



The Study of Gricean Maxim Hedging in Noam Chomsky's Online Lectures

Studi Lindung Nilai Maksim Grice Dalam Kuliah Daring Noam Chomsky

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ABSTRAK

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi dan menjelaskan jenis-jenis prinsip kerja sama yang dibatasi oleh dua pembicara dalam sebuah kuliah umum di Perpustakaan Umum New York dan Akademi Sains Hongaria. Selama diskusi, pembicara idealnya mengujarkan informasi sesuai dengan kebenaran. Kondisi ini membuat penulis mengidentifikasi kemungkinan pembatasan maksim kerja sama dalam ujaran kedua pembicara ini. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Data yang digunakan adalah 25 ujaran atau dialog yang mengandung pembatasan maksim. Data dikumpulkan dengan mentranskripkan video menjadi teks. Data ini kemudian dianalisis dalam prosedur kerja yaitu 1) Identifikasi 2) Klasifikasi 3) Deskripsi dan Elaborasi. Penelitian ini menghasilkan beberapa kesimpulan. Pertama, ditemukan bahwa pembatasan maksim kategori maksim kualitas (13 kali) adalah pembatasan maksim yang paling sering dilakukan. Hal ini berarti pembicara merasa ragu akan keabsahan informasi yang diujarkan. Kedua, ditemukan bahwa pembatasan maksim relevansi dan pembatasan maksim sikap merupakan pembatasan maksim yang paling sedikit dilakukan (hanya 3 kali). Hal ini berarti pembicara berusaha untuk membuat diskusi tidak keluar dari topik pembahasan.

Kata Kunci: *lindung nilai maksim, kuliah daring, noam chomsky*

ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were to identify and describe the cooperative principles that were hedged by Noam Chomsky in his online lectures in New York Public Library (NPL) and in The Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA). During the discussions, Noam Chomsky ideally should utter truthful information. This condition led the writer to identify the possibilities of hedging maxims done by the lecturer in the discussion. The study used a qualitative descriptive method. The data of the study were 25 extract utterances that contained hedging maxims. These data were gained through a transcript of the discussion video. After collecting the data, they were then analyzed through analyzing procedures by identifying, classifying, describing, and elaborating the data. The study revealed two main points. Firstly, it was found that the hedging maxim of quality is the most recurrent hedging maxims (13 occurrences) done by Noam Chomsky. This meant that the lecturer felt doubtful regarding the truthfulness of their utterances. Secondly, it was found that hedging maxims of relevance and hedging maxims of manner were the rarest types of hedging maxims done (only 3 occurrences). It meant that during the discussion, the lecturer tried to maintain the topics of the discussion to be as relevant as possible.

Keywords: hedging maxim, online lectures, noam chomsky

1. INTRODUCTION

Pragmatics, as a part of language that deal with the practical use of language as a tool of communication, there is a way to recognize and to know how the speaker and the listener can reach an ideal communication through language-uses. The principles are known as "Cooperative Principles" by Grice. Grice (1975: 13) stated that people will have an engaged conversation if they fulfill the four maxims or principles. There are four maxims suggested: maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. When these maxims are not fulfilled, it is highly probable that the conversation between the speech interlocutors may not run ideally. Yet, in real life, people seem very often try to deviate these maxims either by purpose or not on purpose. The consequence of this maxim hedging would be that the people involved in the conversation may get misunderstanding of the information and it can result in fatal misunderstanding of the message sent by speakers.

The cooperative principles or the Gricean maxims are talk exchange between addresser and addressee (Grice, 1975). For cooperation to work properly, there are principles of cooperation that should be followed.

In this principle of cooperation, there are four maxims as follows; maxim of the quantity, the maxim for the quality, maxim of the relation and maxim of the manner. In addition, in the conversation, there will ever be a lack of communication. This happens due to the lack of understanding of the addresser and the addressee about the principle of conversation. Addresser does it because he/she thoughts that what he/she has said is uncertain and could endanger the addressee's face.

In many classrooms or courses, the process of teaching and learning are always mediated through language, so theories of communication, precisely expressed by Grice who has turned his attention to the practical use of language, could arguably be of an interest to all educators. The importance theories of communicative practice are applicable in applied language studies.

Pragmatics is applicable in all kinds of teaching environments, because teaching in classrooms or courses is an occupation which essentially uses language in a social context to promote the learning and teaching for use in social contexts. Language experts consider why communication often fails and

how it can be more successful; pragmatics is a central competence to teach students and to teach lecturers who mediate its use for learning inside the classroom. The best way to apply pragmatics in classroom or course interaction is through Gricean Maxims.

That is why, the researcher chooses to analyze the hedging of Gricean maxims in classroom interaction, which in this case, is an online course classroom interaction between lecturer and students.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a discipline that connects language and the users of the language of the speakers and the listeners (Yule, 1996: 10). From this definition, the essential function of pragmatics is for the speakers and the listeners to be able to communicate through their language and reach understanding between them. To achieve that ideal conversation, the hearer needs to find the intended meaning behind the speaker's utterance and the speaker also needs to convey the utterance in an understandable manner. Therefore, ideally, by studying pragmatics, people will be able to use language better and more appropriate based on the context.

The application of pragmatics can be applicable both for practical and theoretical use. Mey (2001) differentiates pragmatics into two ways or characteristics; the practical characteristics and the abstract characteristics. The practical characteristics placed pragmatics as a language function to solve communication-related problems in real circumstances. While the abstract characteristics of pragmatics tend to be more on the side of placing pragmatics as a mere "perspective" in language field of study.

The role of context is pragmatics study is crucial. Context itself according to Crystal (2003) is a term that refers to specific part of utterance or text near or adjacent to a unit which is the focus of attention. Meanwhile, according to Cutting (2000), context in pragmatics is background knowledge of the world, shared experience, beliefs, assumption, and knowledge that guide a speaker's use of language.

2.2. Cooperative Principles

In any communications, there must be a kind of rule applied to make a conversation successful. This rule will help both the speaker and the hearer in delivering their messages and conveying the meaning of their messages. The rule is famously known as Cooperative Principles (Grice, 1975: 13). In cooperative principles (CP), there are four principles called maxims. These maxims will complete each other in a conversation and explain how the speaker and the hearer should do the conversation to make both understand each other ideally.

Basically, this principle tells a speaker and a hearer to organize and use information, along with background knowledge of the world, to convey and understand more than what is said to communicate. There are four maxims in cooperative principles. They are maxim of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner.

2.3. Hedging Maxims

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), 'hedge' is a particle, word, or phrase that modifies the degree of membership of a noun phrase or predicate that is true or certain respect and complete than expected. By hedging the maxim, people tend to speak in simpler way to make the hearer understand about what the speaker means. Besides, it is done to avoid the implicature when they cannot fulfill the maxim in cooperative principle. Hedging also can be presumption that the speaker would to be in conversation even though sometimes they cannot fulfill those maxims. Made (2014: 40) wrote that Hedges of Maxim Quality is often used when speakers are not certain on the truth of his/her utterances.

Behnam & Khaliliaqdam (2012) found that hedging devices also used in Kurdish-speaking people discourse to indicate a lack of complete commitment to the truth of the proposition and a desire not to express the commitment categorically, or to lessen the impact of an utterance.

In this thesis, the writer sees the relation between hedging maxims and classroom interaction. Dagarin (2004), points that classroom interaction might be defined as a two-way process between the participants in the learning process, the lecturer influences the learners and vice versa. Also, Malamah & Thomas (1987) defined classroom interaction as practice that enhances the development of the two very important

language skill which are speaking and listening among the learners.

Dewa (2017) found through the analysis, that there are 17 total utterances that are qualified as hedging maxims in his study of hedging maxims in court trials. Rabab'ah & Rumman (2015) talked about hedges of King Abdullah II of Jordan speeches, as well as to examine the pragmatics functions of these devices.

Faris (2015) found that introductory phrases were the most frequently-used forms used to hedge and hedges function mostly to attenuate epistemic commitment in addressing questions.

Simpson & Marilyn (1983), states that classroom interaction is the model of verbal and non-verbal interaction and relationship that happen in classroom. Jixin, Liu & Li Xiaoting (2017) found that China English lecturer often use interpersonal meta function when teaching English in their classroom. Pica, Young & Doughty (1987) found that classroom interaction creates the opportunity to negotiate, to provide students with increased chances for input comprehension, and to acquire target discourse conventions and practice higher-level academic communicative skills. Tajik & Ramezani (2018) found that male lecturer uses hedges more often than female lecturer with a difference in the female corpus is 35,54 compared to 41,93 in male lecturer corpus.

Maxim hedging is used not only to make the speaker to be aware of maxim. but also, to be aware that the hearer judges them to be cooperative in talking. That guides people to contribute in conversation. In short, when we talk, we are not only conveying the meaning, but also tell each other how informative, well founded, relevant, and perspicuous these messages are, like in Grundy (2000) states that "speakers frequently use highly grammaticalized hedges and intensifiers to inform their addresses of the extent to which they are abiding by the maxims. These hedges and intensifiers show that the guiding principles for talk suggested by Grice really do exist and that speakers orient reflexively to these principles as they communicate (2000)."

Like Grundy, Yule (1996) also states that hedging maxim is a good sign or indication that speaker is not only aware about maxim, but also the speaker shows that they want to observe them, like speaker thinks

that the hearer judges him to be cooperative in conversation. In this study, the writer uses the theories of Grundy (2000) and Brown and Levinson (1987) about hedging maxim, as follows:

1. Quality Hedges

Quality hedges suggest that the speaker does not take full responsibility for the truth of his utterance. For example:

- There is some evidence to the effect that...
- To the best of my recollection
- I Think...
- I Believe...
- I Assume...

(Brown and Levinson 1987)

2. Quantity Hedges

Quantity hedges give indications that not much information is provided as might be expected:

- roughly
- more or less
- approximately
- give or take a few
- or so
- I should think

3. Relevance Hedges

Relevance hedge is used to soften the conversation for changing topic which is not relevant with the previous topic. This hedge marks the change and apologies for it:

- By the way...
- Oh I know...
- Anyway...
- Alright, now...

(Brown and Levinson, 1987)

4. Manner Hedges

Brown & Levinson (1987) also put some examples of maxims of manner hedges. It has purpose to make the utterances become clearer and easier to understand for the hearer. Some examples are such as below:

- to be succinct...
- in a nutshell...
- not to beat about the bush...
- you see...
- what I meant was...
- more clearly...
- to put it simply...
- now, to be clear, I want...

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1. Research Design

Content-analysis method will be used as the design of this current study. This type of methodology is aimed to explain the hedging maxims phenomenon in the study descriptively and qualitatively. Gay (2012) stated that qualitative research is the collection, analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive narrative and visual data to gain insights into a particular phenomenon of interest, but the data gained from interview manuscripts, field note, video recording, and observation checklist.

3.2. Research Instrument

The writer will use observation as the research instrument. The researcher will pay attention to the activities from the beginning to the end of the classroom session. The writer will also use the video recording of the lecture session as the primary data to be observed.

3.3. Data Analysis

In this part, the writer will use a content-analysis method and pragmatic approach. This study is classified as qualitative approach because the data are in form of words or sentences. This method of analyzing data is the process of systematically searching and arranging the collected data. The writer will analyze the data in accordance with the problems and the objectives of the study.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Findings

Following the research questions, the findings are divided into two groups; (1) the total amounts of maxim-hedging that occur in Noam Chomsky's online lectures and (2) the analysis of each Noam Chomsky's utterances that showcase acts of maxim-hedging.

1. Hedging Maxim of Quality

Using maxim hedging of quality means that the speaker is not sure whether the information that he/she has is true or not. Thus, he/she adds an additional phrase to aware the hearer that he/she will not take any responsibilities of the information. Thus, the hearer cannot take it as truthful information. The use of hedging maxim of quality can be seen in below extract. Extract I:

Noam Chomsky: **But I think** that's actually traditional. One of the paradoxes of neoliberalism is that it's not new and it's not liberal.

2. Hedging Maxim of Quantity

In using maxim of quantity, the speaker is aware that the information he/she has is limited. Thus, he/she hedges his/her utterance to mark that he does not have the required information about the topic being talked about. The use of hedging maxim of quality can be seen in the extract below: Extract 14:

Noam Chomsky: And the Melians gave them a Kantian argument that you should never treat human beings to an end, you should treat them as an ends in themselves. **Not exactly but this.**

3. Hedging Maxim of Relevance

In maxim hedging of relevance, the speaker tries to connect and relate his/her utterance to be fit to be said. The several data below explain several relevance hedges.: Extract 20:

Noam Chomsky: Later in the century a steel industry blocking superior British steel, and right up to the present, **as I've mentioned**, with high tech.

4. Hedging Maxim of Manner

In using maxim hedging of manner, the speaker realizes that his/her utterances may be unclear to the conversation, so he/she adds some expressions to make the hearer aware about it. This kind of maxim hedging also functions as an awareness that the speaker does not want to give a confusing utterance to the hearer. There are several examples below. Extract 23:

Noam Chomsky: **Let me add to this just to clarify** something. Actually, I will go further about Europe

4.2. Discussion

1. Types of Gricean Maxims Being Hedged by Noam Chomsky

The result showed that the first types of questions that Based on the findings of the research, the first type of Gricean Maxim hedged by Noam Chomsky is Maxim Quality. When a speaker hedges a maxim through quality hedge, he or she is not taking a full responsibility for the truth of his utterances (Grundy, 2000: Brown and Levinson, 1990). The research findings show that in his online lectures, Noam Chomsky did hedge the maxim quality by uttering

phrases such as "I think....", "As you know..." "I believe....", "I presume....", etc.

The second type of Gricean Maxim hedged by Noam Chomsky is Maxim Quantity. A quantity hedge implies that what the speaker says is merely his or her opinion and therefore becomes not so precise information (Grundy, 2000). In using maxim of quantity, the speaker is aware that the information he/she has is limited. Thus, he/she hedges his/her utterance to mark that he does not have the required information about the topic being talked about. It was found from the research that in his online lectures, Noam Chomsky did an act of hedging maxim quality numerous times. This can be seen based on the Noam Chomsky's usage of phrases such as "more or less...", "basically...", etc.

The third type of Gricean Maxim hedged by Noam Chomsky in his online lecture is Maxim of Relevance. In hedging the maxim of relevance, the speaker tries to connect and relate his/her utterance to be fit to be said. The act of hedging maxim of relevance can be considered to mark a topic change and perhaps apologizes for it. Based on the findings, it can be concurred that Noam Chomsky did several acts of hedging maxim of relevance. This is proven from Noam Chomsky's usage of phrases such as "as I've mentioned....", "by the way....", etc.

The fourth and the last type of Gricean Maxim hedged by Noam Chomsky in his online lecture is Maxim of Manner. In using maxim hedging of manner, the speaker realizes that his/her utterances may be unclear to the conversation, so he/she adds some expressions to make the hearer aware about it. This kind of maxim hedging also functions as an awareness that the speaker does not want to give a confusing utterance to the hearer. Hedging the maxim of manner also indicates an obscurity of the speaker's utterance. It was found from the research that Noam Chomsky did an act of hedging maxim of manner. This can be seen from the usage of phrase such as "let me clarify...", "what I mean is...", "to put it as succinctly as I can...", etc.

2. Why Maxim-Hedging Occur in Noam Chomsky's Online Lecture

The research findings show that in Noam Chomsky's online lecture, Noam Chomsky hedged Gricean maxims for most of the time. Thus, it could be inferred that the online lecture session did not happen as ideal

as it should have been. This is because the lecturer still hedged the maxims and by hedging the maxims, it could be meant that the lecturer was not able to utter their information as ideal as possible. This could create the possibilities of misunderstandings that the audience might get during the discussion.

As it has been assumed before, misinformation or misunderstandings in discussion should not have happened because in discussion, the information uttered are needed to be as clear and as truth as possible. Thus, it can be concurred that the primary reasons on why Noam Chomsky most of the time hedged the maxims is to avoid showing his doubts or cluelessness regarding the information he wanted to convey.

3. The Most Frequent Maxim Being Hedged in Noam Chomsky's Online Lecture

During the discussion, it was found that hedging maxim of quality is the most frequently used type of hedging maxim by Noam Chomsky. It could be inferred that most of the time, the lecturer felt doubtful regarding the truthfulness of their utterances because maxim of quality dealt with how true the utterances that were conveyed and by hedging this type of maxim.

4. The Writer's Personal Argumentation and Experience Regarding the Phenomenon of Gricean Maxim-Hedging in His Daily Lives

The writer lives in Indonesia, a country that has a culture that prefers to speak indirectly instead of directly. This is because Indonesian culture gives highest regard to politeness toward each other, primarily toward elder people. As a university student, the writer himself observes the hedging phenomenon happens almost all the time particularly in campus environment.

In a communication between lecturer and students, the students are more likely to hedge maxim of manner to avoid a possible direct conflict or confrontation. On the other hand, the writer observes that the lecturers themselves often did acts of hedging maxim of quantity and relevance in lecturing sessions. Regarding the hedging of maxim quantity, the writer observes that many times, lecturers do not explain enough information in explaining a concept toward students. While regarding the hedging of maxim of relevance, the writer also observes that while in a

lecturing session, lecturers oftentimes not focused on the relevant topics and instead talking about irrelevant personal topics.

Real examples of daily maxim-hedging that the writer sees in his daily environments with classmates: I think it is better to wear black outfit to campus (fiqah) (quality hedge), by the way, have you ever heard about the money? (subhan) (relevance hedge), you write some content below the table (fiqa) (quantity hedge), what I mean is you must read a lot of references (fiqa) (manner hedge).

To conclude, the writer observes many acts of maxim-hedging in his daily lives as a university student. The writer postulates that the Indonesian culture of prioritizing indirectness instead of directness may influence these many occurrences of maxim-hedging.

5. Implications of Maxims Toward English-Teaching

During the discussion, it was found that hedging maxim of quality is the most frequently used type of hedging maxim by Noam Chomsky. It could be inferred that most of the time, the lecturer felt doubtful regarding the truthfulness of their utterances because maxim of quality dealt with how true the utterances that were conveyed and by hedging this type of maxim.

5. CONCLUSION

From the analysis of hedging maxims found in the data, some conclusions can be drawn. It was found that throughout the discussion, the lecturer Noam Chomsky did hedge the maxims for most of the time. Thus, it could be inferred that the discussion did not happen as ideal as it should have been. This is because the lecturer still hedged the maxims and by hedging the maxims, it could be meant that the lecturer was not able to utter their information as ideal as possible. This could create the possibilities of misunderstandings that the audience might get during the discussion. As it has been assumed before, misinformation or misunderstandings in discussion should not have happened because in discussion, the information uttered are needed to be as clear as possible and as truth as possible.

After analyzing and discussing the hedging maxims in Noam Chomsky's online lecture session, the writer could conclude that during the discussion, it was

found that hedging maxim of quality is the most frequently used type of hedging maxim by Noam Chomsky. It could be inferred that most of the time, the lecturer felt doubtful regarding the truthfulness of their utterances because maxim of quality dealt with how true the utterances that were conveyed and by hedging this type of maxim. It was also found in the study that hedging maxim of relevance and hedging maxim of manner were the least occurred types of hedging maxims during the discussion. From this, it could be inferred that the speakers did try to manage the utterances or the information in the discussion to be as relevant as possible with the topic of discussion.

In the end of the conclusion of this present study, the writer hopes that anyone who studies hedging maxims could get a better and clearer understanding of hedging maxims phenomenon in an academic or in intellectual discussion.

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