
The Study of Flouting Maxim of Grice's Cooperative Principle on Cak Cuk Surabaya T-shirts

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Abstract

The focus of this study is the expressions on the design of *Cak Cuk* Surabaya T-shirts. This study attempts to describe the expressions of the designs which flout the maxims of Grice's Cooperative principle, the implied meaning of the flouted maxims and why the flouting of maxim occurs in the expressions. The writer uses qualitative method in this study. In the process of data collection, the writer took four samples as the data that represent Surabaya cultural characteristics. The reason for selecting the data is because the expressions on the design of *Cak Cuk* Surabaya T-shirts flout the maxims and thereby would give rise to implicature. In analyzing the data, the writer used Grice's theory of Cooperative Principle and implicature. The finding of this study is that the maxim of Quality is mostly flouted by the expressions on *Cak Cuk* Surabaya T-shirts. Furthermore, the writer also found that most of flouting maxims were meant for emphasizing the intended meaning and creating humor.

Keywords: *Cak Cuk* surabaya t-shirts, cooperative principle, implicature, maxim

Introduction

Language is the product of culture (Duranti, 1997). It means that language is not only as a mode of thinking, but also as a cultural practice. The development of a language frequently affects its associated culture. Besides, people and living practices in each culture influence the language. People usually express their pride of the region where they live by means of a language. It is not only expressed in the mainstream media (newspaper, magazine, film, music) but also in another form of media, such as sticker, pin, and T-shirt. Every region in Indonesia has typical characteristics of their T-shirt products, for example, Bali with *Joger* products, Jogja with *Dagadu*, Bandung with *Dadung*, and especially Surabaya with its *Cak Cuk*. *Cak Cuk* is a local product of garments from Surabaya popularly known as the representation of Surabaya culture (Sejarah *Cak Cuk*, 2005).

The writer is interested to discuss the designs of *Cak Cuk* Surabaya T-shirts, because they mostly consist of unique and funny words. Thus, people will directly laugh when they see the images or read the words used on the designs (Yusman, 2011). As commonly known, something that makes someone laugh or smile is called as humour. Thus, most designs on *Cak Cuk* Surabaya T-shirts contain humour (Yusman, 2011). People not only have to understand the words used, but also the background knowledge behind them in order to consider the context of the designs. Here, the interrelation between the text and the picture of the design conveys certain communicative meaning for the readers to interpret.

Based on those assumptions, the writer uses pragmatics approach as an analytical tool. Pragmatics is the approach in linguistics which involves the relation between the language used and the context (Brown and Yule, 1983, p.26). In addition, pragmatics is the subject concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker or writer and interpreted by listener or reader (Yule, 1996, p.3). When the listener hears something, he or she has to firstly assume that the speaker is cooperative and intends to communicate something. It must be more than just what the words mean. It is an additional conveyed meaning, called an implicature (Yule, 1996, p.35).

Grice developed a theory designed to identifying and classifying the phenomenon of implicature. He also sought to describe how such implicatures are understood. Grice assumed a general Cooperative Principle and four maxims (Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner) specified on how to be cooperative. He argued that people generally follow these rules for efficient communication (Grice, 1989, p.26).

Moreover, Grice claimed that the guidelines are not only applicable in a spoken communication that involves speaker and listener, but also in written communication involving writer and reader (Levinson, 1983, p.102). The connection between the Cooperative Principle and maxims occurs when a participant in a talk exchange may fail to fulfil a maxim in various ways, one of them is the flouting of maxim.

The first related study was conducted by Chen (2011) in her research on *The Pragmatics Analysis of Fuzziness in Advertising English*. She focuses on the fuzzy expressions in advertising English to recognize the ultimate goal of advertising from the perspective of pragmatics. The second related study was conducted by Khosravizadeh and Sadehvandi (2011) in their research on *Some Instances of Violation and Flouting of the Maxim of Quantity by the Main Characters (Barry & Tim) in Dinner for Schmucks*. They analyze the extent to which the maxim of quantity is either violated or flouted by two main characters in a movie "Dinner for Schmucks".

From the background of the previous studies, the phenomena of flouting the maxims of Cooperative Principle can be considered essential in investigating the relation between language used and the context. Both related studies above show that study of Cooperative Principle constitutes a topic widely open for more exploration. Thus, from that background of the case, the writer wants to find out the utterances which flout the maxims based on the theory of Cooperative Principle by Grice (1989). The differences between this study and the research conducted by Chen (2011) and Khosravizadeh and Sadehvandi (2011) are in terms of the object and the objectives of the study.

In this study, the writer is interested in finding out the flouting of maxim on *Cak Cuk* Surabaya T-shirts. The writer uses Grice's theory of implicature and Cooperative principle (1989). In particular, the writer attempts to describe the expressions of the designs on *Cak Cuk* Surabaya T-shirts which flout the maxims of Cooperative principle, the implied meaning of the flouted maxims, and the reason why the flout of maxim occurs in the expressions.

This study is expected to give contribution on the development of linguistic field study, especially the study of Pragmatics analysis. It also may give new knowledge and understanding to the readers who are interested in the study of Cooperative Principle and implicature. Besides, the writer also expects that this study can be a meaningful reference for further studies on the same subjects, especially for English Department students. This study is also intended to tell the readers that T-shirt designs can be the media for conveying the moral message, satire and social criticism.

Methods of the Study

This study provided a descriptive account of the expressions on the designs of *Cak Cuk* Surabaya T-shirts. This study used the theory of Cooperative Principle and implicature by Grice (1989). There are hundreds of T-shirt designs already produced by *Cak Cuk* until now (Yusman, 2011). But, this study only focused on the expressions on the designs that specifically represented cultural characteristics of Surabaya, based on the assumption that *Cak Cuk* is the typically original product from Surabaya.

Cak Cuk has six themes of their T-shirt designs: *Surabaya as City of Heroes*, *Surabaya as City of Food*, *Surabaya as Esek-Esek City*, *Surabaya as City of Misuh*, *Surabaya as Bonek City*, and *Surabaya as Crocodile City* (Yusman, 2011). Among the six themes that especially represent cultural characteristics of Surabaya, the writer only took four themes, they are; *Surabaya as City of Heroes*, *Surabaya as City of Food*, *Surabaya as Esek-Esek City*, and *Surabaya as City of Misuh*. Subsequently, the writer only took one data from each themes of the designs as sample in order to limit the data. The data was taken since it matched the criteria required in the study. The criterion was the expressions on the designs of *Cak Cuk* Surabaya T-shirts flouting the maxims and thereby gave rise to implicature.

The data was taken from the website, <http://www.facebook.com/Cak-Cuk-Kata-Kata-Kota-Kita>. The data was taken because within those designs, the writer was able to get sufficient result for answering the statement of the problems in this study. In addition, the writer also provided the description of general information or knowledge of each data to the reader. This description was essential to explain the context of the data because it was an important element required in the process of analysis.

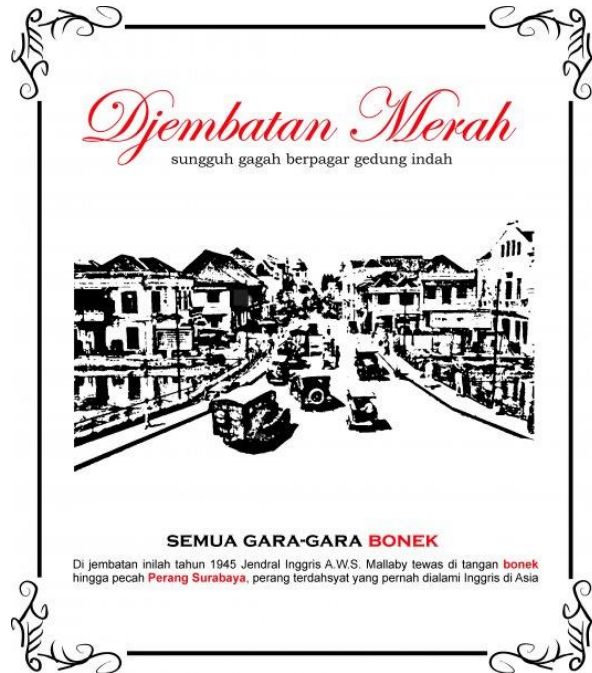
Data Presentation

This section is divided into two parts. The first part is the presentation of the data and data analysis. The second part is the interpretation of the findings and the explanation.

Presentation of the Data and Data Analysis

This sub-chapter presents the contextual description of the data, the transcription of the data, the analysis of flouting maxims, the implied meaning of the data, and the reason why flouting of maxims are applied on the data.

Data 1



The title of the design is *Djembatan Merah Sungguh Gagah Berpagar Gedung Indah* and there are two expressions applied on the data 1. The first expression is *Semua Gara –Gara Bonek* and the second expression is *Di Jembatan Inilah Tahun 1945 Jendral Inggris A.W.S. Mallaby Tewas di Tangan Bonek Hingga Pecah Perang Surabaya, Perang Terdahsyat yang Pernah Dialami Inggris di Asia*.

There is also a depiction of the atmosphere of the *Djembatan Merah* in 1925 in the background image. The depiction of the atmosphere is the old buildings and the cars. We can also see some people walking along the street and pavement at that time in the background image.



Source: <http://surabayatempodulu.com>

From the title and the expressions applied on data 1, the theme of this data is Surabaya cultural characteristics. Specifically, it describes about Surabaya as City of Heroes. *Jembatan Merah* is a historical

place where Surabaya people struggled to fight against British colonialism. *Jembatan Merah* also becomes the identity of Surabaya (Ariyanto, 2011, p. 116). Hence, Surabaya is well-known as the city of heroes because of the existence of *Jembatan Merah* itself. It was the place where General AWS Mallaby was killed on October 31, 1945. The death sparked the incident on November 10, 1945 that is now widely remembered and celebrated as the Heroes Day (Basri, 1997, p.52).

From the context and transcription of data 1, the utterance *Semua Gara –Gara Bonek* flouts the maxim of Manner (be perspicuous, and specifically – avoid ambiguity). The expression is ambiguous, mainly in the word *Bonek*. Actually, the word *Bonek* has two possible representations. First, *Bonek* is used to represent the phenomenon of Surabaya football team supporters, Persebaya, while, *Bonek* did not participate in the battle of Surabaya against British colonialism happened in *Jembatan Merah*. The second representation is when we relate to the meaning of the word *Bonek* itself. *Bonek* is derived from the words *bondo nekat*. *Bondo nekat* is equal to fearless fellows in English. Hence, the word *bondo nekat* is also used to describe the recklessness of Surabaya’s young men against the colonizers.

From the findings of flouted maxims in data 1 and the context of the data, the implied meaning of the flouted maxim is to show that *Jembatan Merah* is a place where it symbolizes the pride of Surabaya people. It not only becomes the center of government, but also the courage of Surabaya’s young people in preserving Indonesia’s independence at the expense of their blood.

Data 2



Before reviewing the finding on the data 2, the writer presents the context of the data by describing general information and situation of the data. The title of the data 2 is *Lontong Balap Surabaya* and there is an expression applied on the data. The expression is *The Real Surabaya Fast Food Makanan Cepat Saji yang paling cepat*.

Data 2 shows familiar areas where the vendors of *Lontong balap* in Surabaya usually locate, such as *Gubeng*, *Kepanjen*, *Rajawali*, *Kranggan*, and *Pasar Turi*. It also shows the ingredients of *Lontong balap* such as, *lontong*, *kecambah*, *tahu*, *petis*, and *sate kerang*. The design on data 2 is adopted from Formula 1. Formula 1 is widely considered as the fastest car race in the world. Thus, from the design of data 4, it can be concluded that *Lontong balap* is also considered as a kind of Surabaya fast food.

From the title and the expressions applied on the data 2, the theme of this data is Surabaya cultural characteristics. In particular, it describes the typical food in Surabaya, *Lontong balap*. Nowadays, *Lontong balap* becomes popular not only in Surabaya, but also in Indonesia. The ingredients of this food are: *lontong* (a kind of steamed food wrapped in banana leaves), bean sprouts, fried tofu, *lenthos*, fried onions, ketchup, and chili sauce. *Lontong balap* is usually served with skewers satay (Ariyanto, 2011, p.101).

A couple years ago, *Lontong balap* was sold in a large *kemaron* (a kind of large bowl) which is made of clay. Though it was heavy, the sellers of *Lontong balap* carried it along the streets and alleys in Surabaya. Nowadays, *kemaron* has been replaced by a metal pot and most of the sellers of *Lontong balap* have already had their own place to sell it. Thus, they no longer get around the town to sell their product (Widodo, 2002, p.91).

From the context and transcription of the data 2, the first expression *The Real Surabaya Fast Food*, flouts the maxim of Quality (try to make your contribution one that is true – do not say what you believe to be false). Grice (1989, p.34) provided different kinds of example involving the flouting of maxim Quality as follows: *irony, metaphor, meiosis, and hyperbole*. From the review of flouting maxims in the data, the implied meaning of the maxim of Quality refers to the form of hyperbole. In order to obtain the implied meaning of this maxim, the contradictory proposition should be considered first. From the transcription and the context above, it obviously implies contradiction between the expressions and the fact by conducting overstatement that its truth cannot be relied on.

In fact, *fast food* restaurants usually have a walk up counter or drive thru window where you order and pick up your food. Some familiar *fast food* restaurants are: McD, KFC, Pizza Hut, Burger King, and so on. Thus, the expression is considered as flouting maxim of Quality because *Lontong balap* Surabaya does not relate to any *fast food* restaurants.

In addition, the expression *Makanan Cepat Saji yang paling cepat* (The fastest fast food) flouts the maxim of Quantity (make your contribution as informative as required for the current purpose of the exchange). This expression contains redundant information because there is a repetition in the word *cepat* (fast). Thus, the expression applied on data 2, *Makanan Cepat Saji yang paling cepat* (The fastest fast food) is considered as too much information.

From the findings of flouted maxims in data 2 and the context of the data, the implied meaning of the flouted maxim is to show that the background image of Formula 1 used on data 2 represents how *Lontong balap* is served and the origin of *Lontong balap*. It is known that *Lontong balap* can be prepared and served quickly. As previously mentioned, *Lontong balap* was sold in a large *kemaron*. Though it was heavy, the sellers of *Lontong balap* carried it around the part of the area in Surabaya by walking quickly which gives the impression as *berpacu* (Widodo, 2002, p.91). Actually, *Lontong balap* is derived from the word *Lontong* and *balap*. It has been already known that *Lontong* is one of the ingredients of this food, whereas the word *balap* is a Javanese which means race in English. Thus, it is known as *Lontong balap*.

Data 3



tempat **main** khusus orang dewasa

BUKAN TEMPAT MAIN ANAK-ANAK

In order to comprehend the process of conveying the intended meaning, the writer has to explain the contextual information of the data. The title of the design is *Dollyland Surabaya* and there is an expression applied on the data 3. The expression is *tempat main khusus orang dewasa bukan tempat main anak-anak*. The design on the data 3 is adopted from Disneyland.

From the title and the expressions applied on the data 3, the theme of this data is Surabaya cultural characteristics. Specifically, it describes the characteristics of *Dolly*. *Dolly* is a notorious red light district, or a prostitution area, located in Surabaya. There are numerous whores who are exhibited in the glass-walled room so that the visitors can easily look at inside the room. *Dolly* was established since the Dutch colonial era. Widodo (2002, p.112) stated that *Dolly* was established around 1950s by Aunt Dolly.

From the context and transcription of the data 3, the title *Dollyland Surabaya* flouts the maxim of Relation (make your contributions relevant). It is considered as flouting the maxim Relation because the title on the data does not relevant with the topic. Actually, the word *Dollyland* reminds us to *Disneyland*,

a famous theme park located in California, USA. It is also well-known as Walt Disney World. *Disneyland* is an area where children can feel like they were inside a cartoon world. Hence, *Disneyland* is absolutely different with the representation of Dolly as mentioned previously.

Referring to the context of the data 3, *Dollyland* is the localization area notoriously famous not only among people in Surabaya, in other cities. This is an area where free sex is legally prevalent. Thus, there is no relation between *Dollyland* and *Disneyland*. Different with *Disneyland*, children are not allowed to visit *Dollyland*. Thus, there is an emphasis through the expression on the data 3, *tempat main khusus orang dewasa bukan tempat main anak-anak*. It means that *Dollyland* is a place for adult only.

From the findings of flouted maxims in data 3 and the context of the data, the implied meaning of the expression is to show that *Dollyland* which is located in *Dolly* refers to the prostitution area. *Dollyland* is not only popular among Surabaya people, but also among people in Indonesia. *Dollyland* has nowadays become the biggest localization area in Southeast Asia (Widodo, 2002, p.112). As we've already known, *Dollyland* also becomes the identity of Surabaya.

Data 4



The title of the design is *Caak-Coek* and there is an expression applied on the data 4. The expression is *menyegarkan obrolanmu*. The design is adopted from one of the most popular beverage brand, *Coca-Cola*. From the title and the expressions applied on the data 4, the theme of this data is Surabaya cultural characteristics. Specifically, it describes the word *j*ncuk* notoriously becomes popular among Surabaya people.

In communication media, the word *j*ncuk* is considered as a vocabulary or more specifically a kind of greeting. The word *j*ncuk* can be viewed as a cultural product in the form of oral tradition. In its development, *j*ncuk* may have an implication, either directly, or indirectly on the community. The word *j*ncuk* has become popular not only among Surabaya people, but also among people in other cities. Nowadays, the word *j*ncuk* has become a symbol of accent or pronunciation for Surabaya people. In the war of independence in 1945, the word *j*ncuk* became an encouragement for the patriotism against the colonialists (Tejo, 2010).

The word *j*ncuk* describes the characteristics of Surabaya society who are typically strong character, full of resistance, and spontaneous. In fact, the word *j*ncuk* still remains having the negative assumption because it refers to the deterioration of people's morality living in Surabaya. This statement appears because *j*ncuk* is literally an acronym of the vocabulary of the taboo words.

From the context and transcription of data 4, the expressions *Caak-Coek menyegarkan obrolanmu*, flouts the maxim of Quality (try to make your contribution one that is true – do not say what you believe to be false). It is regarded as the form of overstatement, hyperbole. From the transcription and the context

above, it obviously implies contradiction between the transcription of the expressions and the fact by conducting overstatement that its truth cannot be relied on.

In fact, we know that something which makes hunger relief does not a word but a beverage. Referring to the context of data 4, the word *Caak-Coek* refers to *j*ncuk*, a kind of rude words that is popular among surabaya people. Actually, the word *j*ncuk* is not only used by people as a rude word when their emotions burst out, they feel furious or curse someone else, but it also expands to become a symbol of intimacy and friendship among people in Surabaya (Tejo, 2010).

The transcription of the expression *Caak - Coek menyegarkan obrolanmu* can be believed to be false because literally it does not relate to any beverage. Thus, the expression is considered as flouting the maxim of Quality by overstating the statement. It can also be concluded that data 4 does not use any real information and the corresponding facts.

From the findings of flouted maxims in data 4 and the context of the data, the implied meaning of the flouted maxim is to show the utterance *Caak – Coek menyegarkan obrolanmu* represents that *j*ncuk* is used to express the closeness among Surabaya's people. It means that the word *j*ncuk* is a symbol of intimacy and friendship among Surabaya's people.

Based on the the elaboration of the flouting maxim and the implied meaning, the writer presents the explanation concerning with the reason why the flouting maxims of Grice's Cooperative principle are applied on the data. The details are presented as followed:

1. The flouting of maxim Quality is considered as the most flouted maxim. The elaboration specifically pertains to the form of hyperbole, which refers to the overstatement. Humor often arises when the maxim of Grice's Cooperative Principle are flouted. Iwanov (2010, p. 1) also stated that the more maxims are flouted, the more humorous it gets if we still can make sense of it. Thus, the flouting of maxim Quality applied on the data is not only to emphasize the intended meaning, but also to create the humor.
2. In the flouting of maxim Quantity, it refers to give more information than required in order to emphasize the particular point of the message. Based on the Grice's theory of Cooperative Principle (1989), the writer or the speaker has to give the contribution as informative as required. It means that the information should not be too much.
3. In the flouting of maxim Relation applied, it is not only to give more emphasize on the conveyed meaning, but also to create the humor. Based on the maxim of Relation, the speaker or the writer has to be relevant and stay on the topic. In this case, the writer (the producer of *Cak Cuk* Surabaya T-shirts) changes the common topic into the humorous one. For example, the producer of *Cak Cuk* Surabaya T-shirts turns the word *Disneyland* into *Dollyland* since the pair of words are quite similar in rhyme.
4. In the flouting of maxim Manner, it is applied to give more emphasis on the conveyed meaning and to create the humor. In the findings, it refers to ambiguity. According to Ross (1998, p.8), humor will often have the following element, the conflict is caused by an ambiguity at some level of language.

Interpretation of the Findings

No.	Maxims	Flouting	
		N	%
1.	Quantity	1	20
2.	Quality	2	40
3.	Relation	1	20
4.	Manner	1	20
Total		5	100

According to the table, there are 5 floutings of maxims in the analysis of six data. The most flouted maxim is the maxim of Quality which is flouted for 2 times or 40%. The flouting maxims appear in data 2 and 4. The maxims of Quantity, Relation, and manner share equal numbers of frequency. Those are

infringed for 1 time or 20%. The flouting maxim of Quantity appears in data 2. In the flouting maxim of Quantity, the producer of *Cak Cuk* Surabaya T-shirts fails to provide their contribution as informative as required.

The flouting maxim of Relation appears in data 3. Based on the maxim of Relation, the speaker or the writer has to be relevant and stay on the topic discussed. The writer also finds that the pattern of the flouting maxim of Relation occurred leads to humor. For example, the word *Disneyland* is changed to be *Dollyland* since the pair of both words is quite similar in rhyme. The maxim of Manner appears in data 1. It occurs on data 1 is deliberately given raise to ambiguity.

Conclusion

In this study, the writer would like to find out the flouting of maxim on Cak Cuk Surabaya T-shirts by using Grice's theory of Cooperative Principle and implicature (1989). Cooperative Principle is a principle to make a cooperative conversation such as telling truth, avoiding ambiguity, and also giving informative contribution. It has been already known that sometimes what people utter or write is frequently out of context, uninformative, obscure, or ambiguous. In this case, the hearer or the reader cannot comprehend the meaning only by relying on the literal meaning conveyed in the utterances, the hearer or the reader should also understand the context, relevant information or knowledge about it. Thus, the Cooperative Principle and maxims will be the guideline for the participants to make the effective and efficient communication.

Based on the elaboration of the flouting maxims and the implied meaning, the writer is able to infer the reason why the flouting maxims of Grice's Cooperative principle are applied on the data. The writer finds that they are applied in order to emphasize the intended meaning and create the humor.

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