. There is romance going between them and Selina curious what was hiding behind Batman's mask.

This conversation occurred in minute 01:39:16:

Selina   : "Who are you under there? What are you hiding? Are you just… hideously scarred?"

Batman : "**Yeah**"

Conversation above consists of violation of maxim of quality. The hearer reply was violating maxim of quality. He does not have any scar, instead he uses the mask to hide his identity.

Data 5

Batman shows photo of a girl with the victim of a murder to penguin.

This conversation occurred in minute 00:29:50:

Batman   : "Who is she?"

Penguin   : "**I really don't know chief. We might have been come out at the same time, but i wasn't rolling with them**".

In conversation above, hearer's answer violates maxim of quantity. The detailed answer given by the speaker is not needed. Also, later in the movie turns out that penguin knows the girl, therefore Penguin's answer also violates the maxim of quality which is to be truthful.

Maxim of Quantity
Data 1

Batman has just returned from the scene of the murder of the mayor of Gotham. When he got home, he was approached by Alfred Who were worried that Bruce does not remember and cared about his family legacy which was the servant of law and justice.

This conversation occurred in minute 00:21:45:

Alfred   : "You don't care about your family's legacy?"

Batman : "**What I'm doing is my family's legacy. If I can't change things here, if I can't have an effect, then I don't care what happens to me**".

The conversation above contains a violation of the maxim of quantity. It was unnecessary for the hearer to receive too much information from the speaker's statement. In this case, the speaker gave an answer that doubts the hearer because the speaker cared or does not cared about the legacy from his family.

Data 2

Batman and Selina saw the news. Selina claimed that she knows the killer and have met before at 44 below.

This conversation occurred in minute 00:40:32:

Selina : "44 below"

Batman : "What is it?"

Selina : "**The club within the club, the real club, It's the mafia**"

There is a violation of the maxim of quantity in the conversation above. The hearer's answer violated maxim of quantity. The answer does not directly answer to speaker's question, also the answer raise ambiguity by not stating exactly what 44 below truly is instead answering with lots of details.

Maxim of Manner

Data 1

The thugs were bullying someone in underground station, then batman come to punish them. The thugs looking at batman with his costume thinks that he is imitating something like in a Halloween.

This conversation occurred in minute 00:10:20:

Thug : "The hells are you supposed to be?"

Batman : "**I'm vengeance**"

Conversations such as the one above violate the maxim of manner. The hearer reply is violating maxim of manner. His reply means that he did not want to reveal or telling his identity to the thugs.

Data 2

Selina met Falcone in the 44 below. He knows Selina was from the club above, not 44 below. So he talked to Selina to see what was she doing down there.

This conversation occurred in minute 00:50:47:

Falcone : "Hey, been a long time since I see you down here. How have you been?"

Selina : "Yeah. I been fine, I was just a... I was just headed back upstairs"

Falcone : "**Well, don't be a stranger**"

Conversation above consists of the violation of maxim of manner. The hearer's answer is raising ambiguity therefore violated maxim of manner. His answer shows that he wants to keep in touch with the speaker while at the same time shows that he wants to keep the conversation going.

Data 3

Selina just got out from 44 below. Batman watched the whole scene from the camera in Selina's eye. He was angry that Selina knows Falcone but does not tell him.

This conversation occurred in minute 00:51:24:

Batman : "You know carmine Falcone?"

Selina : "**I told you it was mafias**"

In the conversation above, the maxim of manner is violated. Hearer's answer does not answer speaker's question. She was using ambiguity by saying "Mafias" instead directly telling who the mafia is. Therefore, she violated maxim of manner which to be brief and clear with the message.

Data 4

Bruce went to Falcone's place to ask whether the news about his father was true. That Falcone killed the reporter who threaten his father's reputation

This conversation occurred in minute 01:44:27:

Bruce   : "Did you kill him? For my father?"

Falcone : **"Look, your father was in trouble. This reporter had some dirt. Some very… personal stuff about your mother, her family history".**

The hearer's reply does not answer the speaker's question. Therefore, the hearer reply was violating maxim of manner. This was because the answer still somehow related to the question; however, it springs up ambiguity in it.

Data 5

Alfred enters the room when Bruce listened to the recorded conversation of him with Selina.

This conversation occurred in minute 00:56:08:

Alfred : "A new friend of yours?"

Bruce   : **"I'm not so sure"**

In conversation above, instead of saying yes or no, the hearer answer was raising ambiguity by saying I'm not so sure. Even though he might truly not sure about it, His answer does not clearly answer the speaker's question. Therefore, his answer violated maxim of manner.

Maxim of Relation

Data 1

Batman and Gordon have a meeting at the apartment to discuss who the informants are involved in the case they are working on

This conversation occurred in minute 00:54:11

Gordon   : "How do you know?"

Batman   : **"You're not corrupt"**

The above conversation is a violation of relation maxim. The speaker did not answer according to what was asked about how he knew the informant and the speaker then only stated that he knew if the hearer did not commit corruption.

Data 2

Bruce confronted Falcone at the memorial service of Mayor Mitchells. Falcone start stalking about what his father done to help him and ask what Bruce opinion about what his father's done by saving him.

This conversation occurred in minute 00:59:53:

Falcone : "You don't mean that meant something, he did that?"

Bruce   : "**It meant he took the Hippocratic Oath**"

Falcone : "Hippocratic oath". That's good"

Conversation above consists of violation of maxim of relation. The hearer answer to speaker's question was violating maxim of relevance by stating something else. He answered

by saying Hippocratic Oath which is the Oath of doctor. He does not saying any about his feelings about it which was the point of speaker's question.
Data 3

Colson was pushed to reveal the name of the informant by Batman and The Riddler. Colson said that they are going to kill his family if he reveals the name. Batman wants to know who will kill Colson's family.

This conversation occurred in minute 01:09:57:

      Batman   : "Who will?"
      Colson   : **"They are watching"**

The hearer's answer violated maxim of relation. He was out of fear and would not want to say anything. He was saying that "They are watching" referring to the people who would kill his family. However, his answer does not relate to speaker's question therefore violated maxim of relation.

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the types of maxim violations committed by characters in the 2022 movie The Batman using Grice's cooperative principle as the theoretical framework. Employing a descriptive qualitative methodology with Sudaryanto's observation method and pragmatic identity analysis, the research identified and categorized 15 instances of maxim violations across four types: quantity, quality, manner, and relation. The findings revealed that violations of the maxims of quantity and manner were the most frequent (each with 5 occurrences), while violations of quality were the least common (5 occurrences), and relation was violated 3 times. These results highlight the strategic use of conversational norm breaches by characters to convey hidden meanings, manipulate information, or assert social roles within the film's narrative.

The majority of quantity and manner maxim violations in The Batman underscores the complexity of communication strategies that characters employ to navigate social identities and group dynamics. Such pragmatic deviations are not mere conversational errors but deliberate acts that reflect individuality and the interplay between minority and majority social groups within the story. For example, characters like Penguin and Selina often use ambiguity (manner violations) or provide excessive or insufficient information (quantity violations) to protect secrets, assert power, or negotiate trust. This finding is significant because it reveals how language functions as a tool for expressing diverse social positions and individual agency in group interactions. It also emphasizes the film's portrayal of communicative diversity, where pragmatic competence is exercised variably according to characters' social affiliations and objectives. Understanding these violations enriches the study of language use in media, offering insights into how minority and majority voices are represented and how identity is constructed through dialogue.

The findings align with previous research on maxim violations in cinematic contexts, yet also provide unique contributions. Dohans and Ayomi (2024) found that in The Kissing Booth 2, quantity maxim violations were most common, motivated largely by collaborative communication strategies, which resonates with the current study's observation of frequent quantity violations. However, unlike their focus on collaboration, this study highlights the role of maxim violations in expressing social identities and power relations. Similarly, Sari et al. (2019) reported that maxim manner violations dominated in Confessions of a Shopaholic, paralleling this study's finding of frequent manner violations, though they emphasized the

impact on communication effectiveness rather than identity expression. Aryanto and Kholis (2023) identified fewer violations in Extraction II but noted diverse motivations such as convincing and diverting topics, which correspond to the strategic purposes observed in The Batman. Other studies, such as Ningsih and Ambalegin (2022) on The Lion in Winter and Andy and Ambalegin (2019) on Night at the Museum, similarly reported quantity and manner as dominant violations, supporting the pattern that these maxims are often strategically breached in film dialogues. Arbain et al. (2023) added that maxim violations often reflect personal interests and face-saving strategies, which complements this study's findings on individual and group identity negotiation. Collectively, these studies affirm that maxim violations serve complex pragmatic functions beyond mere conversational breaches, though this study uniquely foregrounds their role in minority-majority and group identity dynamics.

The importance of these findings lies in their contribution to understanding maxim violations not simply as conversational infractions but as complex pragmatic strategies embedded in social and cultural narratives. By revealing how characters in The Batman employ maxim violations to navigate secrecy, power, and allegiance, this study advances the discourse on language as a means of expressing diversity and individuality within group interactions. This perspective broadens the scope of pragmatic analysis to include sociolinguistic dimensions such as minority-majority dynamics and identity construction, areas that have been underexplored in prior research. The study's application of the Pragmatic Identity Method further provides a nuanced tool for contextualizing violations within character motivations and social settings, offering a methodological advancement for future research.

Moreover, this research identifies gaps in existing literature, particularly the limited focus on the intersection of maxim violations with social identity and group studies in cinematic discourse. While previous studies have documented types and frequencies of violations and their communicative effects, few have explicitly connected these pragmatic phenomena to the portrayal of diversity, individuality, and power relations. This study thus fills a critical gap by demonstrating how maxim violations serve as linguistic markers of social complexity in film narratives.

While the study interprets maxim violations as deliberate pragmatic strategies reflecting social identities and group dynamics, alternative explanations should be considered. For instance, some violations might arise from scriptwriting choices aimed at dramatic effect rather than authentic communicative behavior. Ambiguity or topic shifts could be narrative devices to build suspense or character mystery rather than genuine pragmatic competence. Additionally, some violations might reflect cultural or genre-specific communication styles that differ from everyday conversation norms, limiting generalizability. The relatively small number of violations (15 utterances) also means findings should be cautiously extrapolated. Finally, the subjective nature of pragmatic analysis means interpretations of violations and their social meanings may vary among researchers. Future research could incorporate audience reception studies or cross-cultural analyses to further validate and contextualize these findings.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has successfully identified and analyzed the types of maxim violations present in the 2022 movie The Batman through the lens of Grice's cooperative principle. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach supported by Sudaryanto's observation and pragmatic identity methods, the research revealed a total of 15 maxim violations, distributed across quantity, quality, manner, and relation. Notably, violations of quantity and manner were the most prevalent, indicating characters' tendencies to provide either excessive or ambiguous information, while quality violations were less frequent. These findings illuminate how conversational norms are deliberately breached by characters to serve narrative functions such as concealment, deception, and power negotiation. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to a deeper understanding of pragmatic phenomena in cinematic discourse, particularly how maxim violations reflect and construct social identities, group dynamics, and individuality within the film's context. By highlighting the interplay between minority and majority voices through pragmatic strategies, this research extends prior work that primarily focused on the frequency and communicative effects of maxim violations, offering a novel perspective on their role in expressing social complexity. The study underscores the importance of cooperative principles in facilitating clear communication and avoiding misunderstandings, while also recognizing that intentional violations can convey nuanced meanings beyond literal content This result also helped to avoid misunderstanding between the speaker and hearer when they are conveying their message through conversations. The speaker and hearer also need to reduce maxim violations which can make the information to be understood clearly by applying cooperative principle from Grice. It is also hoped that the hearer can understand the implied meaning that are delivered in this research. This research hopefully can be a resource for the future studies of maxim violation. This research fills a gap in the existing literature by connecting maxim violations with sociolinguistic themes such as identity negotiation and power relations, areas that have been insufficiently addressed in previous studies. It also suggests that pragmatic competence varies according to characters' social roles and objectives, providing a framework for future investigations into how language use in media reflects broader social realities.

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