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## Analysis of the Flouting Maxims in the Posters of Stop Violence Towards Women

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This research aims to examine how the maxim is flouted in campaign posters with the theme "Stop Violence Against Women" found in Zero Tolerance, WCSAP (Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs), End the Fear, and Iowa from the University of Iowa. This research analysed the real meaning of the maxim being flouted and the most frequent types that appeared. In addition, the researchers used Grice's theory as a reference in analysing these posters. The researchers looked for data by collecting violence against women posters by downloading them from the websites and then identifying them so that they could be classified according to Grice's theory of maxim. In analysing the data, the researchers used a qualitative-descriptive method. Here, the researchers found 5 flouting maxims of relation, 2 flouting maxims of quality, and 1 flouting maxim of quantity. In addition, the researcher also found data that flouted two maxims at once, namely 2 the flouting maxims of manner and quantity, and 1 from quality and relation. From the findings and discussion, the researchers concluded that the flouting of maxims found in the posters was intended to increase the audience's empathy and awareness of the importance of avoiding violence against women.

## INTRODUCTION

Violence towards women is a global issue and is also faced in several countries. Furthermore, violence towards women occurs regardless of economic, cultural, or even political status, so it can be said that violence towards women can happen to anyone. Although global issues are evolving and varying, the issue of violence towards women remains a tragic and constant issue. This means that there is still no absolute solution to this issue.

Based on a news article published by Tempo on September 17, 2025, the article was based on a statement from Iin Mutmainnah, Head of the Child Empowerment and Population Control Agency (DPPAPP) of Jakarta, stating that there were more than 1,500 recorded cases of violence against women and children from January to mid-September 2025 (Sari, 2025). Moreover, violence against women can occur in various situations, such as victims of violence by their own partners, some victims of their own families, or even victims of violence from strangers. Furthermore, the violence experienced by women also varies, ranging from physical violence to verbal abuse.

The high number of cases of violence against women, coupled with a lack of awareness about violence against women, has led to the emergence of organizations that care about women and constantly raise awareness about it. Furthermore, some organizations that support stopping violence against women are Zero Tolerance, WCSAP (Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs), End the Fear, and Iowa from the University of Iowa. These organizations conduct campaigns to raise awareness among the public about violence against women that happens around them.

The campaigns take various forms, such as videos, podcasts, and posters. These media generally provide descriptions of how victims experience violence or what actions should be taken when witnessing violence. Furthermore, one of the media often used in campaigns is posters. Posters generally provide complete information about what is being discussed, with clear language, complete information, and continuity among language, images, and context. However, several posters do not provide information directly; audiences can understand them, but must interpret them first. In addition, some of these posters use ambiguous

sentences, lack information, and do not clearly convey the message's meaning and content. Based on H.P. Grice, these posters flout the maxims or rules of communicative language use.

The flouting maxim discusses how a maxim is intentionally flouted when the speaker delivers a message. This happens because the speaker tends to hide the real meaning rather than say it explicitly. However, the flouting of the maxim not only hides the meaning so that the hearer has no clue about what the speaker said, but also intentionally makes the communication lead to an end, and tries to make the hearer find the true meaning. Therefore, the maxim that is flouted is not meaningless. This is in line with what Yulian and Thamrin stated: not all flouting of the maxim is the end of communication and discussion, because when the hearer gets the real message behind the utterance, the conversation that happened can still be said to be successful communication (2022).

Many researchers have discussed and conducted research on the flouting maxim, but in advertisements, headlines, and taglines. As Aninda Dampit, Laila Kartika, and Intisari wrote in their article, "The Flouting of Conversational Implicature in The Headlines and Tagline," their research aimed to determine whether the headlines or taglines that are flouted can still convey the message. They found that 14 of the 60 data points are flouting the maxim in combination type, quantity, and quality (2014). The other researcher is Fifi Rania Maulida with the article entitled "The Flouting of Conversational Maxims in Make-Up Advertisements Found in People Style Watch Magazine." In this study, the researcher aimed to gain knowledge about the implied meaning and what action women would take after seeing the advertisement (2018). The next research by Ayesha Kinzul Eman is entitled "The Study of Grice Principle in Pakistani Advertisements." The researcher found that flouting the maxim in advertisements would attract sufficient attention from the audience, even though the language used can cause misunderstandings (2019).

In addition, analysis of flouting the maxim is also conducted in movies and talk shows. One of the studies that discussed flouting maxim in movies was conducted by Siti Anggriani Dunggio, Sri Widyarti Ali, and Haris Danial entitled "The Analysis of

Flouting Maxim in Cooperative Principle by The Characters in *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle Movie (2017)*". In this research, they discovered a unique feature in their data that was not in Grice's theory: the use of a hyperbolic metaphor in the flouting of the maxim of manner by one of the characters in the movie (2025). Furthermore, research on flouting maxims in a talk show has also been conducted by Ismi Narulita Firda, Didin Nuruddin Hidayat, Alek, and Nurhalimah with the title "An Analysis of Flouting Maxims in a Talk Show Program in Indonesia". In their research, the researchers found that most of the data flouted the maxim of relation. The reason is that most of the data found consisted of avoidance of questions, teasing or mocking other people, and many others (2021).

Based on the previous studies, many researchers have discussed how flouting the maxim is used in advertisements, headlines, taglines, movies, and also talk shows. These studies are conducted to find the real meaning of the utterance. For example, the use of flouting maxim in advertisements is used to attract or persuade people to feel the products. However, it is still rare to discuss how flouting the maxim is used in anti-violence posters, where the poster flouts the maxim so readers can discern what the author really wants to convey. In addition, the researchers use these posters as the object because they raise the issue of violence against women. Moreover, the maxims on the poster are being flouted not to confuse the audience with the content, but to allow the audience to interpret it on their own terms and make it more evocative of the audience's sympathy. Therefore, this research was conducted with two foci: the most common types of flouting maxim that appear in the posters and how the maxim is flouted in them.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to Grice, flouting the maxim occurs when a speaker intentionally violates a maxim or rule to have the listener infer the true meaning without saying it directly (1975).

### **Flouting Maxim of Quantity**

Flouting the maxim of quantity occurs when the information provided is too little than it should be, or too much than is necessary. Although there is nothing wrong with being over-informative, it is a waste of time and can create confusion when read or heard, as it is off-topic. Despite the information given being either too much or too

little, it can still be informative depending on the implied level, because the listener's knowledge also plays an important role.

### **Flouting Maxim of Quality**

Flouting the maxim of quality occurs because the speaker utilizes a maxim that is not in accordance with the facts, or it can be said that the sentence is not literally true. In addition, Grice also said that the maxim of quality must also be based on solid evidence as proof of its truth. Therefore, if there is no solid evidence, it would not fulfil the conditions of the maxim of quality because it would be considered a lie. In addition, flouting the maxim of quality can take the form of figurative language, such as metaphor and hyperbole, as well as irony and sarcasm.

### **Flouting Maxim of Relation**

Flouting the maxim of relation leads to the absence of related continuity between contexts. The speaker used sentences that deviated from the actual topic. Usually, the speaker's purpose is to try to end the conversation. In the book, Grice explains that relations involve many things, ranging from how relevance forms, what causes topics in conversation to change, and how to consider that the subject being discussed changes during the discussion, among many others.

### **Flouting Maxim of Manner**

Flouting the maxim of manner occurs when the speaker does not give a clear meaning of what they are saying. Usually, the way the speaker conveyed their utterances is ambiguous, unclear, and rambling. In detail, the speaker does not provide clarity on what is meant to be said or to whom it is addressed. In a way, it still raises questions. In Grice's book, it is stated that to fulfil the maxim of manner, one must observe how the discussion is conveyed. If the way it is conveyed is not sequential, too long, ambiguous, or unclear, then it is considered a flouting of the maxim of manner.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research used a qualitative descriptive design to analyse digital posters on several websites from organizations that promote the prevention of violence against women. According to Creswell & Creswell (2023), the descriptive method in qualitative research is an approach in which the researcher interprets the data and

develops categories into themes.

Furthermore, these websites used various types of media, including posters, to spread information about the importance of stopping violence against women. Therefore, the researcher used the posters on these websites as data. The data is from Zero Tolerance, WCSAP (Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs), End the Fear, and Iowa from the University of Iowa study.

Furthermore, this research analyzed the data using Grice's theory of implicature, namely, flouting the maxim. The researcher collected the data by downloading various posters from websites related to violence against women, using the researcher as the main instrument to gather and identify relevant posters.

The analysis process includes classifying the data, counting each classification to identify the most frequent types, and interpreting the data to determine the contextual meaning of the posters. The reason researchers use this kind of method is that it describes the research as closely as possible (Furidha, 2023). This method aims to discover the true meaning of a poster in which the use of sentences flouts the maxim.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1. Number of types flouting maxim**

No	Types	Amount
1	Maxim of Quantity	1
2	Maxim of Quality	2
3	Maxim of Relation	5
4	Maxim of Manner	0
5	Maxim of Manner & Quantity	2
6	Maxim of Quality & Relation	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>12</b>

Based on the table above, there were approximately 12 data points from several posters published on websites that were identified as flouting the maxim of quantity, quality, and relation. In detail, there is one datum of flouting the maxim of quantity, two data of flouting the maxim of quality, and five data of flouting the maxim of relation. The researcher found no data that flouted the maxim of manner. However, the researcher found several data from posters that flouted two maxims at once: the maxim of quantity and manner (amounting to two) and the maxim of quality and relation (amounting to one). In addition, after conducting identification and classification, the researcher found that the most frequent type of flouting maxim is

the relation maxim.

### **Flouting the maxim of quantity**

Flouting the maxim of quantity occurred when the information provided was either too little or too much, and did not provide enough about the topic. Below, one piece of data has been found on the poster that flouts the maxim of quantity.

Datum (1) From three to ninety-three, women are raped.

This data is from one of the posters on the website of an organization that conducted campaigns of violence against women, namely Zero Tolerance by Franki Raffles. This data is flouting the maxim of quantity. This can happen because the poster is not providing enough or complete information about what the phrase “From three to ninety-three” represents, which raises questions about the context it refers to or the role it plays. Therefore, the lack of information prompts the audience to think and interpret the phrase for themselves. In detail, the data above does not provide clear or continuous information about what the sequence of numbers mentioned refers to. Are they just numbers, or is there another context? Furthermore, the lack of information in this data forces audiences to rethink and “fill in” the missing information with their own interpretation. Therefore, this data is flouting the maxim of quantity.

However, the phrase “From three to ninety-three” is interpreted as a woman's age. Therefore, when linked to the next sentence, “women are raped,” this poster gives a strong impression of its intent and purpose, which is to make the audience aware that women can be victims of sexual violence regardless of age, from young to old. Furthermore, this incomplete sentence gives a strong impression of providing reasoning for the poster's true meaning.

### **Flouting the maxim of quality**

Flouting the maxim of quality occurred when what is conveyed is not literally true or is false. Below, one piece of data has been found on the poster that flouts the maxim of quality.

Datum (2) My cup is not my consent.

This data is from a poster published on the website of an organization that is concerned about violence against women. This organization is from the University of

Iowa in the United States. This data is flouting the maxim of quality. This can happen because the data show the use of metaphors, in which inanimate objects are used as representations. The use of metaphors itself usually contains falsehoods, because it uses language that relates living things to inanimate objects. Therefore, when readers receive the message, they cannot interpret the sentence literally because the result does not make sense.

Furthermore, in this sentence, the word “cup,” which is essentially an inanimate object, is used to indicate whether “cup” means agreement with something or not. However, when considered literally, the noun “cup” is unable to provide an answer that represents whether consent is given or not. It can be said that the above sentence is factually incorrect because inanimate objects are basically incapable of approving something related to consent. Therefore, the above data is included in the type of flouting maxim of quality.

However, “cup” here more refers to a glass used to drink alcohol. In addition, “cup” here can represent a woman who is drinking, accepting an offer of a drink, or even drinking the most alcohol. Furthermore, when combined with the phrase “is not my consent,” the noun “cup” takes on a specific meaning, namely that when a woman is drinking, accepting an offer of a drink, or even drinking a lot of alcohol, it does not mean that she consents to sexual activity. Therefore, although the above data violates the maxim of quality by using a metaphorical sentence, it still conveys a message about morality.

### **Flouting the maxim of relation**

Flouting the maxim of relation occurred when there is no relation between the context discussed. Below, one data has been found in the poster that flouts the maxim of relation.

Datum (3) Her boss raped her at knifepoint. In court, she was asked if she found him attractive.

This data is from one of the posters on the website of an organization that conducted campaigns of violence against women, namely Zero Tolerance by Franki Raffles. This data is flouting the maxim of relation. This can happen because the data here consists of two sentences, and neither sentence show any relevant discussion context. In detail, the context of the first sentence discusses victims who have been sexually abused by her own supervisors. However, the second sentence presents the opposite of what it should be, where the sentence should convey the punishment

received by the abuser, but instead presents a sentence that the context is questions the victim as if the victim were at fault. Thus, there is a disconnect between the context of the first and second sentences of the data above. Therefore, the data is flouting the maxim of relation.

However, the two different contexts of the poster aim to show the misery of a legal system that is not as it is supposed to be, where the data describes how victims are blamed for crimes or sexual violence committed by others. Therefore, the purpose of the poster that flaunts the maxim of relation is to build emotion and mental effort towards a situation that should have happened but did not, in the hope of becoming a strong motivation for change.

### **Flouting the maxim of manner and quantity**

Flouting the maxim of manner occurs when the way a message is conveyed creates ambiguity, appears unnecessary, and still raises questions. In addition, flouting the maxim of quantity occurred when the information provided was either too little or too much, and did not provide enough information about the topic. Below, one data has been found in the poster that flouts the maxim of manner and quantity at once.

Datum (4) Whoever, wherever, whenever. Sexual assault – There is no excuse.

This data is from one of the posters on the website of an organization that conducted campaigns of violence against women, namely Zero Tolerance by Franki Raffles. This data floats the maxim of manner and quantity simultaneously. First, this data flouts the maxim of manner because it conveys ambiguous, unspecific information and raises questions. In detail, the data above deliberately uses sentences that are grammatically imperfect because of their fragmented form, making the three words “whoever, wherever, whenever” ambiguous and unspecific. Therefore, because the data is grammatically imperfect and ambiguous, it flouts the maxim of manner.

Second, the data above also flouts the maxim of quantity. This can happen because, when displayed on the poster, the data does not provide clear, complete information. In detail, the data only displays three words and is directly followed by a conclusion about “there is no reason for sexual violence” without any additional specific information that would make it easier for the audience to understand the context. Moreover, the data above also does not show that the three words have

referral information. In detail, the lack of information could be questioned by the audience, such as who the target is. Is it the abuser or the victim? Then, where is the location? Is it a quiet place, an alley, or another specific place, and finally, when does it refer to a specific time? Daytime or nighttime. Furthermore, after reading the data above, the poster would create a gap in the audience's understanding of the context. Therefore, the data is flouting the maxim of quantity.

However, the purpose of the poster deliberately flouting two maxims at once is to make audiences interpret more deeply to understand the meaning. In detail, in any cases of conditions such as who the target is, where the place is, or what time it should be, there are no reasons that allow sexual assault. This makes the information successfully obtained by audiences through their own interpretations much more universal and inclusive, thus giving a more personal effect. Therefore, posters that flout the maxims of manner and quantity aim not to limit the audience's interpretation because they do not mention specific contexts and indirectly convey a rejection of all forms of sexual violence.

### **Flouting the maxim of quality and relation**

Flouting the maxim of quality occurred when what is conveyed is not literally true or is false. In addition, flouting the maxim of relation occurs when there is no relation between the discussed contexts. Below, one data has been found in the poster that flouts the maxim of manner and quantity at once.

Datum (5) She lives with a successful businessman, loving father, and respected member of the community. Last week, he hospitalised her.

This data is from one of the posters on the website of an organization that conducted campaigns of violence against women, namely Zero Tolerance by Franki Raffles. This data violates the maxim of quality and relation simultaneously. In the maxim of quality, it must be consistent with the facts. This data violates the maxim of quality because the first sentence describes a woman who lives with a successful man, a loving father, and so on. However, this fact is contradicted by the next sentence, which reveals another fact that the husband had committed violence against his wife by locking her up for a week. Furthermore, the two sentences from the data above do not present the facts, as the facts in the first sentence are no longer entirely true, as they are contradicted by the facts in the second sentence. Therefore, the data is flouting the maxim of quality.

In addition, the data also follows the maxim of relation. This can have happened

because the data consists of two sentences with different contexts. In detail, the first sentence sets the context for describing the husband as a successful businessman and a loving father, with a good social image, as seen in the data above. However, the second sentence shows a contradictory and different context, where it describes the husband as a cruel and brutal figure. This is evident from the second sentence, which shows that the husband has locked her up. Therefore, this data flouts the maxim of relation.

However, the purpose of posters that flout these two maxims is to show that not everything portrayed corresponds to reality. In detail, abusers of women can hide their actions by becoming positive public figures so that people will not believe that they are committing acts of violence.

## **DISCUSSION**

These data, identified as flouting the maxim, are used and displayed in posters on violence against women. Posters that deliberately flout the maxim are not intended to confuse audiences in conveying the message, but rather to encourage them to think beyond the literal meaning to achieve a deeper understanding of the poster's intent and purpose. These posters flout certain maxims in different ways but share the same goal. Furthermore, the results of this study differ from the results of previous studies, which analysed how flouting maxims attracts readers to buy the advertised product. Thus, the flouted maxims are mostly persuasive, using ambiguous, sarcastic language, or even exaggerated sentences to attract the audience's attention and promote their products.

However, this study discusses posters with themes of violence against women that are found flouting the maxim and aims to leave a strong effect on the audience regarding the importance of awareness of violence against women. For example, posters that flout the maxim of quantity give audiences the impression of filling in the information gaps they do not receive from the poster with their own interpretations and conclude meanings that lead to personal, stronger interpretations of the message than direct statements.

Another highly visible example of a poster that flouts the maxim has a strong rhetorical effect is a poster that flouts the maxim of quality, where the goal is to make

audiences aware of the alarming moral facts that often occur to victims of sexual violence. Therefore, posters that flout the maxim aim to build emotion, mental effort, motivation for change, and criticism of flawed social norms.

In addition, this research contributes both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study can enhance readers' understanding of flouting maxims. Furthermore, this study provides insight into how flouting maxims influences social life through the analysed data. In detail, this study provides information and evidence that effective communication to convey a message does not always comply with the rules of proper language. In practical terms, this study shows that flouting maxims occurs not only in oral and written conversation but also in social campaign discourse in visual media. In addition, this study demonstrates that deliberate flouting of maxims is a strategy for attracting audience attention. In detail, the analysis and discussion of this study indirectly show that language that does not follow the rules affects audiences, involving their emotions and cognition in building empathy.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that posters with themes against violence towards women that deliberately flout the maxims have their own goals. In detail, several posters convey the message of stopping violence against women by deliberately flouting the maxim; they use ambiguous language, lack information, are unrelated, and lack clarity in relation to the maxim. However, this does not mean that the posters have no meaning at all. The purpose of these posters is to invite the audience to be more aware of the abuse situation by allowing them to interpret the poster's message for themselves. In addition, the effect of posters that flout the maxim is to create mental effort, motivation for change, and a form of criticism of poor social norms.

In addition, after conducting this research, the researchers realized that there are still many things that can be studied using the flouting maxim and that have a significant impact in the real world. The researchers hope that future researchers will be able to conduct similar studies with a broader scope, such as by finding more data sources or using other research objects, and prove that interaction in communication can still occur even when flouting the maxim.

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