

COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES IN NEGOTIATION: A CASE STUDY OF THE PULSE SHOOTING TRAGEDY

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Abstract:

The research is based on the case study of 911 Emergency Call's transcript for the Pulse Tragedy in Orlando. It focuses on the interaction between the suspect and the negotiator and how Grice's cooperative principles were implemented during the negotiation. Objectives: It aims to 1) identify the adherence and the breach of the maxims in conversation, 2) which maxims were dominant in the communication, and 3) into what did the results translate. Methods: The descriptive approach was used for data analysis from the official transcript release from the City of Orlando Police Department. Findings: The results indicated that the suspect adhered to the maxims of relevance, quality, manner, and quantity 9.57%, 9.57%, 6.38%, and 5.85% respectively while breached the maxims of quantity, manner, relevance, and quality 19.15%, 18.62%, 15.43%, and 15.43% respectively, with a percentage of 68,62% breach. Conclusion: The significant difference between non-compliance and compliance of the maxims showed that further studies are required on the role of cooperative principle in negotiating emergencies.

Keyword:

cooperative principles; negotiation; Pulse tragedy



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INTRODUCTION

A series of conversations between Omar Mateen or Omar Mir Seddique, the suspect of a mass shooting at the Pulse night club on June 12, 2016, took place while calling 911 Emergency Centre Orlando. Over several calls, attempts were made to open communication between a negotiator and the perpetrator to gain information on the identity and the purpose of the shooter. Moreover, it was a standard procedure to deter more shooting from the suspect and the police.

During the negotiation, the negotiator followed the protocol of opening a communication with suspects. From the linguistic point of view, he persisted in establishing Grice's cooperative principles to achieve his immediate goals, which were to open communication and find the solution to the situation. Retrieved from the official site of the Orlando Police Department <http://www.cityoforlando.net/cityclerk/pulse-tragedy-public-records/>, the transcript showed how the verbal exchange took place and how the principles were deployed.

The verbal interaction during the negotiation process followed an underlying structure that can be examined through a linguistic perspective. In this case, it is intriguing to see how pragmatics provides a way to analyze it and expose the situation beyond the surface structure. It is particularly intriguing to follow the flow of thoughts of the parties involved, especially that of the suspect, as the situation progressed to its conclusion by analyzing the extent to which he was willing or reluctant to engage in the negotiation.

Thus, the study aims at discovering three main points, namely the adherence and violation of the maxims in the mediations, the ratio of compliance and non-compliance, and to what the results translate.

METHOD

Negotiations, according to Schatzki and Coffey (1981), vary in their use and urgency even though their goal is to yield an outcome that satisfies all the parties ideally. Even though it may take place in daily settings, it is also common in extreme situations that involve the lives of the people, such as terror acts with hostages.

Zartman (2008) highlighted the cause of terror as the outlet for a party to deal with the oppression they feel helpless if confronted in conventional ways. Moreover, its act is designed to grab the attention of the mass as an attempt to inform them of their situation and gain their support in the cause. One of the processes to handle such a situation is through negotiation. Zartman (2008) argued that it aimed to reveal the reason behind the act and the conditions the actor demands so that appropriate action can be taken. Therefore, the negotiator and the perpetrator must engage in a verbal exchange that allows both parties to convey what they need to say and arrive at a solution.

An adequate verbal interaction under any circumstance requires contribution from parties involved. In pragmatics, including the implementation of cooperative principles which Grice (1975) provided to exhibit the grounds on which the speakers are expected to operate. His cooperative principles identified the maxims that need to be present so that the communication purpose will have some degree of completion and satisfaction to the speakers. The compliance of the principles is measured against the fulfillment of maxims: the more they are present and appropriately used, the higher the chance of having a conversation that satisfies both parties. Allen (1986) emphasized the involvement of the parties by referring to the speakers making efforts in adhering to the purpose of the interaction and using the maxims to make it as fluent as possible.

Both Grice and Allen advocated the necessity of maxims, namely that of quantity, quality, manner, and relevance to be employed in the conversation. Grice (1991) showed how the quality maxim is fulfilled by the speaker providing truthful information. Quantity maxim is how wholesome the right information is given since he argued that partially accurate information has the potential to defeat the efforts of optimizing the exchange experience. The way a party conveys the information or the manner maxim is also a fundamental part since how the order of the information should be linear of various aspects such as chronology, importance, or emphasis. Finally, Sperber and Wilson (1995) argued that the cognitive process in human interaction is seeking and giving relevant information. Nadar (2009) extended the notion that the more relevant the information to the speakers and the purpose, the less process is needed to digest it, and the quicker the participants will be satisfied with the conversation.

The trespassing of the maxims may cause the exchange to fail, and Thomas (1995) identified such violations as based on their methods as flouting, violating, infringing, opting out, and suspending. They could be the product of intentional or unintentional action by one or both speakers. For example, flouting is the deliberate misuse of a maxim as the speaker provides information that has a deeper meaning, and the hearer is expected to seek it. Meanwhile, unconscious misleading information is considered as a violating act.

Opting out is the choice a speaker makes (Thomas, 1985) when they refuse to take part in any point of the interaction, thus failing the information exchange that would generally take place.

The last violation known as infringing occurs when a speaker commits to a conversation with information that is not true due to his or her lack of knowledge or linguistic skills. A specific kind of this type of violation is suspending, where the speaker withholds the truth like speaking only the favorable side of the deceased rather than exposing the actual characteristics which may upset the family.

Blakemore (2002) argued that one of the intentions of not adhering to the principles is to cause a particular effect on the exchange. However, it is a high stake strategy, especially in dire conditions,

as the case would exhibit. Even so, it is worth considering in determining the level of success a negotiation took place.

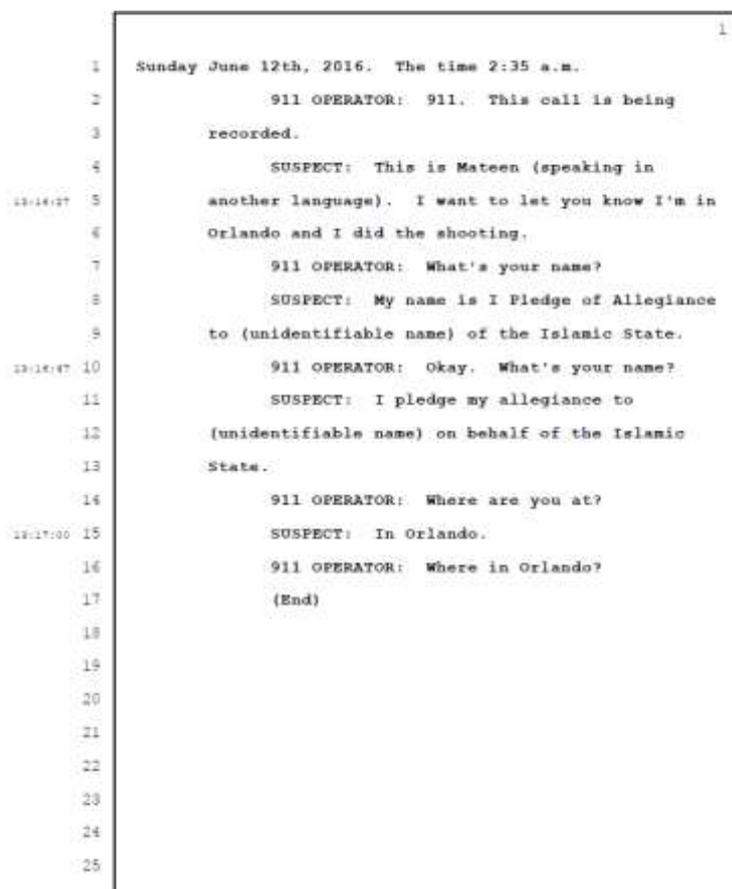
Based on the literature review, the study focused on the use of maxims in the conversation between the suspect and the negotiation official found in the transcripts above. It followed the descriptive design suggested by Kothari and Garg (2014). The first task was to collect the data from the source mentioned above. The second step was categorizing the maxims based on their types, followed by deciding whether a violation occurred in them. Grice's cooperative principles acted as the main guidelines for identifying and evaluating them.

The last phase is to exhibit the difference between maxim compliance and non-compliance. Their ratio would prove sufficient to conclude the real intention of the suspect in engaging in the conversations.

The data spread across four primary transcripts, namely '911audio', 'NEGOTIATION1', 'NEGOTIATION2', and 'NEGOTIATION3' following their filenames. The transcripts had been divided into four sections due to the period between the first and the last calls, where the suspect called and disconnected several times through the course of the incident.

Each of the transcripts had been marked with line numbers, time markers for the actual time of the call, and the minutes they appeared in the recording, as seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Example of The Transcripts



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1 Sunday June 12th, 2016. The time 2:35 a.m.
2 911 OPERATOR: 911. This call is being
3 recorded.
4 SUSPECT: This is Mateen (speaking in
13:16:27 5 another language). I want to let you know I'm in
6 Orlando and I did the shooting.
7 911 OPERATOR: What's your name?
8 SUSPECT: My name is I Pledge of Allegiance
9 to (unidentifiable name) of the Islamic State.
13:16:47 10 911 OPERATOR: Okay. What's your name?
11 SUSPECT: I pledge my allegiance to
12 (unidentifiable name) on behalf of the Islamic
13 State.
14 911 OPERATOR: Where are you at?
13:17:00 15 SUSPECT: In Orlando.
16 911 OPERATOR: Where in Orlando?
17 (End)
18
19
20
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25
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Forty-seven instances of maxims were found throughout the transcripts. Each finding was placed in a table like below to identify the source, page line, the actual dialogs between the operator/negotiator and the suspect, and the maxims he complied with/violated.

Figure 2 Data Analysis Example

No.	Souce	Page	line	Dialogs	Maxim Adherence				Maxim Violation		
					Ql	Qn	M	R	F	V	O
1	911 audio	1	4-6	911 Operator: "911. This call is being recorded." SUSPECT: This is Mateen (speaking in another language). I want to let you know I'm in Orlando, and I did the shooting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	X	X

Note: Ql = quality, Qn = quantity, M = manner, R = relevance, F = flouting, V = violation, O = opting out

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. adherence to the cooperative principles mostly occurred in all of the maxim categories. However, the maxim of relevance and quality are the most frequent types the perpetrator adhered to, amounting to 18 times (9.57) each, followed by the manner (12 times or 6.38) and quantity (11 times or 5.85).

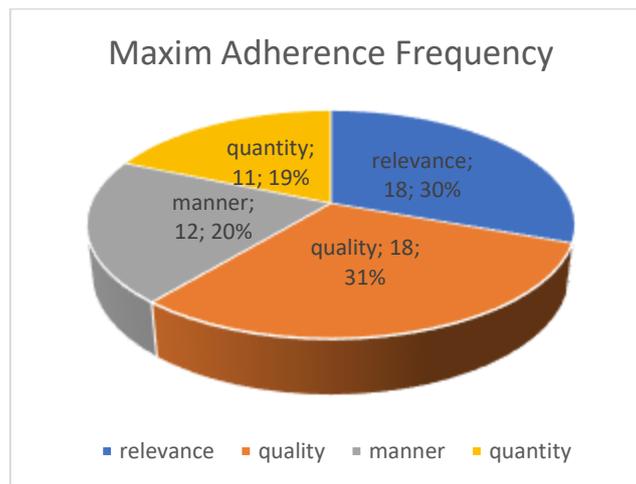


Figure 3 Maxim Adherence Frequency

2. All the maxims were also violated. The quantity was the most frequent type with 36 occurrences (19.15%), followed by manner (35 times or 19.15%), relevance (29 times or 15.43%), and quality (29 times or 15.43%).

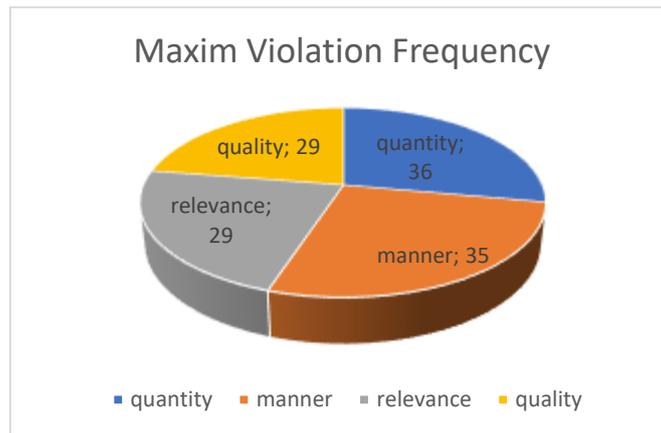


Figure 4 Maxim Violation Frequency

3. The ratio of the adherence to the violation of the maxims was 31.38% to 68.62%.

Several points, therefore, can be drawn from the findings. The high frequencies of compliance in relevance and quality showed that the suspect showed intentions of maintaining a certain degree of the cooperative principles by addressing appropriately several questions and requests the mediator offered.

However, it was not proof of willingness to open a balanced communication as the frequencies of non-compliance were two-fold compared to that of compliance. Quantity maxim violations showed that the speaker held back information the negotiator needed to maintain communication and on which he could base the possible solutions.

It is also notable that the suspect's violation of the relevance maxim agreed with Blakemore's notion of intentional infringement. Some of the responses were repetitive statements unrelated to the questions to evade conveying vital details that may jeopardize his organization and the mission. It also set the course of the discussion to yield no compromise. Also, some of the suspect's statements employed code mixing. Even though he was a United States citizen by birth, he identified himself as part of a terrorist group by reciting in a foreign language his allegiance to the organization.

CONCLUSION

The research was able to demonstrate how the cooperative principles are still relevant today, even in critical situations such as negotiating with assailants. By assessing the maxims adhered to and violated in a conversation, the parties directly or indirectly may be able to evaluate its effectiveness.

It is important to note that despite the discussions on how crucial they principles are in any discussion, the intention is also key to implementing the principles. A violation may serve as a strategy to maintain control of the verbal exchange by limiting opportunities for the other speaker to balance or dominate a discussion. Still, it may also put the non-compliant speaker at risk of losing their credibility as a competent counterpart.

As a recommendation, further investigation on the subject should focus on the patterns of non-compliance in similar situations to test the non-compliance strategy to win over negotiations, with intention as the starting point and the adherence and violation of maxims as evidence of the design of a discussion and the goals of a perpetrator.

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