

**Some Cases of Flouted Maxims by Some Characters' Communication Style in  
*Eat Pray Love***

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Abstract

The way of communication can affect the rational and cooperative communication. The speaker and the hearer (interlocutors) in talk exchange may disobey the maxims of quantity, quality, manner, and relevant. The result is the cooperative principles flouted in communication. Such as in *Eat Pray Love*, involves three countries which have different communication style found some flouted maxims. They are; flouted maxims of quantity, quality, manner, and relevant. The communication style affects the way of speaking in each country. For instance, the interlocutors' response is redundant, unclear, and out of the point in communication.

**A. Introduction**

Communication can be described as an activity in which, for the most part, two or more people take turns at speaking (Yule, 2010:128). This kind of activity involves a particular speaker and hearer. Meanwhile, Communication is a process that involves an exchange of information, thoughts, ideas, questions are asked and answered, news and emotions. Thus, communication is important to keep the personal relationship. To keep the personal relationship, communication must have consideration to be successful in talk exchange; for instance, proper communication between two people must be effectively so particularly the purpose of communication achieved.

Cooperative principle describes how the effective communication in conversation is achieved in common social situation. This means, the two people in conversation should have cooperation in delivering information, thoughts, ideas,

questions are asked and answered, etc. otherwise, lacking cooperation in communication may have counterproductive, having an effect which is opposite to the one which is intended or wanted. According to Grice in May, he considered communication to be both rational and cooperative; he also claimed that the inferential intention-recognition is governed by a cooperative principle and maxims of quality, quantity, relation, and manner (2009:106).

There are some affectations of the culture in communication that happen in this movie. The cultures are like Bali in Indonesia, India, and Italy. Besides, this movie also has an attractive conversation in each country. Some of the conversations between the main character and supported characters fail to have the principle maxims. The failure in conversation can be found in term of flouting conversations between the main character and the supported characters that occur in each country. Some flouting maxims in the dialogues are to make the way of the story more attractive and interesting. This means, the principle maxims are flouted. The flouted maxims appear in this movie because there are some differences in the way of communication which is influenced by the existence of cultural variations in communication. Therefore, *Eat Pray Love* is acceptable movie to be analyzed in the form of flouted maxims.

## **B. Cooperative principle**

A basic underlying assumption we make when we speak to one another is that we are trying to cooperate with one another to construct meaningful conversations. For having successful communication, according to the philosopher H. P. Grice we must assume that both people in a conversation are cooperating; this assumption is known as the Cooperative Principle. As stated by H. P. Grice in Yule: make your

conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purposes or direction of talk exchange in which you are engaged (Yule, 1996:37).

Grice in (Mey, 1993:65) states cooperative principle consists of four sub principle, or maxims. They are:

**1. The maxim of quantity:**

- a. Make your contribution as informative as is required.
- b. Do not make your contribution more informative than required.

For instance:

X : John put on his raincoat, picked up his umbrella from the table near the door, turned off the lights, put out the cat, got ready for his ten-minute walk to the bus-stop

Y : John went out.

The utterance in X contributes more informative than is required. The content is too long. Therefore, to get the same concept the sentence in Y is commonly used.

**2. The maxim of quality:**

- a. Do not say what you believe to be false.
- b. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

The example can be seen in the following conversation:

X : How many maxims are in Grice cooperative principle?

Y : 4 maxims

X : What are they?

Y : Maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner.

The conversation above explains that X responses is true that there 4 maxims in Grice cooperative principle. It can be proved by reading the Grice book.

Truthful and evidence are needed to fulfill this cooperative principle

### **3. The maxims of relation:**

- a. Make your contribution relevant.

The example of relevance can be seen in the conversation below:

A: There is somebody at the door

B: I'm in the bath. (Joan Cutting , 2002:36)

Based on the example above, the speakers should give relevance contribution in conversation. The relevance of B response with A response is not the utterance meaning. But the relevant is in the utterance implication. So in this case as long as the utterance is still related to what is being talked about is the relevance of the conversation.

### **4. The maxim of manner:**

Be perspicuous, and specifically:

- a. Avoid obscurity.
- b. Avoid ambiguity.
- c. Be brief.
- d. Be orderly (this means that if time relations are not explicitly expressed, events should be related in the order in which they occur).

The example of manner can be observed in the conversation below:

A: Let's stop and get something to eat.

B: Okey, but not M-C-D-O-N-A-L-D-S.

The conversation above, the speaker B is aware in spelling Mc. Donals. The speaker may have strong opinion to not eat in Mc. Donals. To make it clear the speaker try to spell it clearly.

### C. Flouting maxims

According to Grice (1989:30), there are four kinds of the flouting maxims that are generated as follow:

#### 1. The flouting maxim of quality

Flouts which exploit the maxim of Quality occur when the speaker says something which is blatantly untrue or for which he or she lacks adequate evidence.

Study the following example in the conversation below:

Ann: Jim, do you know where the Big Ben Clock tower is?  
Jim : It's in Hong Kong

The talk exchange above describes that Jim does not contribute what he believes to be false and to be unsubstantiated. This means, Jim's response is not really truthful because he may not be able to give the proof to Ann.

#### 2. The flouting maxim of quantity

A flout of the maxim of Quantity occurs when a speaker blatantly gives more or less information that the situation requires. The example is in the conversation below:

A: What can you tell me about Catherine's ability to concentrate on a task?  
B: Catherine is a butterfly flitting from flower to flower.

The conversation in above gives understanding that the talk exchange is not fulfilled the quantity maxim. In the conversation B tells more than expected and B invites a metaphorical interpretation. So the participant is confused because the answer is confusing.

#### 3. The flouting maxim of relation

Thomas (1995:70) states the maxim of Relation is exploited by making a response or observation which is very obviously irrelevant to the topic in hand "by abruptly changing the subject or by overtly failing to address the other person's goal in asking a question". Study the following conversation:

A: What on earth has happened to the roast beef?

B: The dog is looking very happy.

The conversation in above can be seen that the talk exchange is not fulfilled the maxim of relevance. B's response is not connected or irrelevance with the question uttered. A simply want to know the answer dealing with the discussion but B's answer moves or runs of the track.

#### 4. The flouting maxim of manner

The maxim of Manner is exploited by making obscurity expression, a response which is unclear; this maxim is prolixity, using too many words, therefore boring and difficult to read or listen to. So that the hearer cannot catch what the speaker means. The example is like in the conversation below:

A: What are you baking?

B: Be I are tea aitch dee ay wye see ay kay ee.

A: I hear you went to the opera last night; how was the lead singer?

B: The singer produced a series of sounds corresponding closely to the score of an aria from "Rigoletto."

Both conversations in above are not fulfilled the maxim of manner. The talk exchange that conversation blatantly tells obscurity answer that makes the participant does not understand the meaning at all. Besides, the talk exchange has prolixity in flouting the maxim of manner.

#### **D. Language, Culture and Communication**

Language and culture are inseparable in the way of communication. It is how people from differing cultural backgrounds communicate, in similar and different ways among themselves, and how they endeavor to communication cross cultures. People coming from different countries may not find comfort in communicating or coordinating easily with one another. When people from different countries come together, their way of thinking varies. Some might be shy to communicate, while others open for communication. Owing to the difference in their cultural backgrounds, there is a difference in their upbringing, due to which there is a difference in their views and beliefs. Even the communication etiquette differs across the different countries, thus making it difficult for starting communication.

Singer (in Martin, 2010:87) defines culture is as a pattern of learned, group-related perception including both verbal and nonverbal language attitudes, values, belief system, disbelief systems, and behavior. Language and culture are like aspects of communication which is interrelated each other. The aspects of communication are verbal language and nonverbal language. Verbal communication includes sounds, words, language and speaking. Language is said to have originated from sounds and gestures. Non-verbal communication involves physical ways of communication, like, tone of the voice, touch, smell and body motion. Creative and aesthetic non-verbal communication includes singing, music, dancing and sculpturing. Symbols and sign language are also included in non-verbal communication.

Every country has habits and distinct cultural elements that make it unique. For instance, the cross cultural communication is in the movie Eat Pray Love which involves Balinese culture, India culture, and Italian culture. The cultural

communication or the way of speaking of Indonesian (Balinese) is commonly indirect or indirect communicators. This means they do not always say what they mean. It is up to the listener to read between the lines or pay attention to gestures and body language to get the real message.

Generally speaking Indonesians' speak quietly and with a subdued tone. Loud people would come across as slightly aggressive. In Indonesia most of people spend time through communication to build a strong relationship. Dealing with someone face-to-face is the only effective way of cooperation in speaking.

The communication style in India will be good if there is certain distance between you and the person to whom you are speaking. Most Indians make direct eye contact during conversation; however, a woman from traditional or rural background may speak to you from behind the veil of her sari. It is not acceptable to touch someone during conversation unless you know the person well. For example, an older person could take offence if you touch him or her because you are not a Hindu or, if you are a man, a woman would feel very uncomfortable and think you are making a pass at her.

Italian culture also has differences in the way of communication. Italians are quite famous for being effusive talkers that use hand gestures to underline most statements. As a rule, Italians tend to communicate a great deal. By communication we mean either speech or gesture, but in Italy one does not preclude the other; to the contrary, they complement each other. In the workplace and in daily life, Italians augment verbal communication by pronounced gesturing and frequent facial expressions in order to add liveliness to speech. While they speak to someone to

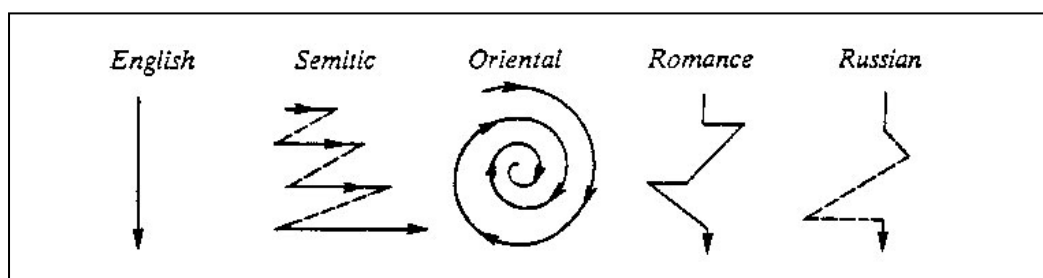


explain or argue a point, Italians have a tendency to brush against or touch the other person (e.g., on the shoulder or the arm). In this way, the latter feels more comfortable and may better pay attention to the contents of the conversation.

Although in some respects men use physical contact more frequently than women, the fact remains that it is a dramatic gesture, but a positive one. In addition to hand gestures, Southern Italians also have another widespread custom: speaking loudly. Someone unfamiliar with Italians in conversation may see a Southerner speaking and mistakenly assume they are yelling or angry while, in truth, they are just speaking in their regular tone of voice.

Dealing with this discussion, philosophically Kaplan (1966:11) points out those cultural differences in the nature of rhetoric can affect the way of communication because rhetoric is mode of thinking or a mode of finding all available means for the achievement of a designated end. In his finding, Kaplan presents some languages that written by foreign students in the form of paragraph are not dominantly linear in its development. Some of their paragraphs seem out of focus in the topic. Their papers are out of focus because they are employing arhetoric and a sequence of thought which violate the native reader expectation. Besides, they have lack organization or lack cohesion in combining the sentences in paragraph. Kaplan (1966:21) has drawn the pattern of languages in the following figure:

Figure 1. The pattern of languages



The figure 1 describes the English paragraph tends to follow a direct line of development. The Oriental paragraph tends to develop thought in a more circular pattern. Romance languages and Russian tend to prize digressions, while Semitic paragraphs often value parallel lines in development.

In line with the pattern of language in the figure 1, can be elaborated in the following description:

- ❖ **English** explains that the English communication is direct, linear, and doesn't digress or run off the track/topic. Meanwhile, the English language is also straight to the point and has an emphasis on organization and conciseness.
- ❖ **Semitic such as** Arabic or Hebrew thoughts is expressed in a series of parallel ideas, both positive and negative and coordination is valued over subordination.
- ❖ **Oriental** is like languages of Asia describes that the communication is indirect and there is circumlocution expression. A topic is not addressed head on, but is viewed from various perspectives, working around and around the point. Asian use it because of various reasons e.g. 'loss of face', politeness and other reasons. Kaplan (1966:7) states that the development of the paragraph is turning and turning in a widening gyre.
- ❖ **Romance** such as French, Italian, Romanian and Spanish describes that the Romance communication often digresses because in Romance communication often detours aren't odd and are deliberate. These detours are evidence of class, not of poor language faculty. It is fine to introduce extraneous material, which adds to the richness of the communication.

- ❖ **Russian is almost same with** Romance languages, Russian communication is often digressive. The digression may include a series of parallel ideas. It is often circuitous and discursive. But it's often not easy to connect these ideas.

### **E. Thematic synopsis of Eat Pray Love**

Eat Pray Love is American drama in 2010 based on the novel Eat, Pray, Love by Elizabeth Gilbert. The location of this movie involves New York, Napoli (Italia), Pataudi (India), and Bali (Indonesia).

The section on Italy is mouthwatering - savoring a simple Italian meal with wine and tiramisu for dessert on her first day in Rome, roaming around the streets with frequent cappuccino and gelato refreshment breaks, and joining an Italian language class for no practical reason but simply to roll the sounds over her tongue and revel in the texture of the mellifluous language.

These four months are spent in a Guru's ashram, a spiritual hermitage near Mumbai India. Having grown up in a non-religious family, she approaches the road to spiritual enlightenment with a fair degree of skepticism. In Bali, Elizabeth interacts with a few local Balinese and her impetuous involvement in their personal lives is quirky and amusing. The book then meanders into Elizabeth's romantic dalliance with a Brazilian and ends with her finding true love.

### **F. Findings**

The findings indicate there are some flouted maxims influenced by the interlocutors' communication style in each country. The below excerpt from the movie is an example of flouted maxims between Elizabeth and other supported characters.

1. In Bali (Indonesia), The flouted maxims can be seen in the conversation between Elizabeth and Ketut

- ❖ Liz : .... I want to discuss my relationship.
- Ketut : You are a world traveler....
- Ketut : you will live a long time, have many friends, many experiences.  
You will have two marriages. One long, one short.
- Liz : Am I in the long one or the short one?
- Ketut : Also, you will lose all your money. I think in next six to ten months. Don't worry, you will get it all back again....
- Ketut : You will come back to Bali and live here for three or four months and teach me English.....

From the conversation above, it can be described that almost all maxims are not fulfilled. Liz in the conversation wants to know about her relationship. She needs to have simple and clear answer from Ketut but he forecasts through her palm up with long answer. Ketut does not answer clearly but redundant, even he tells her something embittering. Thus, the conversation cannot fulfill the maxims of quantity. Beside the Ketut prediction cannot be proved yet so it doesn't fulfill the maxims of quality. In this case, less cooperative in conversation is because of cultural difference. Ketut is a Balinese who has a circumlocution or indirect expression of saying something, because of various reasons e.g. 'loss of face', politeness and other reasons. On the other hand, Elizabeth is an American whose language is straight to the point and has an emphasis on organization and conciseness. So simply she does not straggle or move the track of the conversation.

On another case when Elizabeth back to Bali again, There are many flouted maxims in her conversation with Ketut. The selection is like below:

- ❖ Liz : ....(take something in a bag) You gave me this....oke
- Ketut : (remembering) You you I remember you
- Liz : Ohh good
- Ketut : You a girl from New York. You come back. You Liz you you you

Liz : Me me me  
Ketut : so long ago we meet. Last time you had much too worry, too much sorrow, last time you look like sad old woman, now you're pretty.

Both speakers in the above conversation are flouting the maxims of quantity.

Both of them communicate redundantly by uttering "you" and "me" many times.

2. In Napoli (Italia), The flouted maxims can be seen in the conversation below:

❖ Liz : ...Luca, what time did you put the turkey in?  
Luca : (all innocence) it's still defrosting.

The conversation above Luca gives short answer to the Eliz's question. Meanwhile, the answer is not expected by Eliz. So the Luca's answer is flouted maxim of quality because the maxim of quality is not fulfilled. On the other hand, Luca implies that the turkey is not ready yet to be served. The next is also one of the flouted maxim in the conversation between Ruffina and Sofi

❖ Ruffina : How's she going to find another husband on the other side of the world?  
❖ Sofi : If a man said I'm going to travel for a year, meet wonderful people, have great adventures and search for meaning.....  
❖ Ruffina : (interrupting) But she's not a man.

In the above exchange, the Sofi's response is going off the point of conversation. Sofi makes assumption by giving allusion sentence. But Sofi's response is redundant. The statement is more than needed to response the Ruffina's statement. A good reason is that Sofi probably is being little bit annoyed with Ruffina, so she gives a little bit annoying protest to the question. Therefore, Sofi flouts the maxim of quantity.

3. In Mumbay (India), the flouted maxims can be seen in the following conversation between Elizabeth and Corella:

- ❖ Liz : (shaking hand) Hi, nice to meet you?
- Corella : (just laughing but no “ I AM IN SILENCE”)
- Liz : Where’d you get that button?
- Swami Shivananda : They sell them at the bookstore.
- Liz : I need to get one. That is exactly what I need.  
I’ve always been little Miss Chatty Kathy according to my sixth grade teacher, and it’s time to change it up. I don’t want to waste the greatest spiritual opportunity.....See? I’m rambling now....

Elizabet goes to India to have spiritual enlightenment with a fair degree of skepticism. She wants to learn how to be closer to the God. In India, she meets with Corella, a silent girl. When having conversation with her, she doesn’t say anything. Because she believes that silence is a wonderful spiritual practice but actually she can speak. In conversation Corella’s response is not sufficient to have effective communication. Meanwhile, Liz also gives more response than is required by Swani. Liz’s response is redundant. Therefore both responses flout the maxim of quantity.

### **G. Conclusion**

The description above reveals that some cases in communication are not always smoothly communicated. The interlocutor in talk exchange may disobey the maxims of principle such as flout the maxims of quantity, quality, manner, and relevant. These flouting maxims affected by some communication styles of each country in Eat Pay Love. Such as in Indonesia the communication style is indirect, in Italy the communication style usually digress or out of the point, and in India has direct eye contact during conversation.

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