

**NON-OBSERVANCE OF GRICE'S MAXIMS FOUND IN *THE DEATH OF A SALESMAN*  
DRAMA SCRIPT BY ARTHUR MILLER: A PRAGMATIC STUDY**



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**by:**

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**“NON-OBSERVANCE OF GRICE’S MAXIMS FOUND IN *THE DEATH OF A SALESMAN* DRAMA SCRIPT BY ARTHUR MILLER: A PRAGMATIC STUDY“**

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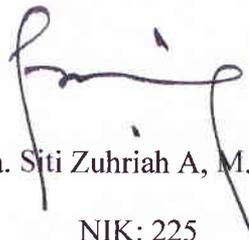
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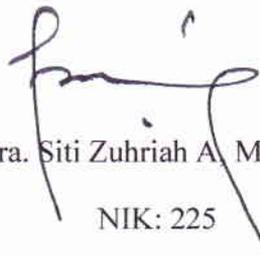
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# NON-OBSERVANCE OF GRICE'S MAXIMS FOUND IN *THE DEATH OF A SALESMAN* DRAMA SCRIPT BY ARTHUR MILLER: A PRAGMATIC STUDY

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Abstract

*This research is aimed at describing the types of non-observance maxims, and the intentions of non-observance maxims.*

*The type of this research was descriptive qualitative research which the researcher used documentation method as the method of collecting data. The data of this research were dialogues which contain non-observance maxims that were found in *The Death of Salesman* drama script.*

*The result of this research showed that firstly, the types of non-observance in *The Death of a Salesman* drama script used by the characters were flouting of maxims, violating of maxims and suspending of maxims. Secondly, the speaker's intentions of non-observance maxims were requesting, suggesting, alerting, warning, refusing, and disagreement utterance.*

Key words: non-observance maxims, Gricean's maxims, speaker's intentions

## A. INTRODUCTION

Communication can be seen as a cooperative act in which people cooperate each other by providing adequate information to establish understanding. This is what the English philosopher Grice (1975) believes. He points out that communication is a cooperative manner. The basic supposition is that any discourse, whether written or spoken, is a joint effort. Both the speaker and hearer have to follow certain rules in order to communicate effectively.

Communication is not simply conveying information but also constituting desires to maintain a good relationship between interlocutors. According to Grice (1975), people communicate in a way to work together to provide mutually desired information and use

utterances to maintain social relationship. Grice proposed it as Cooperative Principle (CP) as he put it: “make your conversation contribution such as required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (1975:45). This principle is formulated as a rule of communication involving maxims that is rules which have to be obeyed by interlocutors in order to understand each other. This communication principle is formulated into four maxims: quality, quantity, relevant, and manner. Interpersonal interaction would be very difficult and counterproductive if it lacks cooperation.

However in daily communication people intentionally do not always observe the maxims for a particular purpose. Not only in daily conversation do people violate maxim but also in drama dialogues. The following are examples of one non-observance maxims found in dialogue of *The Death of Salesman* drama.

**Data 1/TDoS/Act 01/ Flout-R**

Willy : Is there any cheese?

Linda : **I'll make you a sandwich**

In the morning in the kitchen of his residence, as usual Willy made a breakfast menu before he left for working. In this dialog Willy looked for cheese in the kitchen. Willy really liked cheese, because it would make him stronger. Usually Linda put the cheese in the refrigerator, but that morning Willy could not find the cheese there.

When she was answered Willy's question, Linda used non-observance maxim strategies to create an implicature. In this case, Linda used flouting of maxim to show her attention. She never let him to make a sandwich by himself; she would make a sandwich for him. It was correct if she cared to his husband, but she flouted the maxim of relevance, she changed the topic of conversation by ordered sandwich. She could simply answer “yes” or “no” it would give maximum response. Linda flouted the maxim of relevance to show that she cared with her husband and she would not make Willy busy in the kitchen by himself because she really loved him.

From the examples above the writer assume that maxims are not always observed, in the sense that it is not obvious at the time of the utterance that the speaker has

deliberately lied, supplied insufficient information, or been ambiguous, irrelevant or hard to understand.

Study on the use of maxims is not something new as there have been some previous studies on it. For example Ni'mah (2009) studied Maxim of Politeness Principle found in "the Prince and Me" Movie. Ponidy (2006), analysed Maxim Used by the Main Character in Titanic Movie. Zor (2006) studied the use of Grice Cooperative Principle and its maxim to analyze the problems of coherence in Turkish and English essays. Mulyani (2009) studied maxim flouting in "Forest Gump" Film. Nevertheless, those studies generalized the non-observant maxims as violations and flouts. In other words other types of non-observant maxims have been ignored. This present study intends to explore more types of non-observant maxims in addition to violations and flouts. The present researcher intends to analyze more types of non-observance maxim used in the drama script in *The Death of a Salesman*, and the intentions of the use of non-observance maxims

To specify the problem statement, the writer draws two supplementary questions as follows. (1)What are the types of non-observance maxims found in *The Death of a Salesman* drama script? (2)What is the intention of non-observance maxims found in *The Death of a Salesman* drama script?

The objective of the study is to describe the types of non-observance maxims found in the data, to describe the speaker's intentions in non-observance maxims, and to describe the variations of maxims which are not observe by the characters.

## **B. UNDERLYING THEORY**

### **1. Pragmatics**

According to Levinson, (1983: 6) Pragmatic is the study of those principles that will account for why a certain set of sentences are unusual, or not possible utterances. Levinson (1983:9) also states that pragmatics is the study of relations between language and context that are relevant to the writing of grammars. It can be said that pragmatics focuses on the study of how utterances have meaning based on the context or situation. Pragmatics would be field which studies how hearers fill out

semantic structure with contextual information, and then make inferences which go outside the meaning of what was said to them. Pragmatics are concerned with people's ability to use language meaningfully (Kreidler, 1998: 18). In short, pragmatics focuses on the speaker's meaning. When the speaker says something to the hearer, of course the speaker has a meaning from what the speaker said. What the speaker intended is conducted in pragmatic study. There are three pragmatic scales that operate in maxim of politeness, they are the cost-benefit scale, optionality scale, indirectness scale, authority/power scale, and social-distance scale.

## 2. Speech Act

The term speech act was firstly introduced by English philosopher J.L Austin. Speech act can be analyzed on three levels: the locution (the words the speaker uses); the illocution (what the speaker is doing by using those words); the perlocution (the effect of those words on the hearer) (Peccei, 1999: 47).

In English speech acts are commonly given more specific actions, such as requesting, commanding, questioning, or informing. The term speech act refers to an utterance and the total situation in which the utterance is issued. Speech act is used to mean the same as illocutionary act (Thomas, 1995: 51).

According to Peccei, (1999: 51) there are five types of speech acts as follows, representatives/assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. Representatives/assertive is the act when the speaker represents external reality by making their words fit the world as they believe it to be (stating, describing, and affirming). Secondly, directive utterance is an act when the speaker directs the hearer to perform some future act which will make the world fit the speaker's words (commanding, ordering, requesting, warning, suggesting). The third type of speech act is commissive, commissive is speakers commit themselves to a future act which will make the world fit their words (promising, vowing, threatening, and offering). The next type is expressive utterance, speakers express their feelings by making their words fit their internal psychological world (thanking, greeting, welcoming, apologizing) (Peccei, 1999:52). The last type of speech act is declarative utterance.

Peccei (1999:53) defines declarative as the speaker utters words that in themselves change the world (naming, marriage, and sentencing).

### 3. Cooperative Principles

The cooperative principle describes how people interact with one another, the principle is intended as a description of how people normally behave in conversation, Grice (cited in Peccei, 1999: 27). Listeners and speakers must speak cooperatively and mutually accept one another to be understood in a particular way. The cooperative principle describes how effective communication in conversation is achieved in common social situations. Grice (in Griffiths 2006: 134) identified some of the communicational norms and show how the speakers are involved in the reasons when speakers make possible utterances to convey rather more than is literally encoded in the underlying sentences.

The cooperative principle can be divided into four maxims, called the Gricean maxims, describing specific rational principles observed by people who obey the cooperative principle; these principles enable effective communication. Grice proposed four conversational maxims that arise from the pragmatics of natural language. The maxim of Quantity relates to the amount of contribution to the coherence of conversation. Grice clarifies that the maxim of Quantity has sub- maxim, i.e.: “make your contribution as informative as is required, but not more, or less, than is required” and “Do not make your contribution more informative than is required”. The maxim of Quality suggest to the speakers to valid contribution with certain evidences. Grice (cited in Thomas, 1995: 63) suggest that a conversation should be genuine and sincere and speak the truth of facts. He formulates this maxim s: “do not say that which you believe to be false or for which you lack adequate evidence. The maxim of Relation suggests that utterances should be relevant to the context of the conversation. In Grice (cited in Thomas, 1995: 63) outlines, that speakers should “be relevant”, say things related to the current topic of the conversation. The maxim of Manner

suggest that speakers have to try presenting meaning clearly, concisely orderly, and avoid ambiguity and obscurity of expression.

#### 4. Non-observance Maxims

According to Thomas (1995: 64) people may fail to observe a maxim because they are incapable of speaking clearly, or because they deliberately choose to lie. The types of non-observance of the maxims can be classified into five, those are:

##### a. Flouting Maxim

Grice (cited in Thomas 1995: 65) explains the flouting a maxim is a situation in which a speaker blatantly fails to observe a maxim, not with any intention of deceiving or misleading, but because the speaker wishes to prompt the hearer to look for a meaning which is different from, or in addition to the expressed meaning.

##### b. Violating a Maxim

According to Grice (cited in Thomas: 1995: 72) defines violation very specifically as the unostentatious non observance of a maxim. If a speaker violates a maxim, he or she will be liable to mislead.

##### c. Infringing a Maxim

Thomas (1995: 74) explains that infringing maxim of non-observance could occur because the speaker has an imperfect command of the language (a young child or a foreign learner), the speaker's performance is impaired in some way (nervousness, drunkenness, excitement). Because of some cognitive impairment or simply the speaker is constitutionally incapable of speaking clearly, to the point, etc.

##### d. Opting Out a Maxim

Grice in Thomas (1995: 73) explains that a speaker who opts out from the operation both of the maxim and cooperative principle, he or she may say, indicate or allow it to become plain that he is unwilling to cooperate in the way the maxim requires. Thomas (1995: 74) adds that "examples of opting out occur

frequently in public life, when the speaker cannot, perhaps for legal or ethical reason, reply in the way normally expected. The speaker usually wishes to avoid generating a false implicature or appearing uncooperative”.

e. Suspending a Maxim

Suspending a maxim is a case in which the speaker needs not opt out of observing the maxim because there is no expectation for the maxim to be observed (Thomas, 1995: 76).

### **C. RESEARCH METHOD**

In conducting this research, the writer uses descriptive qualitative research. The writer intends to describe the types of non-observance maxims, the speaker’s intention, and the variation of maxims found in *The Death of a Salesman* drama script. The object of the study is the non-observance maxims found in *The Death of a salesman* drama script. The data of this research are dialogues which contain non-observance maxims used by the characters in *The Death of a Salesman* drama script. In collecting the data, the writer uses documentation and observation methods with steps of collecting data as follows; firstly, the writer reading the original drama script of *The Death of a Salesman*. Secondly, the writer marking and noting all the dialogue used by the characters that shows a non-observance maxims taken from *The Death of a Salesman* drama script. Thirdly, the writer re-typing all the data of non-observance maxims. The last step is grouping the data and analyzing all the data of non-observance maxims that are used by the characters in *The Death of a Salesman* drama script.

In analyzing this research, the data are analyzed based on the types of non-observance maxims, speaker’s intention and variation of maxims that occurred in non-observance maxims.

### **D. RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

#### **1. Research Findings**

From the data analysis the researcher found 31 data used by the characters of *The Death of Salesman* drama script. The data was categorized into three types of non-

observance maxims. Those were the Flouting of maxims, a violation of maxims, and suspending a maxim. From the data analysis showed that there were 24 data included the flouting of maxims, 3 data of violating of maxims, and 5 data of suspending a maxim. From the flouting analysis showed that the most maxims are not observed are maxim of relevance, it occurred in fifteen times it was about 62, 5%. While the least maxims occurred was the maxim of manner. It was only occurred once time. From the finding, the writer assumed that the speakers dominantly were irrelevant. The second types of non-observance used by the characters were violating a maxim. Violating maxims occurred if the speakers deceived the hearer with certain purposes. According to the data analysis the writer found three data that categorized into violating maxims it was about 09,57%. Two data of Violation of quality maxim and one data of relevant maxim. The last category was suspending a maxim. Suspending a maxim was a case in which the speaker did not need opt out of observing the maxim because there was no expectation for the maxim to be observed. The writer found 5 data that included the suspending a maxim that was suspending the relevant and quantity maxim. From the explanation of each data above, the researcher assumed that the speakers did not observe the maxims with a certain purpose and used different ways. To make the readers easy to take the data, the researcher provides the table of the data findings below:

**Table 4.1**

**Result of the Finding**

No	Types of Non-observance Maxims	Types of maxims are not observe	Number of Excerpt Data	Amount	Percentage
1		QN	21 ,30, 17,06,16	5	16,12%
		QL	10,	1	03,12%

	FLOUTING OF MAXIMS	R	26,15,28,02,03, 12,01,13,14,18, 19, 20,25,22,09	15	48,37%
		M	23,4	2	06,45%
2	VIOLATING OF MAXIMS	QL	24,8	2	06,45%
		R	05	1	03.12%
3	SUSPENDING OF MAXIMS				
		QN	11,27,29	3	09,67%
		R	07,31	2	06,45%
TOTAL				31	100%

## 2. Discussion of Findings

The writer found 31 data of non-observance maxims in *The Death of Salesman* drama script. The data findings were analyzed based on the problem statements of the research. They were the types of non-observance maxims, the intentions of non-observance maxims, and the ways of occurrence in non-observance. Based on the research findings, the writer obtained some findings, they were as follows:

### 1. Types of Non-observance Maxims found in *The Death of a Salesman* drama script.

In the analysis of the types of non-observance maxims found in *The Death of a Salesman* drama script, the writer uses theory of cooperative principles. The

writer found three types of non-observance maxims. They were flouting of maxims, violating of maxims, and suspending of maxims. Flouting maxims that found in the research finding was dominated by the hearers. He/she flouted the maxims to make the hearers knew what about the speakers meant behind his/her utterance. The second types of non-observance maxim found in research finding was violating of maxims, speakers might violate the maxims to deceive the hearer with certain purpose. Violating of maxim that found in the research finding was conquered when the hearers disagree with the speakers. The last type of non-observance maxims found in *The Death of a Salesman* drama script was suspending of maxims. Suspending of maxims occurred when there was no expectation for the maxims to be observed, based on the data finding the writer assumed that speakers suspended the maxims to distract the hearer. He/she would not give maximum information to the speakers because of certain reason.

## **2. The intention of Non-observance Maxims found in *The Death of a Salesman* drama script.**

When someone did not observe the maxims in their communication, there was intention behind his/her utterance in order to make the hearer drew the conclusion from the speaker's utterance. Based on the data finding of this research, the writer found that dominant of the data attends to hearer to do something or not to do something. Besides, when speakers got angry they did not also observe the maxims, for example as found in data number 27. Willy did not observe the maxims by flouting a maxim of manner. He enjoyed the competition, he was disturbed by Linda who asked him about the competition. Willy got angry because Linda teased his concentration. The other data showed that the speakers did not observe the maxims to show his/her disagreement. According to the cooperative principles maxims, the maxims were not observed by the characters found in the data was all of four Gricean's maxims. They were maxims of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of relevance, and maxim of manner. The characters did not observe the maxim of quantity because they lacked to make the contribution as informative as required, sometimes he/she gave too much

information than required, but sometimes he/she gave less information than required so hearers did not get maximum information as they required.

The second maxim which was not observed was maxim of quality. Based on the data finding, the finding of non-observance maxim in quality maxim was the least than the other maxims. Speakers did not observe the maxims of quality when he/she said to be false. For example, the writer found non-observance maxims in flouting maxim of Quality in data number 10. Willy flouted the maxim of quality to tease his wife because she could not control their children activity. Willy used illusion “good work” to alert Lind. He hoped that Linda would be a good mother next time.

The third maxim that was also not observed in *The Death of a Salesman* drama script was maxim of relevance. To observe the maxim of relevance, speakers should “be relevance”, based on the data finding the writer found eleventh data that show of flouting and violating maxims. Speakers failed to observe the maxim of relevance because she/he responded the speaker’s question in many ways, for example he/she changed the topic of their dialogue with a certain purpose.

The last maxim found in the research finding was maxim of manner. Speakers failed to observe this maxim when he/ she created ambiguity, not orderly, not to be brief, and incomprehensible in expression.

## **E. RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Conclusion**

- a. The writer found the types of non-observance maxims found in *The Death of Salesman* drama script are flouting of maxims, violating of maxims, and suspending of maxims. The most non-observance maxims found was flouting of maxims. This was done by the characters because they have some intentions.
- b. The writer found that the speaker’s intentions of non-observance maxims used by the characters in *The Death of a Salesman* drama script were in the form of request, warning, affirming, threatening, suggesting, and ordering. The most frequency of

speakers' intentions that are involved were requesting. The speakers asked hearers to do something. All of types of Gricean's maxims were not observed by the Characters in *The Death of a Salesman* drama script. Those were maxim of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of relevance, and maxim of manner. Most characters did not observe the maxim of relevance and manner. It meant that the characters in *The Death of Salesman* was not relevance, created ambiguity, not orderly, and obscured in her/his expression.

## **2. Suggestion**

- a. For the English teacher. The writer hoped that this research would give the additional theory, material, and knowledge in teaching pragmatics about the non-observance maxims in cooperative principles.
- b. For the students of English Department. The writer hoped that this research would give contribution as the references for the students in conducting their research next time. The students could learn and analyzed the maxims from the different point of view.
- c. For the viewers. In conducting this research the writer hoped that the readers got inspiration and guidance for the other researchers to be more careful in doing their research. Maxims of cooperative principles was very interesting to be observed and learned deeply. Besides, the writer hoped that the readers were able to expand the study about the cooperative maxims; they could analyze, categorize, and classify the maxims as found in this research finding.

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