

Flouting And Hedging Maxims In The Democratic Presidential Candidates Debate Between Barack Obama And Hillary Clinton

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Abstrak

Artikel ini memfokuskan pada pelanggaran maksim, penggunaan hedges dan juga pembuktian bahwa kedua fenomena tersebut terjadi di dalam suatu debat politik. Data yang digunakan dalam artikel ini adalah debat politik pencalonan presiden dari partai Demokrat. Data yang telah terkumpul dianalisis secara kualitatif, dimana pelanggaran maksim dianalisis dengan menggunakan teori yang dikemukakan oleh Grice. Ada 4 jenis pelanggaran maksim dalam prinsip kerjasama yaitu, pelanggaran maksim kualitas, kuantitas, relevan dan sikap. Penggunaan hedges yang berkorelasi dengan maksim dalam prinsip kerjasama dianalisis dengan menggunakan teori yang dikemukakan oleh Brown dan Levinson. Ada 4 jenis hedges yang berkorelasi dengan maksim yaitu, hedges kualitas, kuantitas, relevan dan sikap.

Studi ini menemukan bahwa hedges kualitas merupakan hedges yang paling sering digunakan di dalam debat ini. Hedges kualitas digunakan ketika pembicara tidak sepenuhnya bertanggung jawab atas kebenaran dari ucapan mereka. Dalam hal pelanggaran maksim, di dalam debate ini pelanggaran maksim kuantitas paling banyak ditemukan karena para pembicara memberikan informasi yang lebih atau kurang dari seharusnya. Implikasi yang ditemukan adalah sebagai hasil dari terjadinya pelanggaran maksim.

Kata kunci: maksim, pelanggaran maksim, hedges maksim

I. INTRODUCTION

In conducting the cooperative principle, both speaker and hearer are expected to cooperate each other by following each maxim however, not all people are able to obey the maxims. People sometimes make some mistakes that out of the rule of the maxim itself, which are called as flouting maxims. People flout the maxims of cooperative principle when they give the information or say something that out of the concepts of cooperative principle maxims. Some people flout the maxim when they are not able to follow the maxim, when they begin to provide some statements without any proof or facts.

When people communicate with each other, they not only deliver the message, but also want to show how informative, relevant and understandable the messages are. The speakers usually use the high grammatical hedges,

which are proposed by Brown and Levinson (1990:164). They use hedge maxim while they do not want to be committed or take responsible with the content of the utterance. Hedges are used by speakers in order to communicate more precisely in the degree of accuracy and truth in estimation.

By following this principle both speaker and hearer will be understand each other, the hearer will be able to know what is speaker intention and so does the speaker will be able to know what the hearer wants to hear. This principle will ensure that the communication will go smoothly and the information is attested. However while following it, people also tend to flout maxim and also tend to use high grammatical hedges. Most of the flouting and hedging of maxim are only found in the conversation, talkshow or other communications in the informal situation. None of it found it found in the debate. Therefore, this study will reveal that the phenomenon not only occurs in the informal communication like conversation or chatting, but also occurs in the debate in which debate is a two ways communication in the formal situation.

This study focuses on kinds of maxims, which are flouting and hedging by using Grice's theory and Brown and Levinson to analyze the data. This study analyzes Flouting and Hedging Maxims in The Presidential Candidate Debate between Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. There are three problems occurred:

- What maxims are flouted in the Democratic Presidential Candidates Debate?
- What hedges are used related to the Grice's maxims in the Democratic Presidential Candidates Debate?
- Why the maxims are flouted and hedged in the Democratic Presidential Candidates Debate?

The aims of this study are:

To find out kinds of maxims, which are flouted in the Democratic Presidential Candidates Debate, to identify what hedges that is used, which is indicating to the Grice's maxims in the Democratic Presidential Candidates Debate, to prove that flouting and hedging maxims also occur in the debate based on the

theory of Cooperative Principle by Grice (1975) and Brown and Levinson (1990).

II. MATERIALS AND METHOD

The data used in this article is the script of Democratic Presidential Candidates Debate which is downloaded from www.nbcnews.com. The data are collected by using documentary method which is assisted by some techniques, such as reading the script and note taking the relevant data. afterwards, the collected data are qualitatively and descriptively analyzed which is also assisted by some techniques, such as classifying, in which the collected data are classified into two main groups based on whether it is flouting the maxim or hedging the maxim, eliminating in which the utterances that uttered by the moderator are not included in the analysis. In analyzing flouting maxims, the implicatures found are also analyzed, in analyzing hedges maxim theory which is proposed by Brown and Levinson (1990) is used as a supporting theory.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Summary of Democratic Presidential Candidates Debate

This Democratic Presidential Candidates Debate on April, 16th 2008 was sponsored by ABC News. In this debate, there were several topics discussed such as civil rights, education, energy and oil, gun control, principles and values, social security, tax reform and war and peace.

3.2 Analysis of Hedging Maxim

3.2.1 Manner Hedges

OBAMA: *But let me be very clear about what I meant because it's something that I've said in public. It's something that I've said on television, which is that people are going through very difficult times right now.*"

In data above, it could be seen that Obama used Manner hedge in his utterance by saying *But let me be very clear*. It happened when the narrator Gibson asked Obama about his last statement 10 days ago in California that he was misspoke at that time. He said that people who have had tough economic in Pennsylvania became antipathy to rich or wealthy people who were not like them. Now, Obama wanted to make his last statement clearer about what actually he meant by using Manner hedge. Based on <http://abcnews.go.com/>,

he wanted to make it clear because many people were offended and feel like they were humiliated by Obama's words at that time. Manner hedge has a function to avoid the misunderstanding between speakers and hearers. Therefore, he used hedges to make his statement softer and to be more polite.

3.2.2 Quantity Hedges

CLINTON: Well, I think we have to beat John McCain, and I have every reason to believe we're going to have a Democratic president and it's going to be either Barack or me. And we're going to make that happen. And what is important is that we understand exactly the challenges facing us in order to defeat Senator McCain ...

STEPHANOPOULOS: But the question is: Do you think Senator Obama can do that? Can he win?

In data 2, it can be seen that Senator Clinton used quantity hedge *well* in the beginning of her answer. It happened when Stephanopoulos asked her that can Senator Obama can beat John McCain or not. At that time John McCain was the Senator from Arizona who was also as the Republican presidential nominee in the 2008 United States presidential election and both Clinton and Obama were the candidates from Democratic Party. Quantity hedge which was used by Senator Clinton indicated that she gave a warning to Stephanopoulos that may the information that is provided not as much as it was expected by the hearer. As the data above, Senator Clinton gave the answer less than it was expected even she did not answer it at all. It can be proved that after she answered the question from Stephanopoulos, he offered the same question *But the question is: Do you think Senator Obama can do that? Can he win* which meant that Senator Clinton gave the information less than it was expected.

3.2.3 Quality Hedges

STEPHANOPOULOS: But the question is: Do you think Senator Obama can do that? Can he win?

CLINTON: Yes, yes, yes. Now, I think that I can do a better job.

From the data above it can be seen that Senator Clinton in her answer used quality hedges *I think*. It happened when Stephanopoulos asked her that could Senator Obama defeat John McCain or not and she answered it by saying yes and she thought that she could do a better job than Senator Obama does. The use of hedge *I think* in Senator Clinton's answer indicated that she did not take full responsibility for the truth in her utterance, which meant that

she might say that she can do better job than Obama does at that time to make or to influence people to vote for her, but as she used quality hedge, she at that time did not take a responsibility that if she was chosen as a president she will do her job better than Senator Obama or not.

3.3 Analysis of Flouting Maxims

3.3.1 Flouting Maxim of Manner and Quality

GIBSON: *But do you still favor the registration of guns? Do you still favor the licensing of guns? And in 1996, your campaign issued a questionnaire, and your writing was on the questionnaire that said you favored a ban on handguns.*

OBAMA: *No, my writing wasn't on that particular questionnaire, Charlie. As I said, I have never favored an all-out ban on handguns...*

Obama's answer about licensing and registration gun was not clear. It indicated that he flouted Maxim of Manner. The speaker may flout Maxim of Manner when he say something ambiguity, give obscurity of expression, not be brief, not say something orderly and clear. It happened when Gibson asked him about whether or not he favoured in licensing and registration gun. He said that he never favored an all-out ban on handguns, but he did not give the reason why. It can be proven by Gibson statement *Well, with all due respect, I'm not sure I got an answer from Senator Obama, but do you still favor licensing and registration of handguns?* Gibson underlined statement told us that he did not really get the point and Obama statement was not really clear.

On the other hand, Obama also flouted Maxim of Quality since he told something, which was untruth about the questionnaire, which filled in 1996. In September 1996, Obama ran for Illinois State Senate. He filled out a questionnaire for the Chicago Democratic Socialist of America-Connected Independent Voter for Illinois. In the questionnaire there were some question offered. One of them was *do you support the legislation to ban the manufacture, sale and possession of handguns?* and he answered *yes*. From that proof, it could be seen that Obama lied and flouted Maxim of Quality.

Obama's answer for being untruthful implicated that he avoid became inconsistent since in the first question offered by Gibson about handguns, he already said that he never supported the handguns and when Gibson asked about Obama's questionnaire, he seemed like he attempted to avoid for being inconsistent to maintain his image as a presidential candidate.

3.3.2 Flouting Maxim of Quantity and Relation

STEPHANOPOULOS: But a simple yes or no question: Do you think Senator Obama can beat John McCain or not?

CLINTON: Well, I think we have to beat John McCain, and I have every reason to believe we're going to have a Democratic president and it's going to be either Barack or me. And we're going to make that happen. And what is important is that we understand exactly the challenges facing us in order to defeat Senator McCain ...

STEPHANOPOULOS: But the question is: Do you think Senator Obama can do that? Can he win?

In data above, it can be seen that Senator Clinton flouted Maxim of Quantity. It happened when Stephanopoulos asked her that can Senator Obama beat John McCain or not. In order to follow Maxim of Quantity, Senator Clinton should give the answer not more or less than it was required or expected by the hearer. As the data above, Senator Clinton gave the answer less than it was expected even she did not answer it at all. It can be proved that after she answered the question from Stephanopoulos, he proposed the same question *But the question is: Do you think Senator Obama can do that? Can he win?*, which meant that Senator Clinton did not answer his question at all.

Senator Clinton also flouted Maxim of Relation since her answer was not relevant to the question from Stephanopoulos. Instead of answering yes or no, she answered it by saying how hard to defeat John McCain, she also told about what John McCain had done, and etc. which were not relevant at all to the question.

Clinton in this data by being not relevant, her answer implicated that she attempted not to answer yes or no. She did not want to acknowledge the ability of Obama and she did not want to exalt him. She did it because Obama was her rival in this debate to compete for the position as presidential candidate from Democratic Party.

IV. CONCLUSION

In terms of hedges maxim, there were several Quality hedges, Quantity hedges and Manner hedges. Unfortunately, relevant hedges could not be found in this Democratic debate. It did not mean that the candidates did not give the irrelevant answer, they did it. However, they did not use the relevant hedges to indicate or to warn the hearer that they would become irrelevant.

In terms of flouted, there were several flouted Maxim of Quality, Maxim of Quantity, Maxim of Relation and Maxim of Manner. Implicature in those flouting analyses occurred when there was a flouting maxim. Since in every flouting there must be an additional information or information that is implicitly conveyed. All of the implicatures found in the data were conversational implicature. Both of Obama and Clinton said something implicitly because they were as a rival in this debate in order to get a chance as a presidential candidate from Democratic Party.

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