

**GRICEAN CONVERSATIONAL MAXIMS IN
CHUAH GUAT ENG'S *ECHOES OF SILENCE***

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UNIVERSITI MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR**

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ABSTRACT

Gricean Conversational Maxims, for both observance and non-observance of maxims, is used to analyse the dialogues involving the Malaysian Chinese female protagonist in Chuah Guat Eng's *Echoes of Silence*. The framework is considered as it offers the usage of cooperative principles theory to avoid, or minimise, misunderstanding and misinterpretation between protagonist and the supporting fictional characters during the communication process (Grice, 1975; Finch, 2000). The data is coded according to the framework. Content analysis is used to qualitatively analyse the data. Findings of the study indicated that the protagonist observed maxim of relation the most in the dialogues of the novel. Further, the combination of more than one maxim do occur and pertinent examples will be presented. It can be deduced that the communication process amongst fictional characters is deemed effective when intended meanings are realised through the appropriate use of maxims but may cause the plot to be less interesting.

Keywords: Gricean Conversational Maxims, *Echoes of Silence*, Malaysian novel, dialogues

MAKSIM PERBUALAN MAKSIM DALAM *ECHOES OF SILENCE*

KARYA CHUAH GUAT ENG

ABSTRAK

Maksim Perbualan Gricean digunakan untuk menganalisis dialog yang melibatkan protagonist wanita yang berbangsa Cina dan berwarganegara Malaysia dalam novel tempatan iaitu 'Echoes of Silence' yang ditulis oleh penulis tempatan iaitu Chuah Guat Eng. Rangka kajian tersebut dipilih kerana menawarkan penggunaan teori prinsip kerjasama yang berpotensi untuk mengelakkan, atau meminimumkan, salah faham dan salah tafsir antara protagonist dan watak-watak sokongan semasa proses komunikasi (Grice, 1975; Finch, 2000). Data dikodkan mengikut rangka kajian yang telah ditetapkan dan seterusnya dianalisis secara kualitatif. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa protagonist mematuhi kepada maksim hubungan pada kadar tertinggi melalui dialognya. Tambahan pula, gabungan antara dua atau lebih maksim wujud dalam dialog yang diperkatakan oleh protagonis di mana contoh akan dipersembahkan. Ini menunjukkan bahawa proses komunikasi antara watak-watak dalam novel ini berkesan apabila mesej yang ingin disampaikan difahami melalui penggunaan maksim-maksim yang sesuai. Namun demikian, dialog yang mematuhi semua maksim kemungkinan akan menyebabkan plot cerita menjadi kurang menarik.

Kata kunci: Maksim Perbualan Gricean, *Echoes of Silence*, novel Malaysia, dialog

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Research

Language is an important system for humans. Blakemore (1992: 3) found it challenging to think of any activities performed by humans which does not involve communication as she believed that human beings are always communicating with one another. Besides for the purpose of writing, Pardoe (1965: 3) noted that words are important in the process of communication. Without words, the mentioned process will not occur verbally. Humans communicate for various functions using language as it serves many vital purposes. Through the usage of language, humans are often expressing their knowledge, ignorance, feelings, needs and intentions (Blakemore, 1992: 3). Besides, Yang (2014) noted that meaning, messages, ideology and knowledge can also be transmitted via a proper and efficient communication approach. Hence, it is vital for a speaker to put the necessary effort to ensure that the hearers will be able to receive and understood on the communicated message.

According to Pardoe (1965: 1), the principle of communication is that thought is transmitted from one mind to another. In short, information is conveyed when there is at least one speaker and one listener to create a flow in communication. When the speaker convey a message, the listener is expected to interpret it and provide a necessary response. When interlocutors show the ability to converse, understand and reply to each other, it will subsequently create a flow in communication. Hence, these two roles are interchangeable.

Language can be communicated through two discourses, namely spoken discourse, such as face-to-face interaction and telephone conversation, as well as written discourse such as narration and dialogue. According to Cornbleet and Carter (2001: 11), dialogue, an important element in literary, is often present in fictional works which functions to

break the monotony of lengthy prose sections. As a result, this will create a variation of sentence structures in the work. The text found in it has the ability to create its own context and is rather self-contained (Cornbleet & Carter, 2001: 107). Thus, through the choice of words used, the readers will be able to interpret the author's ideas. In addition, the readers will not question the format as well as the language which are applied by the author in the work (Cornbleet & Carter, 2001: 107). Moreover, as stated by Cornbleet and Carter (2001: 107), the readers will accept what is in the literary text, adding that the content is written according to how the author has intended it to be.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Many a time, people would regard the process of communication by expressing thoughts in words, both spoken and written discourse, as something natural and easy. In contrast to such belief, Pardoe (1965) remarked that such process through transmission of thoughts as "difficult and highly artificial" whereby much effort must be inserted throughout the process. Among the problems that Pardoe (1965: 26) has noted are that thoughts are not arranged in a logical manner, thoughts are uttered carelessly and usage of more words than is required when communicating. Furthermore, Pardoe (1965: 1) noted that such problems can also arise when thoughts are not arranged in a logical manner or when uttered carelessly. When such issues occur, there may be a failure in the process. Pardoe (1965: 2) believed that perfect communication, particularly those involving any forms of complicated thoughts, is absurd. Hence, it is necessary for interlocutors to focus on being precise, logical and clear at any stage of the communication process (Grice, 1975; Pardoe, 1965: 2).

Pardoe (1965: 1) emphasised that one should not, and should never, make any forms of assumption that the same thought can be transmitted to another interlocutor for the same

interpretation. As a result, one should not have the perception that the thought will be understood and interpreted accurately as intended by others. Besides that, Pardoe (1965) also claimed that being vague will also lead to the occurrences of breakdown in the process of communication. Dumanig (2010) claimed that a speaker's message can be influenced by his or her social class and gender. Hence, those factors contribute to how one may commit himself or herself during the process of communication.

Despite realising that communication is vital to perform human activities, various problems may occur in line with human's interest. Blakemore (1992: 25) stated that a speaker will only be regarded as communicating if he is assumed to be rational whereby he will be required to conform to particular norms and standards. Hence, it is believed that communication will occur effectively once those criteria are fulfilled.

Fiction serves as a reflection of human discourse. According to Kizelbach (2017), fiction does not possess to offend "for real" as it illustrates the fictional world of human relationships. From the readers' perspective, it is illogical for them to accept what is in the literary work and agree to the content written in line with the author's intention as stated by Cornbleet and Carter (2001: 107). With that, readers may have the tendency to misinterpret the plot written by the author.

From a grammatical point of view, Sadiq Abdulwahed Ahmed Ismail (2010) highlighted that communication "suffers a considerable breakdown" when grammar is used wrongly. When grammar is used wrongly, for example, verb forms, it may affect the understanding of the interlocutors who may not be able to comprehend the sequence of events. As a result, misunderstanding or confusion among interlocutors may arise due to this error, adding that the communication may be affected. Besides ungrammatical, Pardoe (1965) also highlighted that being vague will also lead to the occurrence of such breakdown. When a message is not conveyed clearly, possibly unclear or has more than

one intended meaning when uttered, interlocutors may not be able to grasp it according to what is expected.

However, women are viewed differently by Lakoff (1973) for they experience linguistic discrimination in line with their gender. He clarified that women are discriminated from the way they are taught to use language when communicating, adding that it “submerges a woman’s personal identity, by denying her the means to express herself strongly and encouraging expressions that suggest triviality in subject matter and uncertainty about it.” As a result from the effect, women are “systematically denied access to power”, allowing men to be more authoritative. Additionally, Lakoff (1975: 3) claimed that women “are not capable of holding it as demonstrated by their linguistic behaviour along with other aspects of their behaviour.” Despite having the urge to be vocal, women are aware that they will “later suffer with discrimination” from their actions. In his work, he has provided an example on how a little girl who ‘talks rough’ like a boy will be “ostracised, scolded or made fun of.” Hence, it can be viewed that women are expected to behave and respond in a way that is expected by the society. However, it may not be the case in today’s modernised world.

In today’s world, women are seen to be contradicting Lakoff’s ideas, in which it is depicted by the female protagonist in the novel. In order to have an in-depth understanding on this from the society and reality, pragmatics will be the main focus of this study whereby the question of how dialogues involving the female protagonist from a spoken discourse can be translated into a written discourse, particularly from a novel, using Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975).

1.3 Research Objectives

With regards to the issue problematised in Section 1.2, the research objectives of this study are as follows:

- i) To identify the occurrences of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975), for both observance and non-observance of maxims, in the dialogues involving the Malaysian Chinese female protagonist in Chuah Guat Eng's *Echoes of Silence*
- ii) To investigate the phenomenon of non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) in the dialogues involving the Malaysian Chinese female protagonist in Chuah Guat Eng's *Echoes of Silence*
- iii) To analyse the implicature(s) in the dialogues involving the Malaysian Chinese female protagonist in Chuah Guat Eng's novel *Echoes of Silence* based on Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

1.4 Research Questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

- i) What are the observance and non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) that are identified in the dialogues involving the Malaysian Chinese female protagonist in Chuah Guat Eng's *Echoes of Silence*?
- ii) How are the non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) manifested in the dialogues which involved the Malaysian Chinese female protagonist in Chuah Guat Eng's *Echoes of Silence*?
- iii) What is/are the implication(s) when the Malaysian Chinese female protagonist in Chuah Guat Eng's novel *Echoes of Silence* did not observe Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)?

1.5 Significance of Research

For effective communication to occur, interlocutors must start an interaction with a purpose. It will allow a consistent flow of ideas to be exchanged during the process.

It is important for writers, particularly novelists, to create dialogues uttered by fictional characters. Novelists can minimise or attempt to avoid occurrences of misunderstanding and misinterpretation among the fictional characters as well as readers. Through such avoidance, readers will be capable of comprehending and interpreting the novelists' intended meaning from their respective work. As a result, readers would be able to generate a clearer insight on the novel's plot. When readers show the ability to visualise the plot as depicted by the novelists, the novelist is regarded to have successfully conveyed the intended idea of the storyline to the readers' minds. Subsequently, this may also ensure that readers, both Malaysians and non-Malaysians, are able to accept and show interest in reading a Malaysian novel, creating a higher demand for such reading material in the market. Hence, novelists can consider applying Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) when creating dialogues for fictional characters when producing their respective work for such benefit.

From the academic perspective, contribution to linguistic theories related to the field of pragmatics, especially towards Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975), specifically the non-observance, in novels is scarce. The findings obtained also has the potential to act as another source of informative reference for further studies related to literature and communication, particularly on dialogues produced by fictional characters.

1.6 Limitation of Research

The study is limited to analyse dialogues involving the protagonist from the research instrument. From the data, the existence of monologues and narration, if present before, during or after any dialogues, act as a form of information to the study. However, it is to be noted that the data obtained does not serve as a representation of all dialogue produced in all literary work but only to the dialogues involving the protagonist through the application of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975).

1.7 Definition of Terms

Novel refers to a literary work which has 250 to 300 words per page with a total of more than 50, 000 words consisting of approximately 200 pages or more.

Fictional characters refer to the characters who may be entirely fabricated or inspired based on a real-life individual.

Protagonist refers to the main character who gains the limelight to the entire, if not, most, of the plot of the literary work.

Supporting fictional characters refer to individuals characterised in the literary work who are not the centre of the plot but help to enhance the protagonist's role.

Dialogues refers to conversation that occurs between characters in the literary work which is often easily distinguished through the usage of quotation marks to reveal the thoughts of the involved characters, allowing it to act as an added information for readers to understand the storyline better.

Gricean Cooperative Principle refers to the principle that governs on how interlocutors would frequently respond when they are engaged in the process of communicating which are to be true, be brief, be relevant and be clear.

Gricean Conversational Maxims refers to the maxims, also known as the sub-principles, are separated between observance and non-observance, whereby the interlocutors are often expected to adhere when communicating.

Observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims refers to the four categories of maxims under observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims, namely, maxim of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of relation and maxim of manner.

Non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims refers to the four ways interlocutors would usually fail to cooperate when communicating which are flouting a maxim, violating a maxim, opting out a maxim and infringing a maxim.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Malaysian Novels in English and Novelists

Chuah (2015, August 4) has described Malaysian novel in English as:

“a book with a minimum of 75, 000 words, single-story, fictional prose narratives published after 1965 and originally written in English by writers who present themselves as having some kind of “homeland” relationship with Malaysia.”

Chuah (ibid.) provided such relation through three methods on how Malaysian novels in English are described:

- i) The “only homeland” relationship of those Malaysians who are born, bred and live here.
- ii) The “former homeland” relationship, that of the Malaysian diaspora.
- iii) The “second homeland” relationship of a foreign national who, for personal or professional reasons, now or in the past, has made a second home in Malaysia.

(Extracted from Chuah (2015, August 4) in *How to Talk about Malaysian Novels in English without Reading Any*)

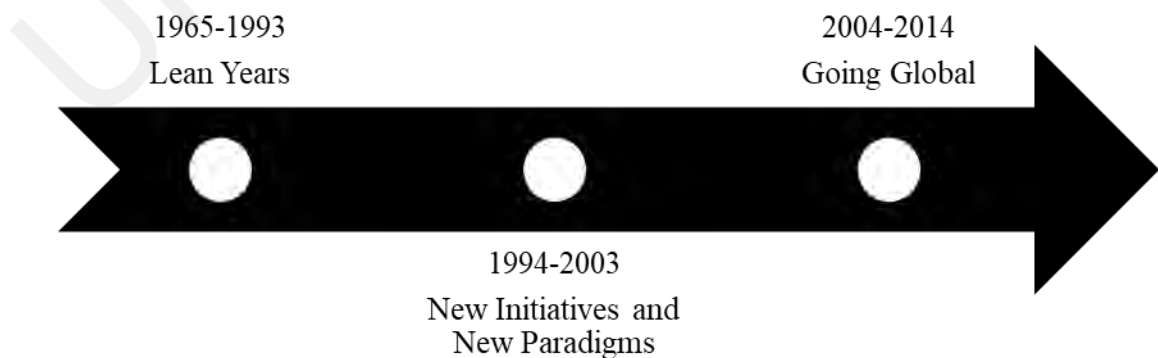


Figure 2.1 Timeline on Malaysian Novels in English

As shown in Figure 2.1, Chuah (2015, August 4) provided a timeline on Malaysian novels in English whereby she segregated it into three eras. She claimed that she marked 1965 as her starting point to remark the year that Singapore has left the then-Malaya. Additionally, she ended her timeline in 2014 as it was challenging for her “to talk about the developmental trend while they (Malaysian novels in English) are still unfolding” when she wrote on the article entitled *How to Talk about Malaysian Novels in English without Ready-ing Any for The Star*, Malaysia, particularly for *Star 2*.

During 1965 to 1993, only a few Malaysian novels in English were published. Based on Chuah’s (2015, August 4) research, in that 28 years, only 17 novels were published, all written by 13 male writers who were either born before or soon after the Second World War (refer to Appendix A). Among the reasons which have contributed to the low number of publications were the low productivity, lack of interest from the publishers and local readers as well as the then-unfavourable political environment (Chuah, 2015, August 11). Hence, it affected the number of Malaysian novels in English available within the country at that time.

In 1994, the Malaysian novels in English underwent a change in view. However, the change only became distinct in the 21st century. Throughout this second phase, between 1994 to 2003, Chuah (2015, August 4) identified an increase of women novelists writing Malaysian novels in English as well as self-publishers. Besides, she also observed that universities showed a supportive role, from the aspect of education, in expanding the community of readers.

From 2004 to 2014, Chuah (2015, August 4) observed “a sudden and fairly well-sustained increase” towards the Malaysian novels published on a yearly basis. The published novels, in this era, were written by “locally-based Malaysian citizens, members of the Malaysian diaspora and former Malaysians who had chosen to be either

citizens or permanent residents of other countries” (Chuah, *ibid.*). On the other hand, several expatriates or foreign nationals who were residing in Malaysia at that time have also contributed to this field. Chuah (2015, September 22) accounted that “no less than 66 new Malaysian novels in English were published” during the ten years, adding that 12 were produced in 2014.

2.2 Dialogues

To date, many analysts, including Halliday (1994), have highlighted that the language used in dialogues involves the act of exchanging information. During interaction, the speaker carries a particular role (Halliday, 2014; Halliday, 1984). In return, the listener is expected to complement the speaker’s role.

Cornbleet and Carter (2001) have noted that “very few works of fiction have no dialogue at all” as it is usually applied to break the monotony of lengthy prose sections. However, dialogues are present minimally or absent by classical writers as it was not a practice then. Furthermore, many novelists believed that the existence of dialogues in literary work allow the fictional characters to reveal their respective personalities. Additionally, Tannen (1989: 33) claimed that the usage of dialogues in fiction has the ability “to give voice to the characters” in literary work. Besides, Cornbleet and Carter (2001) have realised that novelists have also practiced using a variety of writing techniques and styles for dialogues such as adding tags, such as ‘She said’ and ‘he groaned’, when necessary.

Kozloff (2000) argued that dialogues produced “is never realistic; it is always designed for us”, in which the personal pronoun ‘us’ is referring to the readers. With that, readers who are reading fictions are aware that the content that they read is purely from the creativity of the writer and that it is not based on a real-life situation unless stated

otherwise. Additionally, it creates a form of entertainment of leisure for the readers. To enhance the characterisation and plot development of a literary work, intra diegetic level of communication is vital (Kizelbach, 2017; Kozloff, 2000). When the characters talk among themselves simultaneously, it will act as an added information for the readers besides understanding from the characters' characteristics and settings. As a result, pragmatics, namely Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) (refer to Section 2.4), can be applied in order to create a better understanding of the characters and plot as depicted by the writers to the readers.

Thus far, the study of dialogue in fiction has been prompted with various purposes such as to analyse character speech, to describe methods of representing fictional speech, to study the relationship between real and fictional dialogues and to examine linguistic theories of language use (Rossen-Knill, 1999; Rossen-Knill, 1994; Tannen, 1990; Toolan, 1985; Leech & Short, 1981, Vološinov, 1971).

2.3 Gricean Cooperative Principle (1975)

In 1975, philosopher H. P. Grice has successfully published a notable article about Cooperative Principle which focuses on the verbal interaction strategies created by speakers when communicating. Grice (1975: 45) defined Cooperative Principle as “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.” Hence, this principle is applicable when one shows an attempt to be cooperative during the communication process.

According to Simpson (1997: 148), the principle is mutually understood among interlocutors as a basic assumption that “speakers normally intend to accomplish purposeful and effective communication in conversation.” On contrary, such

conversation may not occur frequently. For Grundy (2008: 97), Gricean Cooperative Principle (1975) allows the interlocutors to be informative to the expected degree, to say things that are well founded, to be relevant as well as to be clear. However, what may seem as such may be an opposite to another interlocutor. Finch (2000) mentioned that Gricean Cooperative Principle (1975) functions to observe the conversations by minimising the occurrence of misunderstanding which arise among interlocutors during the process of communication. When misunderstanding is avoided among interlocutors, it allows the effective communication process to occur.

However, Mey (2001) argued that the process of communication is only considered as effective if and only if interlocutors cooperate among each other through “mutually accepted, pragmatically determined context.” Therefore, interlocutors are required to mutually accept the conveyed message in order to show cooperation during the process.

2.4 Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

According to Birner (2013), the basic idea behind the Cooperative Principle (1975) is that interlocutors, above all else, attempt to be cooperative during conversation. Interlocutors are, therefore, required to show cooperation with one another when communicating.

Thomas (1995) noted that Grice did not suggest that “people are always good and kind or cooperative in any everyday sense of that word.” Instead, Grice himself was aware that interlocutors, generally, show the tendency to only observe certain regularities throughout the process of communication. As a result, Grice intended to provide an explanation on a particular set of regularities which has the ability to govern the generation and interpretation of conversational implicature that arise when communicating.

The Gricean Cooperative Principle (1975) consists of four conversational maxims which are maxim of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of relation and maxim of manner. Each of the maxims covers one aspect of linguistic interaction and describes what is expected of a cooperative speaker with respect to that particular maxim (see Table 3.1). The proposed maxims are also known as supermaxims.

However, Grice's (1975: 47) proposed maxims are not limited to the occurrences of talk exchanges only. He claimed that: "it may be worth noting that the specific expectations and presumptions connected with at least some of the foregoing maxims have their analogues in the sphere of transactions that are not exchanges." As a result, there may be a particular reason on why the interlocutors failed to observe the maxims.

Grice (1975: 47) claimed that the conversational maxims are connected with a particular purpose which allows talk and its talk exchange to be adapted as well as to be employed to serve. Hence, there may exist an overlap of more than one maxim in the dialogues involving the protagonist in the novel.

Additionally, Thomas (1995) highlighted that the four conversational maxims has the ability to "establish what the implicature might be." Hence, the dialogue uttered involving the protagonist can be understood despite not being said explicitly.

2.4.1 Observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

2.4.1.1 Maxim of Quantity

If you are assisting me to mend a car, I expect your contribution to be neither more nor less than is required; if for example, at a particular stage I need four screws, I expect you to hand me four, rather than two or six.

(Extracted from Grice (1975: 47) in *Logic and Conversation*)

Based on the example, Grice expects that *you* should observe the maxim of quantity by ensuring that *you* are able to provide sufficient contribution in mending the car whereby *you* are expected to give only four screws as required instead of more or less. However, supermaxim 2 is not present as *you* did not make his/her contribution by being informative than required during that incident.

2.4.1.2 Maxim of Quality

I expect your contribution to be genuine and not spurious. If I need sugar as an ingredient in the cake you are assisting me to make, I do not expect you to hand me salt; if I need a spoon, I do not expect a trick spoon made of rubber.

(Extracted from Grice (1975: 47) in *Logic and Conversation*)

Based on the example, Grice expects the help offered to be true as stated in supermaxim 1. He does not expect to be given other ingredients or tools when asked for a particular ingredient or tool. Hence, he has set an expectation that he will be receiving assistance that is truthful and not false.

2.4.1.3 Maxim of Relation

I expect a partner's contribution to be appropriate to immediate needs at each stage of the transaction; if I am mixing ingredients for a cake, I do not expect to be handed a good book, or even an oven cloth (though this might be appropriate contribution at a later stage).

(Extracted from Grice (1975: 47) in *Logic and Conversation*)

Based on the example, Grice expects the help offered is relevant to the situation that is happening. He does not wish to be receiving irrelevant help at that particular time of occurrence. In the same vein, Grice (1975: 47) has identified that “questions about what different kinds and focuses of relevant there may be, how these shift in the course of a talk exchange, how to allow for the fact that subjects of conversation are legitimately changed and so on” are bound to arise in any process of communication. However, he has “yet to revert them (the questions)”.

2.4.1.4 Maxim of Manner

I expect a partner to make it clear what contribution he is making, and to execute his performance with reasonable dispatch.

(Extracted from Grice (1975: 47) in *Logic and Conversation*).

Based on the example, Grice has the impression that his partner is able to avoid obscurity of expression, avoid ambiguity, be brief and be orderly when contributing help.

Husband: Where are the car keys?
Wife: They're on the table in the hall.

(Extracted from Thomas (1995: 64) from *Meaning of Interaction: An Introduction to*

Pragmatics)

With reference to the above extract, Thomas (1995) justified that the interaction between the husband and wife observed all of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975). In the talk exchange, the wife observed the maxim of quantity by providing the right amount of information. She also observed the maxim of quality by responding to her husband truthfully. Additionally, she observed maxim of relation by directly addressing her husband's goal in asking the question. Furthermore, she also observed the maxim of manner by answering her husband's question clearly. As a result, Thomas (1995) was able to conclude that the wife has "said precisely what she meant, no more no less, and has generated no implicature," adding that what the wife has uttered to her husband does not consist of any additional level of meaning.

2.4.2 Non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

When a speaker successfully observed all the maxims during the interaction, such as from the example provided by Thomas (1995: 64) (refer to Section 2.3.1.4), it is then regarded as "the least interesting case." In reality, many scholars have noted that speakers do not always obey Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) according to what has been proposed, including Grice himself (Grice, 1975; Grice, 1989; Thomas, 1995; Simpson, 1997; Grundy, 2008; Birner, 2013). Simpson (1997: 148) argued that conversation should not be observing all Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) at all times as it will result interlocutors to behave in an automaton-like during the process of communication. Additionally, Simpson (1997: 148) also highlighted that such observance would create an over-literal, direct and unsophisticated routine when communicating. As a result, the failure to adhere the maxims by the interlocutors can be identified through four different ways. Thomas (1995) stated that Grice (1975) has

listed the ways whereby an interlocutor may fail to fulfil a maxim during the occurrence of the talk exchange.

2.4.2.1 Flouting a Maxim

He may flout a maxim; that is, he may blatantly fail to fulfil it. On the assumption that the speaker is able to fulfil the maxim and to do so without violating another maxim (because of a clash), is not opting out, and is not, in view of the blatancy of his performance, trying to mislead, the hearer is faced with minor problem: How can his saying what he did say be reconciled with the supposition that he is observing the overall Cooperative Principle? This situation is one that characteristically gives rise to a conversational implicature; and when a conversational implicature is generated in this way, I shall say that a maxim is being exploited.

(Extracted from Grice (1975: 45) in *Logic and Conversation*)

Based on the explanation, Grice (1975) stated that an interlocutor has the ability to flout a maxim when he or she shows the tendency to fail to fulfil it in an obvious manner. However, the interlocutor's action has no intention to mislead other interlocutors during the process of communication.

Thomas (1995) regarded that such occurrences of flout involves "exploitation. As violation happens in a blatant manner, whereby the interlocutors are aware of it being obvious, Birner (2013: 43) claimed that the hearer is expected to be attentive about it. However, Grundy (2008: 97) noted that the interlocutor's thoughts "do not always abide so rigorously by those maxims." As a result, interlocutors do not show the ability to flout it when communicating.

2.4.2.2 Violating a Maxim

He may quietly and unostentatiously violate a maxim; if so, in some cases he will be liable to mislead.

(Extracted from Grice (1975: 49) in *Logic and Conversation*)

Based on the explanation, Grice (1975) stated that an interlocutor may quietly or unostentatiously violate a maxim whereby the or she has the intention to mislead other interlocutors during the process of communication.

According to Thomas (1995), she realised that many commentators often use the term “violate” incorrectly for all forms of non-observance of the maxims. The act of violating this maxim, as claimed by Al-Hindawi and Al-Aadili (2017: 210), “produces a deceptive non-truthfulness.” As a result, it creates an impression of lying or deceiving among interlocutors (Al-Hindawi & Al-Aadili, 2017: 210; Birner, 2013: 43). Carson (2010: 25) highlighted that the occurrence of violation for Gricean Conversational Maxims, for all four maxims, is prone to illustrate deceptive effects. Hence, misunderstanding may arise during the process of communication whereby the speaker is aware that he or she is lying with the assumption that the hearer will not be able to distinguish it.

2.4.2.3 Opting Out a Maxim

He may opt out from the operation of both the maxim and the Cooperative Principle; he may say, indicate, or allow it to become plain that he is unwilling to cooperate in the way the maxim requires. He may say, for example, *I cannot say more; my lips are sealed.*

(Extracted from Grice, 1975: 49) in *Logic and Conversation*)

Based on Grice's explanation, an interlocutor who is unwilling to show cooperation according to how the maxim is needed shows signs of opting out of a maxim. Additionally, Thomas (1995) highlighted that the speaker will "avoid generating a false implicature" or appears to be uncooperative when failing to adhere to it. Besides, Birner (2013: 43) noted that an interlocutor "refuse to play the game at all" when wanting to opt out from the maxim.

2.4.2.4 Infringing a Maxim

A speaker infringing a maxim fails to observe a maxim because of his/her linguistic performance. This can happen if the speaker has an imperfect linguistic performance.

(Extracted from Grice (1989: 56) in *Further Notes on Logic and Conversation* from *Syntax and Semantics*, 3, 41-58)

Based on Grice's explanation, a speaker is said to have infringed a maxim due to his or her imperfect linguistic performance whereby it can occur as a result of an imperfect command of the language. He further added that such occurrences may arise when the speaker is unable to speak clearly or to the point due to excitement, drunkenness or nervousness. Infringing a maxim can also take place when the speaker does not have sufficient knowledge on the spoken topic.

2.5 Previous Studies using Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

Grice (1975: 45) believed that: "Our talk exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of disconnected remarks, and would not be rational if they did. They are characteristically, to some degree, at least, cooperative efforts." In reality, however, it would be uncommon and irrational for any occurrences of talk exchanges to have

disconnected remarks among interlocutors. Furthermore, the interlocutors are often unaware if they are being cooperative, or vice versa, when communicating.

There have been many studies conducted using Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) in numerous aspects such as dialogues with humorous elements and dialogues extracted from novel. From those studies, various findings, ranging from reasons of observance and non-observance of maxims, are obtained.

Pan (2012) conducted a research on *Linguistic Basis of Humour: In Use of Grice's Cooperative Principle* using discourse analysis. Her aim was to apply Gricean Cooperative Principle (1975) to reveal the feature of English humour. In addition, she also investigated the relationship between the creation of English humour and violation of the principle. Several short dialogues, claimed to be humorous, from Dong (1992) and Li (2002) were selected as the research instrument. Pan (2012) claimed that there are multiple ways to portray humour using English such as the usage of funny words, gestures and facial expressions. Literature humour, stage humour and language humour are among the popular media which have the ability to inject humour through language. However, for the purpose of her research, she has limited it to language humour as it is used most frequently by people in their daily conversations.

She regarded Grice's framework as "precondition to context successful conversation." In selected conversations produced in a particular situation, people opt to achieve a different purpose or to create a special effect, resulting them to flout this principle deliberately and unconsciously. However for Pan (2012), when the cooperative principle and maxims are violated, she did not regard it as a situation whereby the speaker disobey the conversational rules set. Instead, such non-cooperation has created humour in conversation. Therefore, she was able to conclude that through this study,

many jokes created involved the usage of Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975) and its four maxims.

Lian (2017) realised that many studies have been conducted towards *Oliver Twist*, a novel written by Charles Dickens, particularly from the perspective of literature translation and analysis of the characters' image. Due to such gap, she studied the same instrument from the pragmatics perspective for *Discourse Analysis of Oliver Twist from the Perspective of Pragmatics*. 61 conversations produced by Oliver Twist, the protagonist, with other characters in the novel were selected as the corpus. Lian (2017) identified only 24 conversations are related to both Gricean Cooperative (1975) and Leech's Politeness Principle (1983). However, only 17 out of 24 conversations were selected due to the closeness related to the novel's themes which are on the representation of English literature in the 19th century, reflection of the cruel reality in London at that time and life as an orphan.

Her research aimed to provide a linguistic reference for the appreciation of characters and social significance in the novel. She claimed that Gricean Cooperative Principle (1975) is only limited to provide explanation on how conversational implicature is produced but it does not provide any explanations on why interlocutors show the tendency to express their respective opinions in an indirect or implicit manner. Politeness Principle (1983) proposed by Leech was applied to bridge the gap when Gricean Cooperative Principle (1975) is unable to provide a reasonable explanation when such situation arise. Therefore, two frameworks are applied in her study. Based on the data, Lian (2017) identified that characters from the novel have violated Gricean Cooperative Principle (1975) in order to obey Leech's Politeness Principle (1983) when communicating.

Wu (2019) conducted a research on *The Conventional Implicature of Dialogues in Emma* from the perspective of pragmatics. The dialogues in the novel written by Jane Austen are analysed qualitatively based on the conventional implicature using Cooperative Principle, particularly on the violation of maxims. The analysis of the findings is segregated into four distinctive categories which are conversational implicature produced by violation of the maxim of quality, maxim of quantity, maxim of relation and maxim of manner as proposed by Grice (1967, 1978).

Based on the dialogues between Emma and Mr. Knightley, Emma has violated the maxim of quality by saying she did not intend to avoid direct conflict with Mr. Knightley, adding that her response was insincere. Besides, Emma has damaged Martin's positive face and influenced Harriet's initial opinions about Martin by violating maxim of quantity for she did not contribute sufficient information as required.

In another dialogue analysed, Emma has avoided threatening Mr. Knightley's negative face and was being polite by being irrelevant as she changed the topic of their conversation, resulting her to violate maxim of manner. As Frank Churchill was unable to disclose his relationship with Miss Fairfax, he has produced incomplete utterances with Emma by creating pauses as he spoke, creating ambiguity and obscurity of expression to occur, and violated the maxim of manner.

From Wu's (2019) findings, she has noted that it is possible for conversational implicature to be derived and interpreted in fictional utterances. She also highlighted that it is commons for speakers to use indirect speech when communicating to avoid direct conflicts as well as to hurt the feelings of others.

Despite having many previous studies, there still exist a distinctive gap in literature, specifically on literary works from Malaysian context. Realising that studies using

Malaysian novel in English language from the perspective of pragmatics are a scarce combination, this research will bridge the gap by carrying out a content analysis using Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) towards Chuah Guat Eng's *Echoes of Silence*.

Universiti Malaya

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Theoretical Framework

Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) is used as the framework for this study. The mentioned framework, as shown in Table 3.1 and Table 3.2, is used to realise the research objective and research question respectively (see Section 1.2 and Section 1.3)

Table 3.1 Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975: 45-46)

Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975: 45-46)	
Category	Supermaxims and Maxims
Quantity	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Make your contribution as informative as is required.2. Do not make your contribution more informative than required.
Quality	Try to make your contribution one that is true: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Do not say what you believe to be false.2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.
Relation	Be relevant.
Manner	Be perspicuous. Avoid obscurity of expression. Avoid ambiguity. Be brief. Be orderly.

Table 3.2 Non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975: 49; 1989: 56)

Non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975: 49; 1989: 56)	
Ways	Description
Flouting a maxim	May blatantly fail to fulfil a maxim
Violating a maxim	Quietly and unostentatiously violate a maxim
Opting out a maxim	Unwilling to cooperate in the way the maxim requires
Infringing a maxim	Imperfect linguistic performance

Grice's frameworks, as shown in Table 3.1 and Table 3.2, are used to realise the research objectives and research questions respectively (see Section 1.2 and Section 1.3) as both offer the usage of conversational maxim when communicating.

3.2 Novelist Chuah Guat Eng



Figure 3.1 Novelist Chuah Guat Eng

The novelist, Chuah Guat Eng, has been recognised as Malaysia's first female English language novelist who has produced and published two fictional novels, namely *Echoes of Silence* (2008) and *Days of Change* (2010) along with a number of collection of short stories such as *Dream Stuff* (2014), *The Old House and Other Stories* as well as *Tales from the Baram River* (2001).

Based on Figure 2.1, Chuah Guat Eng only emerged in the second phase from her first published novel, *Echoes of Silence* (1994, reprinted in 2008). To date, she has been active in writing.

3.3 Research Ethics

The dialogues used for this research is obtained from the female protagonist as illustrated from Chuah Guat Eng's 2008 edition of *Echoes of Silence*.

Due to the difficulty in obtaining a copy of the novel in bookstores within the vicinity of Selangor and Kuala Lumpur, an email was sent to the novelist herself on 7 November 2017 (see Appendix B: Electronic Mail Thread with Novelist Chuah Guat Eng). The novelist has initiated to meet up at a restaurant situated in Kuala Lumpur for her to deliver the novel, including *Days of Change*, another novel that she has published.

During the meet-up, the novelist has verbally shared that no research has been conducted using her literary work. The novelist acknowledged that her literary work on *Echoes of Silence* will be used as academic research using Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) as the framework.

3.4 Novel Echoes of Silence

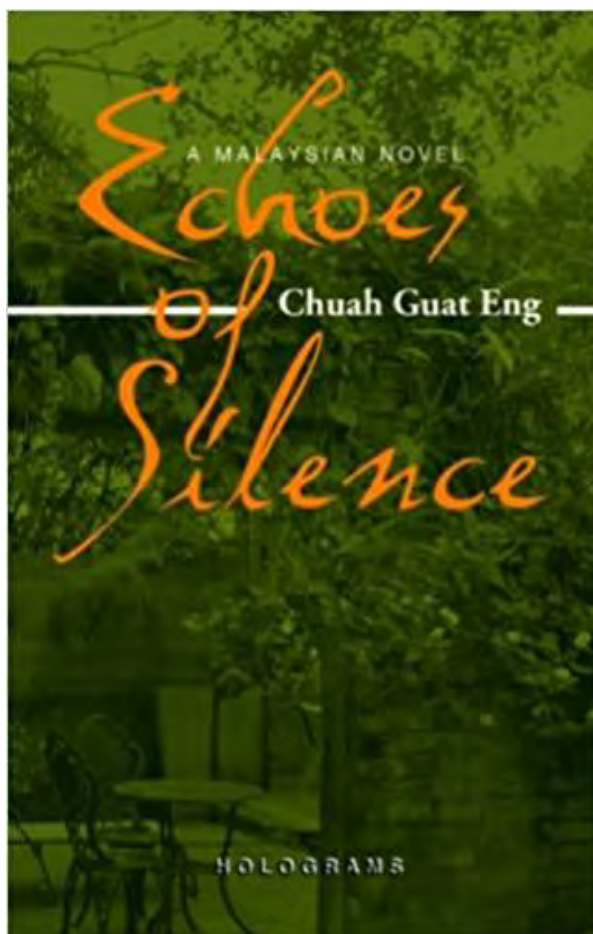


Figure 3.2 Novel *Echoes of Silence* (2008) written by novelist Chuah Guat Eng

The research instrument, written by Chuah Guat Eng, was reprinted for the second time and consists of 337 pages. To date, no research has been conducted using this novel.

In this novel, it is written from the first-person point of view of the female protagonist for all Parts, except for Part Three which is written from other fictional character's first point of view. (Refer to Section 3.4.2 on Distribution of Chapters and Section 3.5.1 on Fictional Characters). Even though all Parts are written from the first-person point of view, none of the narrators are not omniscient as they are also unfolding the mystery from various perspectives.

3.4.1 Synopsis

A complex relationship between a Malaysian Chinese and an Englishman which then turned into a mystery when an unexpected murder took place in the plantation. In the midst of attempting to solve the case, Ai Lian, the protagonist, realised that there were many untold secrets hidden among the other fictional characters, leaving it unresolved.

3.4.2 Distribution of Chapters

The novel is segregated into six parts whereby each part consists of five chapters, except for the sixth part which only has one chapter. Each part is also labelled with a particular date or a character name, particularly for Part Three.

Table 3.3 Distribution of Chapters

Part	Chapter
Part One: 15 Jan 1994	Chapter 1: Summer 1971 Chapter 2: 6 February 1974 Chapter 3: 6 February 1974 Chapter 4: 7 February 1974 Chapter 5: 7 February 1974
Part Two: 1 February 1994	Chapter 1: 8 February 1974 Chapter 2: 8 February 1974 Chapter 3: 9 February 1974 Chapter 4: 10 February 1974 Chapter 5: 10 and 11 February 1974
Part Three: Chap Goh Meh	Chapter 1: Mary (August 1940) Chapter 2: Jonathan (September to December 1940)

	<p>Chapter 3: Deus Ex Machina (November 1941 to February 1942)</p> <p>Chapter 4: Yusuf (July 1942)</p> <p>Chapter 5: Puteh (July 1942 to December 1943)</p>
Part Four: 1 March 1994	<p>Chapter 1: 12 February 1974</p> <p>Chapter 2: 23 February 1974</p> <p>Chapter 3: 24 February 1974</p> <p>Chapter 4: March 174</p> <p>Chapter 5: April 1974 to December 1993</p>
Part Five: 2 March 1994	<p>Chapter 1: 2 March 1994</p> <p>Chapter 2: 3 March 1994</p> <p>Chapter 3: 19 March 1994</p> <p>Chapter 4: 20 March 1994</p> <p>Chapter 5: 21 March 1994</p>
Part Six: 22 March 1994	Ending

3.5 Research Samples

Based on the novel *Echoes of Silence* (see Figure 3.1), the research sample consists of one female protagonist and 70 supporting fictional characters whereby there are 35 male and 35 female characters. Despite having a large number of supporting fictional characters, not all of them produced dialogues when interacting with the protagonist but through narration. For this study, the sample is only limited to the dialogues involving the protagonist.

3.5.1 Fictional Characters

The female protagonist, Lim Ai Lian (AL), is a Malaysian Chinese. She is English educated and shows great interest in reading from a young age but did not complete her programme in university. Due to her characteristics as a determined, courageous and curious individual as depicted in the plot has shaped her to be a wealthy individual over the years through her investments. However, she is portrayed as a regretful and sentimental character in the novel due to various incidents that occurred throughout her life time. Hence, she became more investigative with hopes to attempt to untangle the many untold secrets that was unresolved when it was prompted by her daughter, Anna Templeton.

Table 3.3 shows a list of supporting fictional characters and brief information about them as they have produced dialogues when interacting with the protagonist in the novel.

Table 3.4 Supporting fictional characters, gender and characteristics

Supporting Fictional Characters	Gender	Characteristics
Michael Templeton (MT)	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A musicologist• Holds a Malaysian citizenship in 1960• Humble, eager, wealthy, easily distracted, secretive, thankful
Jonathan Templeton (JT)	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A planter• Retained his British nationality• Tough, careful, attentive, loyal, responsible, forward-thinking

Yew Chuan (YC)	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A doctor in Kota Banir • Has a horse gambling habit and lost a sum of money from it • Loud, talkative, helpful, knowledgeable
Yusuf (Y)	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds a Dato' title • Good with engines and things • Visionary, quiet, loyal, responsible, wise
Hafiz (H)	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A British-trained lawyer • Has experience as a police before studying law • Enjoys playing billiards • Owns a law firm • Emotional, voluble, helpful
Puteh (P)	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A housewife who was previously a maid • Holds a Datin title • Forward-thinking, quick-thinking, loyal, responsible, attentive
Ai Lian's mother (ALM)	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English educated • Secretive, close-minded, caring

M: male; F: female

3.6 Methodology

This research is conducted using a written discourse whereby the findings are analysed qualitatively through content analysis from the pragmatics perspective. As the research is a novel, relevant literature components have been incorporated when necessary to create an in-depth understanding.

McIntyre and Bousfield (2017) believes that data obtained from fiction has its advantages. Firstly, he claimed that “fiction constitutes a limited data set” which is “prototypically complete in and of itself”, allowing the data to be regarded as “a complete set of data for linguistic analysis.” Hence, with the usage of data from the research instrument, it can be confirmed that the set is sufficient for this study.

Additionally, McIntyre and Bousfield (2017) noted that the features found in fiction “has discourse structures that are more complex than those found in naturally occurring conversation.” He further explained that his notion has been supported by Short (1996) who has identified three different levels of discourse present in prototypical prose fiction focussing on the engagement created between the author and the readers. With that, the study is able to understand the engagement that Chuah intended to create with her readers through her novel which is the research instrument for this study.

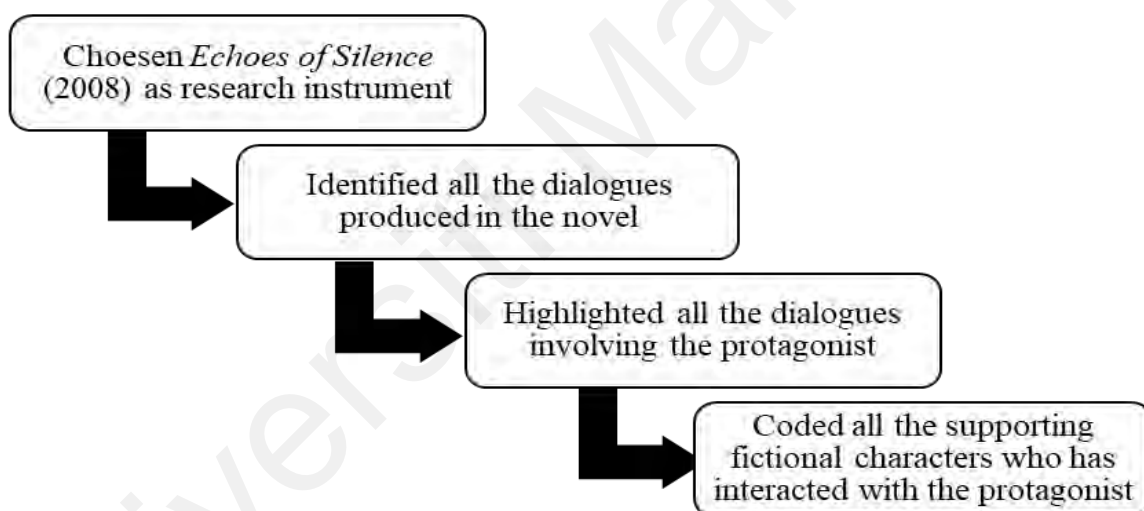
3.7 Data Collection and Procedures

At the initial stage, various novels written by Malaysian novelists were selected and read at random. Realising that there were many prominent Malaysian novelists who have contributed to the field of literature, particularly by successfully publishing their works, Chuah Guat Eng’s novels, *Echoes of Silence* (2008) and *Days of Change* (2010), were selected whereby the former novel was then selected as it is the novelist’s first

published novel available in the market. Due to the difficulty in obtaining a copy of Chuah's novel, an email was sent to the novelist whereby the novels were sold during the meet-up in a restaurant situated in Kuala Lumpur.

Using the selected research instrument, a total of 139 extracts were identified. However, only 87 extracts involved dialogues produced by the protagonist and were highlighted for analysis purpose. All the supporting fictional characters who had interacted with the protagonist were also coded for easy identification.

Figure 3.2 Data collection and procedures



3.8 Data Analysis

3.8.1 Identification of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

Based on the extracted data on the dialogues involving the protagonist, the researcher has identified the occurrences of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) for both the observance and non-observance of maxims by coding the framework.

Table 3.5 Coding for observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

Observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)	
Category	Code
Quantity	QTT
Quality	QLT
Relation	RLT
Manner	MNR

Table 3.6 Coding for non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

Non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)	
Way	Code
Flouting a maxim	F
Violating a maxim	V
Infringing a maxim	I
Opting out a maxim	O

The findings obtained are segregated into distinctive categories (refer to Table Chapter 3.1).

I. Observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

When a particular category of Gricean Conversational maxims (1975) is present in the dialogue, a + symbol is used to make such indication.

II. Non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

When a particular category of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) is absent in the dialogue, a - symbol is used to make such indication.

The symbols are applied based on the observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975). By using the stated symbols, it has allowed the data to be coded in a systematic manner.

Subsequently, the results were tabulated in separate tables to show the frequency in numeric for both the observance and non-observance of Gricean Conversational

Maxims. Additionally, it was arranged from the highest to lowest frequency accordingly. Hence, through this process, both the Research Objective 1 and Research Question 1 were achieved and answered correspondingly (see Section 1.3 and Section 1.4)

3.8.2 Manifestation of Non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

Based on the tabulated data obtained from Section 3.8.1, information on non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims were further analysed.

From the - symbol identified, the data is further analysed by identifying the ways of non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) (refer Table 3.2). Subsequently, the data was investigated on how the responses involving the protagonist were manifested. The relevant findings collected are presented and discussed in the following chapter (see Chapter 4). Hence, through this process, both the Research Objective 2 and Research Question 2 are realised and explained accordingly (see Section 1.3 and Section 1.4).

3.9 Validity and Reliability

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the analysed data, an expert in the field has looked into the aforementioned matter.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

Table 4.1 Identification of Observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)	Number of Occurrences	Frequency (%)
Maxim of Relation	136	34.50
Maxim of Quality	117	29.70
Maxim of Manner	84	21.32
Maxim of Quantity	57	14.47
Total	394	100.00

Based on Table 4.1, a total of 394 dialogues has been identified which involved the Malaysian Chinese female protagonist from the novel.

The highest number of occurrences observed by the female protagonist is maxim of relation with a sum of 136 times, or equivalent to 34.50%. The female protagonist observed maxim of quantity the lowest with a total of 57 times, or equivalent to 14.47%

4.2 Non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

Table 4.2 Identification of Non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)		Number of Occurrences	Frequency (%)
Opting Out		18	25.71
Flouting	Maxim of Quality	17	24.29
	Maxim of Quantity	15	21.43
	Maxim of Manner	8	11.42
	Maxim of Relation	0	0.00
Violating	Maxim of Quantity	9	12.86
	Maxim of Quality	3	4.29
	Maxim of Manner	0	0.00
	Maxim of Relation	0	0.00
Infringing		0	0.00
Total		70	100.00

Based on Table 4.2, the Malaysian Chinese female protagonist failed to observe a total of 162 dialogues according to Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975).

The female protagonist failed to observe Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) by opting out with a total of 18 times, or equivalent to 25.71%. The female protagonist did not infringe any dialogues when communicating, resulting it to be the lowest non-observance with 0.00%.

Based on the data tabulated in Tables 4.1 and 4.2, it can be denoted that the female protagonist is able to observe Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) when

communicating with other fictional characters. Additionally, her ability to observe the maxims shows that she has “attempt(ed) to be cooperative during conversations” (Birner, 2013). Hence, miscommunication during the process of communication is minimised. However, as stated by Grice (1975), reasons may arise when an interlocutor failed to observe the maxims. Thus, implicatures of Ai Lian for not observing the Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) are discussed in the next sub-section.

4.2.1 Opting Out of Maxim

“Maybe you should come back and get a degree at one of the local universities.”

I did not answer. There seemed little point in reminding her that my original intention in leaving the country was not to get a degree but to find a new homeland.

(Extracted from *Echoes of Silence* (2008), p.214)

Based on the conversation between Ai Lian’s mother and Ai Lian, the protagonist has opted out of the maxim by not cooperating in the process of communication. According to Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975), she was seen as “unwilling to cooperate” as she “did not answer”, adding that she claimed that it was of “little point” to explain to her mother about her studies.

According to Lakoff (1975), women’s personal identities are limited to prevent them from being able to express themselves strongly. Being raised in a Chinese family, Ai Lian has opted out of the maxim by not answering to her mother as she does not want to be portrayed as a rude and disrespectful daughter. Even though Ai Lian has her own personal stand for not completing her degree abroad, she remained tight-lipped to show her respect to her mother.

“Were you having a bad dream?” he asked.

“No, on the contrary, I was a beautiful dream. I dreamt that I –” and I stopped.

This was the wrong time to talk about being shot to death even if it was only a dream.

(Extracted from *Echoes of Silence* (2008), p.47)

Based on the conversation between Michael and Ai Lian, the protagonist has opted out of the maxim by not cooperating in the process of communication. According to Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975), she was “unwilling to cooperate” in the way the maxim requires whereby she did not further elaborate on the dream she had. Instead, she chose to stop as she realised that it “was the wrong time” to share about her dream when Cynthia was found dead at the *belukar* and it has yet to be resolved.

Even though Ai Lian is portrayed as a vocal female protagonist in the novel, she did not want to further describe about her dream. She is aware that she may “suffer with discrimination” as highlighted by Lakoff (1975), if she shared about her “beautiful dream” when an unresolved murder occurred in the Templeton’s plantation.

“So how have you been?” he asks as he walks into the office.

“As well as can be expected.”

“Doesn’t sound too good. Is something the matter? Can I help?”

“I don’t know yet. Shall we talk first about what you mentioned on the phone?”

(Extracted from *Echoes of Silence* (2008), p.282)

Based on the conversation between Hafiz and Ai Lian, the protagonist has opted out of the maxim by not cooperating in the process of communication. According to Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975), she was “unwilling to cooperate” in the way the maxim requires whereby she questioned Hafiz if they could discuss on the matter that was

raised on their phone conversation. Her request was then obeyed by Hafiz whereby he answered accordingly.

Despite having an issue to deal with, Ai Lian refused to share it with Hafiz. Instead, she has prompted him to discuss on the matter that was raised on the phone conversation they last had. Her action, even though not stated explicitly by the novelist, could possibly indicate that she is a reserved character and wish to avoid facing any discrimination from sharing her personal matters with a character of the opposite gender and of different race who may share different views entirely.

4.2.2 Flouting of Maxim

Just then the telephone rang. It was Michael.

“At last!” he said. “I’ve been trying to get you for days.”

“I’ve been out a lot.”

“Having fun?”

“Sort of.”

“Missing me?”

“Sort of.”

“That’s good enough for me. I’m on my way.”

(Extracted from *Echoes of Silence* (2008), p.218)

Based on the conversation between Michael and Ai Lian, the protagonist did not observe maxim of manner as she was being too brief when responding to the questions asked. According to Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975), she decided to repeat her responses of “sort of” to a few of Michael’s questions. Michael was able to decipher that she has chosen to not provide more details from his response of “That’s good enough

for me.” As a result, Ai Lian has flouted maxim of manner as she has “blatantly fail to fulfil the maxim”, adding that it was noticed by Michael.

Women have the tendency to limit expressing their expressions when communicating (Lakoff, 1975). Even though Ai Lian experienced a few eventful days, she did not disclose in detail to Michael. She persisted to provide a two-word response and was realised by Michael. However, her response did not deter him from going to her place.

Going home, Jonathan said, “Never thought of taking the Pill?”

“I was on the Pill but I stopped.”

“That’s a bit like letting your insurance policy lapse, isn’t it?”

“When Michael came home I didn’t want to go on taking it.”

He smiled.

“The modern equivalent of putting on the chastity belt?”

“Something like that.”

“And you came home and forgot all about it?”

“Something like that.”

(Extracted from *Echoes of Silence* (2008), p.250)

Based on the conversation between Jonathan and Ai Lian, the protagonist did not observe maxim of manner as she was being ambiguous when responding to the questions asked. According to Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975), she decided to repeat her responses of “something like that” to a few of Jonathan’s statements. As a result, Ai Lian has flouted maxim of manner as she has “blatantly fail to fulfil the maxim”, adding that it was noticed by Jonathan.

Women have the tendency to limit expressing their expressions when communicating (Lakoff, 1975). Ai Lian was aware that she has stopped consuming the Pill even though

she was sexually active during that period which has resulted her to be pregnant from her action. She persisted to provide a three-word response when replying to Michael. From her response, it could possibly be inferred as a way for her to respond to an older man as a form of respect in the process of communication but with a minimal response, adding that she does not want to “suffer from discrimination”.

4.2.3 Violating of Maxim

Then he turned to me and asked, “What about you? Do you feel guilty?”

I caught a glint of amusement in his grey eyes and became unsure of myself. What did he find so amusing? Was he laughing because the subject was of so little importance to him it would not have mattered what I thought? Or was he laughing at me, a young, naïve girl from a small town in Malaysia, so unused to money that she did not know how to use it, how to feel comfortable with it?

At that moment it became important for me to let him know that I was not in any way inferior of him. The habit of a lifetime took over. I wove him a tapestry of half-truths and half-lies and, without actually saying so, gave him to understand that my grandfather had been a very wealthy man and that I inherited a vast fortune.

“But,” I went on, assuming an attitude I had observed in many of my rich, penny-pinching friends at school, “I’ve never felt I was better off than other people. Economies were observed at home. I was expected to do well at school, find a job, support myself. In fact, until my grandmother died, I had no idea how wealthy I was. Inheriting wealth is a bit like having intelligence or luck, isn’t it? You’ve got it, yes, but you having it has so little to do with your own efforts that, really, it’s almost impossible not to feel a bit guilty sometimes.”

I turned to find him looking at me as if he were seeing me for the first time as

I really was. But I had no idea what he saw. Was it me the liar? Or me the heiress I had made myself out to be?

(Extracted from *Echoes of Silence* (2008), p.12)

Based on the conversation between Michael and Ai Lian, the protagonist did not observe maxim of quality by providing a false information about her family's wealth when asked if she would feel guilty. According to Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975), her response was false (a lie) as she "woved him a tapestry of half-truths and half-lies" about her family's financial status. She reasoned that she found the importance to let Michael be aware that she is not "in any way inferior to him.". Additionally, she managed to pull her story with her real-life experience with her "rich, penny-pinching friends at school." She even questioned herself if her response towards Michael's question has caused her to burst her own bubbles when he looked at her. As a result, she has violated the maxim of quality when communicating with Michael.

According to Lakoff (1975), women are "systematically denied access to power". Ai Lian is aware that she is not from a wealthy family when compared to Michael. However, to avoid "suffering from discrimination" on the financial status of her family when communicating with Michael, she has "woved him a tapestry of half-truths and half-lies". Through her response, she wants to be portrayed respected as a financially-secured and possibly financially-independent female in the eyes of an opposite gender character.

“So when are you and Michael getting married?” Puteh asked.

I felt myself blushing, taken aback by her directness.

“We’re just good friends,” I said with a laugh. The standard reply of girlfriends, mistresses, lovers and sundry companions of celebrities and members of royal families.

“Don’t be shy. It’s a good match. I’m told you’re very rich.”

“Good heavens, no! My grandfather was rich. But the family lost everything in the tin slump forty years ago.”

(Extracted from *Echoes of Silence* (2008), p.115)

Based on the conversation between Puteh and Ai Lian, the protagonist did not observe maxim of quality when she tried to be humble about her family’s background. According to Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975), her response was false, adding that she gave a “standard reply” by portraying that she is of a higher class or much-wanted group of society to Puteh. She also further covered up her story by explaining that her family “lost everything in the tin slump forty years ago.” As a result, Ai Lian has violated the maxim of quality.

According to Lakoff (1975), women’s personal identities are limited to prevent them from being able to express themselves strongly. Being raised in an Asian family, one is expected to be humble and not discuss about money openly. Hence, Ai Lian has politely declined Puteh’s statement that she came from a wealthy family. Instead, Ai Lian has given credits to her grandfather.

4.2.4 Infringing of Maxim

The protagonist was not identified to have infringed any maxims from the dialogues produced when speaking to other fictional characters. there will be no data analysis on this non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) in this study.

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CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Identification of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

Based on Table 4.1, the data shows that the protagonist is a fictional character who has shown ability in providing relevant response when communicating with other fictional characters mentioned in the novel. Hence, high number of occurrences and frequency of observing maxim of relation is observed by the protagonist through the dialogues she produced.

However, the protagonist is analysed as a fictional character who does not observe maxim of quantity as high as other maxims proposed by Grice himself. She often provides less than what she is expected and does not make her contribution as informative as she is expected when she communicates with other fictional characters. Despite her minimal response, she was not questioned by other characters on the reason of her responding in such manner. Additionally, she was also not pestered by any of the fictional characters to provide more information when communicating.

5.2 Manifestation of Non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975)

Based on Table 4.2, the data shows that the protagonist is a character who opted out multiple times to different fictional characters during the process of communication. This non-observance of Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) is identified when other fictional characters asked about the protagonist's family, particularly on their financial status. Without fail, she did not disclose about it and often chose to remain silent, stopped and changing the topic of conversation. Initially, she had the intention to hide it from other fictional characters as she does not want to be perceived as a lower class

compared to other fictional characters or to be humble when speaking to older fictional characters. However, she decided to tell the truth to Michael about herself, her parents and her grandmother (*Echoes of Silence*, p.128).

However, the protagonist did not infringe any maxims in any of the dialogues produced with other fictional characters throughout the research instrument as she does not possess any “imperfect linguistic performance” (Grice, 1978). With that, it can be deduced that the protagonist possesses perfect linguistic performance when communicating in line with her English-educated background, proficiency in English language as well as her interest in reading books as illustrated by the novelist, Chuah, in the novel. There are also no occurrences which resulted the protagonist to portray herself as incapable to produce any dialogues through utterances clearly.

5.3 Implications

This study hopes to create positive implications to many.

For writers, particularly novelists, they can further consider applying Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975), both observance and non-observance, when creating dialogues produced by fictional characters in their literary work. Through this effort, they can ensure that the occurrences of misunderstanding and misinterpretation among the fictional characters through their dialogues in the work as well as their readers can be avoided, if not minimised. As a result, the writers’ intended meaning, through the dialogues produced by fictional characters, will not be misinterpreted, allowing the readers to be able to grasp a better understanding of the novel’s plot. In line with this, readers will show greater interest to inculcate a better reading habit with hopes that it will boost the market to create more reading materials.

From this study, which uses a Malaysian English novel, Chuah has incorporated the various races found in Malaysia. Through her effort, readers, both Malaysians and non-Malaysians, are able to picture how the characters in her novel are able to live harmoniously in the same country despite coming from different races. From the literary work, there are many instances whereby characters of different races are depicted to lend a helping hand towards each other for countless reasons.

Besides that, the perceptions, culture and values of the people during the 20th century were also highlighted for the readers' attention. Readers are able to understand that despite showing that the characters are able to mingle well with each other, they share their differences in their perceptions, cultures and values due to their upbringing. There are dialogues produced by the fictional characters who shares such differences asking about thoughts and opinions.

5.4 Recommendations

As stated in Section 1.6, the corpus used for this research is only limited to analysing the dialogues produced by the protagonist with other supporting fictional characters. As a result, the data collected and analysed does not serve a representation of all dialogues produced by all fictional characters mentioned in the research instrument. Hence, it is recommended that additional studies can be made to also study the dialogues produced by the supporting fictional characters with hopes to create a better understanding towards the characters mentioned in the novel.

Besides that, further studies can also be carried out to study on other literature, not limited to the novel used for this research, other Malaysian literature as well as international publications. Through these efforts, a more in-depth and detailed study involving various nationalities, cultures and perceptions can be further analysed.

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