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The Flouting and Violating of Cooperative Principle in Miller's "Death of a Salesman"

A B S T R A C T

This study presents a pragmatic analysis of Arthur Miller's play *"Death of a Salesman"*. The study sheds light on Grice's *"Cooperative Principle"*, its four maxims namely (Quality, Quantity, Relation, and Manner), and the violation and flouting of them. The reason behind selecting this play is that in this play, the writer criticizes the idea of capitalism in American society. Miller shows that American people are victims of capital society and its values. Consequently, the hero of the play, Willy Loman is always depicted living in his imagination and dreams far away from reality which makes him flout and violate the maxims of the Cooperative Principle. The study aims to know how the maxims of the Cooperative Principle are flouted and violated by the main characters of the play and which is mostly flouted and violated. A qualitative method has been used to analyze the speech of the main characters to get the aim of the study. After analyzing 15 selected quotations from the play, it has been concluded that the hero violates and flouts the four maxims in a very obvious way. The maxim of relation is the most one which is flouted and violated because of the hero, Willy Loman, is seen talking about irrelevant matters and issues because he lives in his illusions.

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الاستهزاء وانتهاك مبدأ التعاون في ميلر "وفاة بائع متجول"

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المستخلص

تقدم هذه الدراسة تحليلاً تداولياً لمسرحية آرثر ميللر "موت بائع متجول". تلقي الدراسة الضوء على مبدأ غرايس التعاوني ومبادئه الأربعة وهي (الجودة، الكمية، العلاقة، الطريقة)، وانتهاك هذه المبادئ والاستهزاء بها. والسبب وراء اختيار هذه المسرحية هو أن الكاتب ينتقد في هذه المسرحية فكرة الرأسمالية في المجتمع الأمريكي. يظهر ميلر أن الشعب الأمريكي ضحية المجتمع الرأسمالي وقيمه. وبالتالي، فإن بطل المسرحية، ولي لومان، يصور دائماً وهو يعيش في خياله وأحلامه بعيداً عن الواقع؛ مما يجعله يستهزئ ويخالف مبادئ المبدأ التعاوني. تهدف الدراسة إلى معرفة كيف المبدأ التعاوني يستهزئ وينتهك من قبل الشخصيات الرئيسية في المسرحية، والتي تكون في أغلب الأحيان مستهزئة ومنتهكة. تم استخدام المنهج النوعي لتحليل كلام الشخصيات الرئيسية لتحقيق هدف الدراسة. بعد تحليل خمسة عشر (15) اقتباساً مختاراً من المسرحية، تم الوصول إلى أن البطل ينتهك ويستهزئ بالقواعد الأربعة بطريقة واضحة جداً. مبدأ العلاقة هو أكثر مبدأ تم الاستهزاء به وانتهاكه؛ لأن البطل، ولي لومان، يتحدث عن أمور وقضايا غير ذات صلة؛ لأنه يعيش في أوهامه.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المبدأ التعاوني، القواعد، الكمية، الجودة، العلاقة، الأسلوب، الاستهزاء، والمخالفة

1. Introduction

Miller's *Death of a Salesman* has been chosen to be studied pragmatically for some reasons. First of all, Miller was a major American dramatist who was a moral and social realist. Realism is a style of literature in which contemporary social realities, everyday activities, and the lives of normal people are depicted. The writer discusses the social issues of the day in his play. That means, his play tackles the complicated nature of modern social life by focusing on the realities and nonsense in the lives of normal people in America. Miller was affected by realistic plays. So in his play "*Death of a Salesman*", he adopted a "*retrospective structure*" in which they both explained and brought to a crisis an explosive situation in the present by the gradual revolution of something that has happened in the past. Miller is seen as a playwright whose plays are characterized by the complex, tragic representation, and disillusionment with American society and the American dream. Miller tried to bring the past and present together when he connected realistic techniques with expressionistic techniques by mixing present and past events. He emphasized on social forces of tragedy. This makes the hero of the play "Willy" attached to dreams of success and wealth because he suffered from his disappointment (Kumar, 1990, p. 527).

Because of these reasons, Miller makes the hero of the play "*Death of a Salesman*", "Willy", live in his illusions. He shifts his speech from the present to the past. Consequently, that makes him violate and flout the four maxims of the Cooperative principle. Therefore, this study will shed light on the way in which the hero of the play, "Willy", violates and flouts the maxims of the cooperative principle and which maxim is flouted and violated more than the others. Firstly, it is necessary to know something about Grice's cooperative principle, its maxims, and what flouting and violating mean.

2. Literature Review

According to May (2001, p. 68), the basis of all linguistic behavior occurs when people take part in communicative activity whenever they use language. When communicating with the intention, the speakers talk to tell the hearers something. This is what is called the communicative principle.

Understanding what people mean by their utterances is more than to do with the analysis or understanding of the words or phrases in those utterances themselves. It overrides to include the interpretation of what people mean in a specific context and how the context affects what is being said. This is what is meant by pragmatics. It is "*the study of speaker meaning*." or "*the study of contextual meaning*." (Yule, 1996, p. 3; Alhusseini et al, 2017.

Pragmatics is regarded as a new branch of linguistics because it became a major factor in linguistic thinking in the 1970s, then it developed as a significant field of research. Pragmatics originated from the study of linguistic philosophy and semiology. Many philosophers have contributed to studying pragmatics. They have played the most important role in its development such as Wittgenstein, Leech, Austin, Morris, Searle, Carnap, Levinson, Pierce, Grice, and others (Unubi, 2016, p. 38).

Richard and Schmidt (2010, p. 449) state that *Pragmatics* is regarded as the branch or field of linguistics that concerns "*the study of the use of language in communication, particularly the relationships between sentences and the contexts and situations in which they are used.*"

In other words, pragmatics studies many topics that involve the study of the relationships between the interpretation and use of utterances and how they depend on knowledge of the real world. It studies how speakers use and understand speech acts. It also studies how the relationship between the speaker and the hearer influences the structure of language.

Cruse (2006, p. 3) elucidates that the aspects of meaning that are dependent on context are the most important topics of linguistic pragmatics. Two aspects that have particular importance are conversational implicature and reference or deixis. Conversational implicature is one of two main kinds of implicature which refers to meanings that are conveyed implicitly by the speakers. The speakers sometimes intend to communicate with others without saying the utterances explicitly for reasons. So the hearers will comprehend these meanings according to the context. The second crucial type of context-dependent meaning is reference or deixis which refers to expressions that are used to specify several things, times, or places in the world in different contexts.

Jucker (2012, p. 500) mentions that H. Paul Grice (1913-1988) as the philosopher of language has a significant role and major influence on pragmatics. Grice's theories of cooperation and conversational implicatures have been demonstrated to be one of the most effective theories in the development of pragmatics. They essentially illustrate how the hearer can understand and realize the meaning of utterances that the speaker intended without explicitly expressing them.

Grice was the first who make systematically the distinction between speaker meaning and sentence meaning. He first displayed the verb "implicate" and the related noun "*Implicature*" which means "*the act of meaning of implying something by saying something else.*" Grice classified implicature into Conventional and Conversational Implicature (Davis, 2007, p. 5).

In other words, it is an attempt at elucidating the way in which a hearer recognizes what is said to what is meant from the level of expressing meaning to the level of implied meaning. He works out his theory of the “*Cooperative Principle*” when he notices that conversations are generally speaking cooperative projects. The major idea of the cooperative principle that is the speakers are always trying to be cooperative in conversation. That means they consistently attempt to make their utterances convenient in context (Thomas, 1995, p. 56; Alhusseini & Kareem, 2022).

Herawati (2013, p. 44) shows that Human beings are assumed to follow or obey specific modes of interaction to communicate successfully. So Grice called this mode of interaction for successful communication the “*Cooperative Principle*” and its maxims are based on ordinary language philosophy.

2.1 The Cooperative Principle and its maxims

In “*Logic and Conversation*” Grice defines and formulates the cooperative principle with more details “*Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.*” (Grice, 1975, p. 45).

To illustrate how people interpret the meaning and how they interact cooperatively and rationally to achieve a common aim, the Cooperative Principle is integrated with four general conversational maxims to show how people communicate effectively in the light of certain rules. Each one of the maxims covers one aspect of linguistic interaction. They describe what the hearer anticipates of the cooperative speaker concerning these maxims. These maxims are called “*Gricean maxims*” (Horn and Ward, 2006, p. 6).

These four maxims are:

1. Maxim of Quantity (Informativeness):

This maxim is related to the quantity of information to be provided. It consists of two submaxims:

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

2. Maxim of Quality (Truthfulness):

Super maxim: Try to make your contribution one that is true. It has more specific submaxims:

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

3. Maxim of Relation (Relevance):

Super maxim: Make your contribution relevant.

a- Be relevant.

Although this maxim is very brief, its formation conceals a lot of problems such as how people may shift in the course of a talk exchange.

4. Maxim of Manner (Clarity)

Super maxim: Be perspicuous... (Be clear). It has four specific submaxims:

a- Avoid obscurity of expression.

b- Avoid ambiguity.

c- Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).

d- Be orderly.

This part of a talk exchange clarifies the fulfillment of the four maxims of the cooperative principle:

A: Do you know where I can buy some petrol?

B: You can buy petrol at the garage right around the corner.

It has been supposed that *B* is honest and knowledgeable and *A* finds the garage depending on *B*'s advice so in this case, *B*'s response to *A*'s question entirely follows the maxims. This means according to the quantity maxim, *B* precisely gives *A* the correct amount of information. According to the quality maxim, *B*'s response has the required evidence and it is not false. According to the relation maxim, *B*'s response is directly related to *A*'s question. According to the manner maxim, *B*'s response to *A*'s question is very brief, clear, and efficiently understood (Mey, 2009, p. 152-153).

2.2 Violating and Flouting of Maxims

Through speaking or a talk exchange, a speaker may fail to fulfill the maxims in different ways. This happens when they will be subject to mislead the listeners in many cases. So they may violate or flout the maxims (Grice, 1975, p. 45-49).

According to Birner (2013, p. 43), when the speaker observes the maxims, he directly obeys them. That means, he sincerely says the appropriate amount of utterances, what he believes has evidence, and what is relevant, clear, brief, and unambiguous. The speaker violates the maxims when he fails to observe them. To do that, the speaker deliberately and intentionally deceives and misleads the hearer in an unclear manner such as a lie. In other words, the speaker doesn't want the hearer to realize that the maxims are being violated. The hearer will not know the truth and will only understand the surface meaning of the words. For instance, the speaker tells the hearer what he believes to be false, insincere, irrelevant, unclear, inadequate, or ambiguous.

The speaker flouts the maxims when he fails to observe them. The flouting is similar to violating but there is only one difference which is when the speaker flouts the maxims, he expects the hearer to be aware that the maxims are being violated or breached. When the speakers seem not to follow the maxims at the same time they expect hearers to value or estimate the meaning implied. That means the maxims are clearly violated. The speaker is not deliberately trying to deceive or mislead the hearer (Cutting, 2002, p. 37).

2.2.1 How Maxims Are Violated

The maxims of the cooperative principle are violated in different ways. For instance, If the speaker does not tell the hearer enough information about what is being talked about, he violates the maxim of *quantity*. The speakers intentionally hide some information, for instance:

1. A. *Does your dog bite?*

B. *No.*

In this example, B doesn't give A much information about his or her dog. So B deliberately violates the maxim of *quantity* because some reasons are best known to him.

If the speaker tells the hearer wrong and insincere information about what is being talked about, he violates the maxim of *quality*, for example:

2. A. *How much does that new dress cost?*

B. *Less than the last one.*

In this example, B covers the real price of the dress and gives A the wrong information about it because the dress is expensive. It costs about 35 pounds while the last one is only 30 pounds. So B deliberately violates the maxims of *quality*.

If the speaker tells the hearer irrelevant information about what is being talked about, he violates the maxim of *relation*, for example:

3. A. *Look at my new dress, is it nice?*

B. *Yes, What does it cost?*

C. *OK. Let's go out tonight. Now, where would you like to go?*

In this example, A's answer is irrelevant to B's question because A may want to change the topic to distract B about the price of the dress. So A intentionally violates the maxim of *relation* (Cutting, 2002, p. 40).

If the speaker gives the hearer a lot of information which are vague and ambiguous, he violates the maxim of *manner*, for example:

4. A. *What would the other people say?*

B. Ah, well, I don't know. I wouldn't like to repeat it again because I don't really believe half of what they are saying. They just get a fixed thing into their mind.

In this example, B's answer to A's question is mysterious and vague. B gives A a lot of information that contain general expression like "*half of what they are saying*" and "*a fixed thing*" to avoid being brief and in order. So B deliberately violates the maxims of *manner* (Cutting, 2002, P. 41).

2.2.2 How Maxims are Flouted

According to Cutting (2002, p. 37), the maxims of the cooperative principle are flouted in various ways. For example, giving too much or too little information about something means the speaker flouts the maxim of *quantity*, for instance:

1. A. *Well, how do I look?*

B. *Your shoes are nice.*

In this example, B's answer to A's question is incomplete. B gives too little information about A because he asks about his whole appearance and B gives him an answer about a part of it (shoes) only. At the same time, B does not say that A's whole appearance does not look nice but A understands his implied meaning. So he flouts the maxim of *quantity*.

Exaggeration as in hyperbole, metaphor, irony, and banter are considered ways in which the maxim of *quality* is flouted. For example, exaggerated expressions like "*I am starving.*", "*I could eat a horse.*" Or "*I am dying of hunger.*" The hearers know the speaker doesn't mean the exact words. The speaker just exaggerates his feeling of hunger. The hearers would be expected to know that the speaker simply denotes that he was very hungry. In this case, the speaker flouts the maxim of *quality* by exaggeration.

Using a metaphor like "*My house is a refrigerator in January.*" is regarded as a flouting of the maxim of *quality*. Although the speaker does not say the exact words, the hearer would understand his speech which means that his house is very cold (Cutting, 2002, p.38).

According to Cutting (2002, p. 39), when the speakers anticipate that the hearers can suppose what the utterance did not say and can make the link between their utterance and the preceding ones, this means those speakers flout the maxim of *relation*. For instance:

2. A. *so what do you think of Mark?*

B. *His flat mate's a wonderful cook.*

In this example, B does not say anything about A's question about Mark. His answer is irrelevant to A's question. He implies it. So B flouts the maxim of *relation*.

When the utterance of the speakers seems to be vague and obscure, this means they flout the maxim of *manner*, for example:

3. "A. *Where are you off to?*

B. *I was thinking of going out to get some of that funny white stuff for somebody.*

A. *OK, but don't be long – dinner's nearly ready."*

In this example, B's answer to A's question has some ambiguous expressions like "*that funny white stuff*" and "*somebody*". A can imagine the implied meaning of those obscure things. So B flouts the maxim of *manner*.

3. Methodology

The qualitative method has been used to analyze some selected utterances from Miller's play "*Death of a Salesman*". This method is used to analyze words and sentences in 15 selected quotations pragmatically to discover how the maxims of Grice's Cooperative Principle are flouted and violated and which maxim is flouted and violated more than the others.

4. Data Analysis

1. "LINDA: *Don't you feel well?*
WILLY: *I'm tired to the death. (The flute has faded away. He sits on the bed beside her, a little numb.) I couldn't make it. I just couldn't make it, Linda."*
(Miller, 1949: p. 5).

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 1) between Willy, the hero of the play, and his wife, Linda. They talk about his job. When Linda asks her husband why he doesn't feel well, Willy tells her that he is so tired and he cannot go on anymore. In this dialogue, Willy flouts the maxim of quality by exaggerating his feeling "*I'm tired to death*" to illustrate that he was very exhausted from his life. Although Willy doesn't mean the exact words, his wife, Linda understands his feeling.

2. "LINDA: *Take an aspirin. Should I get you an aspirin? It'll soothe you.*
WILLY: (with wonder): *I was driving along, you understand? And I was fine. I was even observing the scenery. You can imagine, me looking at scenery, on the road every week of my life. But it's so beautiful up there, Linda, the trees are so thick, and the sun is warm. I opened the windshield and just let the warm air bathe over me. And then all of a sudden I'm goin' off the road! I'm tellin'ya, I absolutely forgot I was driving. If I'd've gone the other way over the white line I might've killed somebody. So I went on again — and five minutes later I'm dreamin' again, and I nearly... ((He presses two fingers against his eyes.) I have such thoughts, I have such strange thoughts."* (Miller, 1949: p. 6).

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 1). It is between Willy and his wife, Linda. When she asks to give him a medicine (aspirin), he replies to her question with another answer

irrelevant to what she asks about. He talks a lot telling her about his imagination. By that, he violates the maxim of quantity by giving her a lot of information. He also violates the maxim of relation by giving his wife a lot of information that is irrelevant to her question.

3. *“LINDA: Willy, dear. Talk to them again. There’s no reason why you can’t work in New York.*

WILLY: They don’t need me in New York. I’m the New England man. I’m vital in New England.” (Miller, 1949: p. 6).

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 1). It is between Willy and Linda. She tells him to talk to his manager to transform his work to New York. Willy deliberately lies to her wife that he is a very important salesman in New England, they don’t need him in New York. But the truth is that they don’t need him anymore because he has become an old and disabled worker. So he violates the maxim of quality by hiding the truth and lying to her.

4. *“LINDA: We should’ve bought the land next door.*

WILLY: The street is lined with cars. There’s not a breath of fresh air in the neighborhood. The grass don’t grow any more, you can’t raise a carrot in the back yard. They should’ve had a law against apartment houses. Remember those two beautiful elm trees out there? When I and Biff hung the swing between them?” (Miller, 1949: p. 8).

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 1). It is between Willy and Linda. She plans to buy the land next to their house. Willy answers her with sentences that are far away from her speech. He lives in his dreams about the past times. He makes a comparison between the past time and nowadays. He remembers when there were not a lot of cars in the streets. There was a breath of fresh air in the neighborhood. There was grass that was growing. But nowadays, there are no such things. So here Willy flouts the maxims of quantity and relation by telling his wife a lot of information that is irrelevant to her speech. His speech represents that he is constricted by his failure, and cannot succeed in his life.

5. *“WILLY: You’re my foundation and my support, Linda.*

LINDA: Just try to relax, dear. You make mountains out of molehills.” (Miller, 1949: p. 9).

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 1). It is between Willy and Linda. Willy tries to praise his wife by saying that she is the main source of strength for him. She always supports and encourages him. Linda replies to his compliment by making a metaphor. She said that he makes mountains from small hills. That means he exaggerates the small things. Linda thinks that her husband is exaggerating his speech. By this metaphor, she flouts the maxim quality.

6. *“BIFF: What’s he say about me?*

HAPPY: I can't make it out." (Miller, 1949: p. 12).

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 1). It is between Biff and his brother, Happy. Biff tries to know his father's opinion about him. However his brother, Happy refuses to tell him any piece of information about their father's speech. He hides the information. So Happy deliberately violated the maxims of quantity because he hides the information.

7. "BIFF: Why? You're making money, aren't you?"

HAPPY: (moving about with energy, expressiveness): All I can do now is wait for the merchandise manager to die. And suppose I get to be merchandise manager? He's a good friend of mine, and he just built a terrific estate on Long Island. And he lived there about two months and sold it, and now he's building another one. He can't enjoy it once it's finished. And I know that's just what I would do. I don't know what the hell I'm workin' for. Sometimes I sit in my apartment — all alone. And I think of the rent I'm paying. And it's crazy. But then, it's what I always wanted. My own apartment, a car, and plenty of women. And still, goddammit, I'm lonely." (Miller, 1949: 13).

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 1). It is between Biff and his brother, Happy. Biff asks his brother if he makes money. Happy replies to him with a lot of information about his life that is irrelevant to his brother's question. When Biff asks about money, Happy talks about his hopes, his relationships, his friends, and his loneliness. He doesn't mention anything about money. So he deliberately violates the maxim of quantity by telling his brother a lot of information and the maxim of relation by saying irrelevant information about his life.

8. "WILLY: Don't say? Tell you a secret, boys. Don't breathe it to a soul. Someday I'll have my own business, and I'll never have to leave home any more.

HAPPY: Like Uncle Charley, heh?

WILLY: Bigger than Uncle Charley! Because Charley is not — liked. He's liked, but he's not — well liked." (Miller, 1949: p. 19).

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 1) in which Willy violates the maxims of quantity and quality in his speech to his sons Happy and Biff, he gives information more than is required and tells them something that is not true and lacks adequate evidence. He deliberately tells his sons that he is bigger than his friend Charley and he is well-liked than him but truly he is not. He tries to clarify that he is an important and successful salesman.

9. "HAPPY: Shh! Take it easy. What brought you back tonight?"

WILLY: I got an awful scare. Nearly hit a kid in Yonkers. God! Why didn't I go to Alaska with my brother Ben that time! Ben! That man was a genius, that man was success incarnate! What a mistake! He begged me to go." (Miller, 1949: p. 27).

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 1). It is between Happy and his father, Willy. Happy asks his father what makes him return home tonight. However, Willy answers his question differently. Willy tells his son, Happy something irrelevant to his question. He lives in his illusion. He loses in his dreams. Willy talks about his brother. He remembers the past time when his brother, Ben demanded from him to go together to Alaska. Ben begs Willy to go with him to Alaska. Willy blames himself because he doesn't go with his brother at that time. So he deliberately violates the maxims of relation and quantity because he tells his son, Happy a lot of irrelevant information.

10. *"LINDA: You look so rested, dear.*

WILLY: I slept like a dead one. First time in months. Imagine, sleeping till ten on a Tuesday morning. Boys left nice and early, heh?" (Miller, 1949: p. 50).

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 2) in which Willy flouts the maxim of quality by using exaggeration. Because he is very tired he says that he was sleeping like a dead. So he exaggerates his tiredness. He is not a dead man. Willy also flouts the maxim of relation when he asks about his sons. He gives his wife irrelevant information.

11. *"WILLY: Oh. Can we talk a minute?"*

HOWARD: Records things. Just got delivery yesterday. Been driving me crazy, the most terrific machine I ever saw in my life. I was up all night with it." (Miller, 1949: p. 54).

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 2). It is between Willy and his manager, Howard in his office. While Willy wants to talk to Howard, Howard entirely talks about a different thing as if he doesn't listen to Willy. He talks about the recorder. His response is irrelevant to Willy's question. As he ignores Willy's question, Howard deliberately violates the maxim of relation by giving some irrelevant information to Willy's question.

12. *"HOWARD: Not travel! Well, what'll you do?"*

WILLY: Remember, Christmas time, when you had the party here? You said you'd try to think of some spot for me here in town." (Miller, 1949: p. 56).

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 2). It is between Howard and Willy. While Howard asks Willy what he would do if he didn't travel anymore, Willy's answer to his question is completely irrelevant. Willy reminds Howard about some events that happened in the past, especially, Christmas time. Howard promised Willy to give him a position (a job) in the

town. By that, Willy deliberately violates the maxim of relation by saying some irrelevant information. He also violates the maxim of quantity by giving more information and hiding the appropriate answer.

13. “WILLY: Howard, are you firing me?

HOWARD: I think you need a good long rest, Willy.” (Miller, 1949: p. 59)

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 2). It is between Howard and Willy. Willy asks his boss, Howard, if he is fired. Howard’s answer is indirect and incomplete. He hides some information. It is somehow vague and ambiguous. Howard does not answer Willy directly. He uses a general expression like “*I think you need a good long rest.*” which has implied meaning. He tells him that he is fired but in an indirect way. So he flouts the maxims of manner and quantity because his speech is mysterious and incomplete.

14. “WILLY: Ben, am I right? Don’t you think I’m right? I value your advice.

BEN: There’s a new continent at your doorstep, William. You could walk out rich. Rich!” (Miller, 1949: p. 62)

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 2). It is between Willy and his brother, Ben. When Willy asks his brother, Ben about his opinion about him and how he sees Willy, Ben replies to him in a vague and obscure way. He tells his irrelevant information. Ben uses general expressions like “*There’s a new continent at your doorstep.*” which has implied meaning. He wants to tell his brother, Willy that he will be rich if he comes with him and leave his job. Willy will live a prosperous life with his brother, Ben. So, Ben flouts the maxims of relation and manner because his answer to Willy’s question is ambiguous, mysterious, and has a lot of irrelevant information.

15. “BERNARD: What’s Biff doing?

WILLY: Well, he’s been doing very big things in the West. But he decided to establish himself here. Very big. We’re having dinner. Did I hear your wife had a boy?” (Miller, 1949: p. 66)

This quotation is extracted from (ACT 2). It is between Bernard and Willy in which Willy violates the maxims of manner and relation deliberately. When Bernard asks Willy about what his son, Biff is doing, Willy answers him in a very ambiguous and obscure way. His speech has general expressions like “*he’s doing very big things in the West.*” and “*very big*” which are mysterious and have implied meaning. Willy tries to hide some information from Bernard so he deliberately violates the maxim of manner. He also talks about something irrelevant to their speech when he asks Bernard about his new baby. So he deliberately violates the maxim of relation.

5. Conclusion

After analyzing 15 selected quotations from Miller's "*Death of a Salesman*", it has been noticed that there are flouting and violating of the four maxims of the cooperative principle (Quantity, Quality, Manner, and Relation). The violation of the maxims has been noticed more than flouting in the play. The most maxim that has been flouted and violated is the maxim of relation because Miller depicts the hero of the play, Willy Loman as the victim of modern social life in America. He cannot live in reality so he always lives in his dreams. His speech is always irrelevant to all the issues that have been discussed. Willy flouts and violates the maxim of quantity and quality by hiding some information, exaggerating other things, and using metaphors to hide his failure. He also flouts and violates the maxim of manner by using some general expressions that have vague and obscure meanings to illustrate how he is a successful person. Miller makes the hero flout and violate the maxims to clarify how poor people lived at that time in America and how they were suffering.

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