

CHAPTER 4

THE ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the analysis of the language used by the deejays and the callers. An attempt will be made to show to what extent the spoken discourse in the data conforms to the Cooperative Principle and its maxims. Having done that, attention will be drawn to evidence from the data to show how the conversational maxims are violated to produce conversational implicatures as well as how the conversational implicatures are established based on the background knowledge and the context of situation. Finally, an attempt will be made to identify the strategies employed by the speakers within the violations of the conversational maxims that convey the implicatures and to discuss their significance.

The language used by the participants in this radio chat programme is informal. The deejays represent competent ESL speakers. They are fluent and eloquent. However, occasionally, they do code-switch to Bahasa Malaysia and the use of the particle 'lah' is quite prevalent in their conversations. This creates an informal and a casual atmosphere. The deejays tease and cajole the callers and each other causing the conversations to be quite hilarious at times.

The callers, on the other hand, represent a cross-section of Malaysians who also speak English well enough to be understood. They adopt a more serious tone. They may not be eloquent in their speech but they are quite fluent. The deejays and some of the callers are very expressive. They display excitement, elation,

disappointment, disgust and annoyance in expressing their views. On the whole, the spoken discourse in this programme is light and easy to follow.

4.2 The Gricean framework

The Gricean framework consists of a general principle of conversation and the four maxims of conversation which participants in a conversation are expected to observe. In the analysis of this study, the researcher first identifies examples in the data that adhere to this principle. Then, the researcher will examine the violations of this principle in the data.

4.2.1 The Cooperative Principle and Maxims

The general principle of conversation which participants are expected to observe is stated as:

Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of talk exchange in which you are engaged.

(Grice, 1975:46)

Participants in conversations are expected to observe this principle which subsumes four other maxims. They are the maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner. A participant adheres to the maxim of quantity when he or she makes the contribution in a conversational exchange as informative as it is required. The contribution to the conversation should not be more or less than what is required. A participant who adheres to the maxim of quality will make his or her contribution to a conversation one that is true

and for which he or she has adequate evidence. A participant who adheres to the maxim of relation will contribute only relevant information for the current purpose of exchange. Finally, a participant who adheres to the maxim of manner will be brief, orderly and clear in his or her contribution to the conversational exchange.

The data show that there are instances when the participants in the conversation uphold the Cooperative Principle and the maxims. However, the data also show that there are instances when the maxims are not adhered to. In such cases, these violations create conversational implicatures. These implied meanings may be different from the surface meanings of the utterances but they are still in keeping with the spirit of the Cooperative Principle.

4.2.2 Four Classes of Maxim Violations

After identifying the violations, the data is categorized according to Grice's four classes of maxim violations. The classes are:

1. violate a maxim 'quietly and unostentatiously' with an intent to mislead.
2. opt out of a situation by withdrawing from the interaction when one is unwilling or unable to be cooperative.
3. be faced with a clash of maxims such that the choice of one maxim violates another.
4. flout a maxim by blatantly violating it with the intent of strategic and artful cooperation.

After the violations have been identified, an interpretive study is made using the background knowledge of the participants and the context of the utterances. The primary data is verbal, that is, the

language used in the utterances. But, the analysis also takes into account the non-verbal vocalizations when making inferences and interpretations of the meanings conveyed by the speakers.

The interpretation of the utterances moves from the surface meanings of the utterances to their underlying meanings or implied meanings. Implicature is calculated by the process of inference taking into account the responses of the listeners in the programme as well as that of the uninvolved third person, who is the listening audience (and in this study includes the researcher herself).

Further examination indicates that speakers employ strategies within the violations to convey the conversational implicatures. The strategies are identified and their significance in the spoken data is discussed.

4.3 The background knowledge of participants

The data is taken from a Malaysian radio chat programme. To make a proper interpretation of the conversational implicatures conveyed, one has to understand the value system, beliefs as outlined in Chapter 2, and the current social happenings in the country. This is the background of the people of Malaysia that has an impact on their conversations.

At the time of this study, some of the social happenings in Malaysia included the obsession to make it to the Malaysian Book of World Records with some of the most ludicrous feats such as making the longest dragon lantern, the biggest *e-cha-kway* (a Malaysian food) or the biggest pizza. This was also the football season with many Malaysians favouring the British Manchester United football team. Generally, Malaysians also enjoy relating hilarious stories and jokes, whether they are based on personal

experiences or stories they have heard. Malaysians are also health-conscious, going through great lengths to ensure good health or to seek some miraculous cure for some of their ailments. They are also food-lovers.

4.4 The context of the utterance

The researcher observes that the data contained exchanges that centred around topics such as physical abuse, sibling rivalry, travel, personal ambitions, marriage, women's accessories, sports, corporal punishment and the Book of Malaysian Records. The topics of discussion form the context of the utterances that the participants of the conversations produced. The topics are common in everyday exchanges between Malaysians.

The context of the utterances also include the call-in situation, the absence of face-to-face communication and the fact that the participants were far apart during the verbal interactions. Only the deejays could be said to be involved in face-to-face interactions

4.5 Utterances adhering to the Cooperative Principle

Conversations generally adhere to the Cooperative Principle and conform to the conversational maxims. Meaning is conveyed in a straight-forward manner and is clear and precise. The following extracts in the section that follows show this adherence. They provide a useful basis for the main focus of this study, that is the violations of the maxims of conversation resulting in the establishment of conversational implicatures.

4.5.1 The Maxim of Quantity

Grice in his theory states that in a conversation, the speakers should make their contribution as informative as is required for the current purpose of exchange. At the same time, they are not to make their contribution more informative than is required. The following extracts show this adherence.

Extract 1: Sample # 1: Lines 9-19

- C1: Yeah and hm..we were in Sarawak..in Kuching to be exact and hm..I got my results hm.. my report card and my results were not too good..not up to my father's expectations..
- MC1: Yeah
- C1: So I hid it..I hid it..
- MC1: Like a hero lah
- C1: Yeah..I hid it thinking that later on I could always duplicate my father's signature..
- MC1: @
- C1: And he found it in my room..
- MC1: Yeah

The use of the form 'yeah' as a response to what the speaker says is a form of acknowledgement and confirmation. This form is an indication that the listener is attentive and is following the conversation closely. The form 'yeah' is a very short response but it adheres to the maxim of quantity, that is, contributing only what is sufficient for the current purpose of exchange.

The next extract also shows how the speaker makes a sufficient contribution to the conversation by not being more informative than is required.

Extract 2: Sample # 3: Lines 157-162

MC2: Ok here we go..nine a.m. Sunday
Jalan Kewajipan Subang Jaya
BP station..

MC1: and you're thinking gosh Jalan
Kewajipan is a long road..where
lah?

MC2: Check out the BP station lah..how
many BP station can there be in
one road..

MC1 wants to know where Jalan Kewajipan is and MC2 gives a precise response that there may be only one BP station on one road. He is adhering to the Cooperative Principle by contributing sufficient information. This is in keeping with the maxim of quantity.

4.5.2 The Maxim of Quality

According to Grice's Maxim of Quality, a contributor to spoken discourse, should try to make his contribution one that is true. In other words, he should not say what he believes to be false. The maxim of Quantity and Quality can be considered together since they frequently complement one another: the amount of information the speaker gives is limited by the speaker's wish to avoid telling an untruth

The following extracts will show how the maxim of Quality is adhered to.

Extract 3: Sample # 4: Lines180-189

MC1: And I've got to bring some news
to somebody right now..you're the
tenth caller..

C4: I have got it is it? ((high pitch
extremely excited voice))

MC1: It is..you won..@ it's yours..

C4: Oh my God.. How much is it?

MC1: One hundred ringgit..

C4: I'm so happy

- MC1: Oh I'm so happy you're so happy
 we're so happy...ah easy money
 C4: Ya easy

The participants observe the Maxim of Quality by giving very direct and exact answers to the questions that were asked. For example, when C4 exclaimed "I have got it, is it?", MC1 answers "It is...". When C4 asked "How much is it?", MC1 answers "One hundred ringgit." Therefore, in this instance, they are adhering to the Cooperative Principle.

Extract 4: Sample # 5: Lines 76-80

- C2: I think you should bring a cobra
 in..
 MC1: [A cobra?]
 MC2: [Bring a] what's the difference
 between a goat and a cobra?
 You got something against
 goat mam?
 C2: More spectacular...

Both the deejays (MC1 and MC2) want to get into the Book of Malaysian Records by bringing a goat into their studio. They call up the person at the Book of Malaysian Records, to convey their intention. The person at the other end has an even better suggestion, saying that a cobra would be even "more spectacular". In other words, C2 has conformed to the Maxim of Quality by saying what she believes to be the truth for the Book of Records that indeed a cobra would be more spectacular than a mere goat. This exchange shows the Cooperative Principle at work.

4.5.3 The Maxim of Relation

Exchanges in conversations are expected to adhere to the Maxim of Relation in that the exchanges between participants are

relevant for the current purpose of exchange. The next two extracts show that the speakers are aware of this maxim and adhere to it. In doing so, they are upholding the Cooperative Principle.

Extract 5: Sample #4: Lines 46-47

MC1: Which is that river again?

MC3: Kwangsi..

Here is a simple and direct question with a straight-forward, direct, clear and relevant reply. This exchange supports the Maxim of Relation. When MC1 asks the question, MC3 gives the pertinent reply.

Extract 6: Sample # 4: Lines 73-75

MC1: But you know we have so many winners so far and I tell you are just one of the many..it was just a matter of time..

C1: Yeah I'm so lucky.

The lucky winner to call through in this morning's programme will win one hundred ringgit. C1 is the winner. MC1 comments that there are always winners and it was just a matter of time before the next one wins. C1 gives a relevant reply saying that she is so lucky to have won.

4.5.4 The Maxim of Manner

The Maxim of Manner states prescriptively that participants are to avoid any obscurity or ambiguity of expression. By adhering to this maxim, participants in conversations are being cooperative. The following extract shows that the speakers in the conversation are brief, orderly, and clear in their utterances. The deejays want to

do a show with a goat in the studio and they convey that idea to someone at the Malaysian Book of Records to see if they qualify to be in the records.

Extract 7: Sample # 5: Line 54-60

C2: With a ...?
 MC2: With a goat in the studios..
 C2: With a gold?
 MC2: Goat
 C2: Goat
 MC1: G-O-A-T goat..
 C2: [*Kambing*] ah?...Oh I see @

C2 was probably caught unaware and surprised at the deejays' suggestion. She thought they meant 'gold'. In order to be clear and not obscure, MC1 had to spell the word 'goat'. Thus, he adhered to the Maxim of Manner because it was necessary to be clear. If he had not done so, their intention may not have been conveyed correctly. Subsequently, we see that because MC1 had been very clear when he conveyed his intention, C2 finally understood his intention with her reply "*Kambing ah?...Oh I see.*" All three participants are cooperative in their conversation.

4.6 Violations of the maxims

It has been established that in this study, there are a number of instances of adherence to the Cooperative Principle and the conversational maxims. However, the main focus of this study is to identify the violations of the conversational maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner and how they are interpreted in terms of conversational implicatures. These implicatures are conveyed by the speaker and inferred by the listener, taking into account the background knowledge of the participants and the context of the

utterances. Therefore, the discussion of how the interpretation moves from surface meaning to implied meaning is seen in detail in this chapter. Each time a violation of any one of Grice's maxims occurs, implicature is established. Within the violations, the researcher also examines the strategies used by speakers when conversational implicatures are created. The strategies include overstatement, understatement, obvious exaggeration, irony, metaphor, ambiguity, punch lines and hedges.

4.7 Violations of the Maxim of Quantity

There are seven examples of the violation of this maxim in the data. They show that the speakers try to contribute more than is required or necessary in the conversation. When a speaker contributes more information than is necessary, he is overstating, that is, exaggerating, amplifying and magnifying the contribution to that conversation. When the maxim of quantity is violated, speakers employ overstatement as a strategy to convey implied meaning.

4.7.1 Overstatement

In the first extract, a speaker MC1 asks the question and an appropriate answer is expected. However, the listener MC2 does not answer the question appropriately but rather gives more information than is necessary.

Extract 1: Sample # 4 Lines 22-25

MC1: Why...why are you in Kwang Dong?

MC2: I've come here to learn ancient Chinese traditional ointment..

MC1: @ Dude you think you're gonna change your entire gender?

MC2: I'm becoming a new person.

does not literally mean this. He is in fact implying that they should not be so nervous. The listening audience is pleasantly entertained by the deejay's play on words. By saying more than is required, that is by overstating the matter, MC2 is violating the maxim of quantity. He probably had to do so to defuse the tension that has been built up because the callers know they are competing with each other and they are on air. MC2 displays an artful use of the language which is a characteristic required of very good and competent deejays.

In the next example, the deejay once again says more than is required in a conversation with the winner of a competition. In this segment, the first caller who gets through to them has a chance of winning one hundred ringgit.

Extract 3: Sample #4 Lines 134-137

- MC1: And you the big winner..your
name is Illa of Kajang...
- MC2: Illa you can have *safay* for the
next one month...on Hitz...
- C3: Why?
- MC2: Because we're giving you one
hundred ringgit baby...

As Illa has been declared the 'big winner' and she wins one hundred ringgit, the utterance "Illa you can have *safay* for the next one month..." appears to be unnecessary in this conversation. This is because she knows she is the winner. However, just because she is from Kajang, (the general listeners know that Kajang is famous for its *safay*) does not mean that she will most likely spend all the prize money on *safay*. Yet, the utterance does not appear to be completely out of line and it adheres to the Cooperative Principle even though it violates the maxim of quantity. Therefore, we can infer that MC2 is exaggerating in order, perhaps, to tease the caller.

Likewise, the deejay continues this trend in the following example. He says more than what is required thus violating the maxim of quantity.

Extract 4: Sample # 5 Lines 146-148

MC1: You can have the *ketupat*..you can
have the cucumber on the side
and the *satay* kuah you can say
tambah [*tambah*]

MC2: [*tambah*] [*tambah*]
because it's on Hitz FM @

By exaggerating and teasing the winner of the one hundred ringgit, the deejays have violated the maxim of quantity. But they have unconsciously created an implicature here. They are implying that the amount of the prize money is quite large that one can do lots of things with it, namely not just to buy *satay* but everything else that goes along with it.

In the next example, we see how it is necessary for one to actually violate the maxim of quantity because the situation does not permit one to be succinct or brief. The deejays invite callers to put their love to the test. Nicholas calls in. He was asked to give his girl-friend's mother a call and to use three things given by them in his entire conversation with her. The three things are: tell the future mother-in-law that she is good-looking, tell her that his feet smell and, finally, ask for permission to marry her daughter. Nicholas sees the second one as tough and demanding. However, he proceeds quite well. In the extract, we see how Nicholas finds it very difficult to tell his future mother-in-law that his feet smell. He cannot confront her directly because it is inappropriate and rude to do so. So as not to be rude or to cause unnecessary offence, he goes through a

lengthy session before hinting about the smelly feet. In doing so, he has violated the maxim of quantity.

Extract 5: Sample #6 Lines 171-183

Nick: Er..never mind lah..anyway
Aunty..er..um..when dance that
time right..

Aunty: Ya..

Nick: your feet don't smell
ah..I mean how to prevent the
thing right sweat and
everything.

Aunty: Oh the feet sweating is it?

Nick: Ya..

Aunty: Oh you you you can buy anti-
perspirant and spray on the foot
before you wear on the shoe..

Nick: Oh ok..

Aunty: After bathing you you you during
bathing ah you brush your feet
clean ah and then when you
come out you dry your feet and
spray with anti-perspirant lah.

Nicholas has to go through a lengthy hinting session before asking what to do with smelly feet. He has to violate the maxim of quantity because of the value system of Malaysians where one does not ask about a seemingly rude issue directly especially with an older person because one must not appear to be rude. Therefore, the only other way to do this is by being indirect. In another example, Nicholas also violates the maxim of quantity by saying more than is necessary.

Extract 6: Sample #6 Lines 184-195

Nick: Ok er..Aunty just say lah I get rich
and everything lah...

Aunty: Ah..

Nick: with the eight let's say six or
seven years right..

Aunty: Ya..
 Nick: Would you
 give permission for me to marry
 Joanne ah?
 Aunty: @why you talk about that so fast?
 Nick: No no no just asking only just
 asking only..
 Aunty: Er..
 Nick: just saying lah I got really rich
 and famous just six or eight years
 something like that will I be able to
 marry her ah?
 Aunty: Sure why not?

One of the reasons why Nicholas had to go to some length before he could ask what he actually wanted to say is because Malaysian culture rarely allows one to be direct in matters that are considered sensitive. Also, Nicholas is speaking to someone much older than him, his girl-friend's mother in fact. The culture does not allow one to speak so directly to someone who is older. It appears more polite and tactful to approach such a person about this subject in an indirect manner. So, in this example, it is necessary for Nicholas to violate the maxim of quantity. If he does not, he would be regarded as rude and presumptuous. Besides, because of his relationship with her, he cannot afford to be rude. In fact, much of what we say and communicate is determined by our social relationships. To him, this is his politeness strategy and this will help him to minimise friction. Nicholas may be implying that it is improper to be direct at times because we are bound by culture and customs. In other words, culture and custom cannot be divorced from language.

Another example of overstatement employed by the speaker is seen in the next extract. It is the Hitz storybook competition and Hitz FM is offering an IBM Notebook worth five thousand ringgit for the best story-teller.

Extract 7: Sample #2 Lines 63-68

MC1: I want you to try and take home, check this out an IBM Notebook worth five thousand bucks..

MC3: That's awesome isn't it?

MC1: It's great..you can use it at home because that's what a notebook's all about..you can bring it to your home..you can carry it to your car..you can just call up your boss and say hey! I'm gonna do all my work at home.

The general audience knows that a notebook is very useful. When MC1 says, "you can use it at home...you can carry it to your car...you can call up your boss and say hey! I'm gonna do all my work at home.", he is saying more than is necessary thus violating the maxim of quantity. However, his overstatement is still in keeping with the Cooperative Principle. He is implying that the IBM notebook is a worthy prize because of its usefulness and he is indirectly encouraging listeners to call in and participate in the Hitz Storybook competition in order to have the chance of owning this notebook.

The seven examples above all involve the speakers saying more than what is required or necessary and thereby violating the maxim of quantity. The next two examples also violate this maxim but in these examples the speakers say less than what is required or necessary. In other words, while the first seven examples involve overstatement, the next two involve understatement.

4.7.2 Understatement

The speakers are engaged in a talk about their personal spanking stories. MC2 relates what happened to him as a young child when he fought with his little sister. The response of MC1 to his story is interesting because even though he does not say

enough, the listeners can understand the underlying meaning of his utterance.

Extract 8: Sample # 1 Lines 77-87

MC2: You know the *lidis* thing..they can actually slice your leg like this thin skin..so she *kenal*ah Joe like little blood all..you know that time like little blood all get so excited already so she got so upset she chased after me...I fell on the staircase and my luck...I had to fall with my head right on that stair..on that stair lah..the edge of the stair and start bleeding all and she got beating lah

MC1: Oh...oh...

MC2: But little did my mother know that I was the culprit lah..you see..

MC1: So you...

MC2: I wasn't a gangster lah ..my mother was the one that *bap-bap* me please lah @

After MC2 related the story, MC1 responded with "oh...oh...". With just these two sounds, he is implying that what happened to MC2 is going to get his little sister into a lot of trouble. Next, after MC2 confesses that he was the actual culprit of the whole incident, MC1 responds with "So you...". Immediately, MC2 realizes that MC1 is implying that MC2 has acted like a bully but he quickly defends himself by saying that the mother was the actual bully since she was the one who spanked him. In other words, even though MC1 has said less than what is required, one is still able to understand the implied meaning.

In the next example, Anna is relating her spanking story. Anna does not say how she was spanked but from the little that she mentions, the *deejays* are able to interpret that she was caned.

Extract 9: Sample # 1 Lines 23-30

C1: ...and he said oh Anna could you go out and take that thing that I just bought...

Together: @

MC1: Could you go out and get that cane pulled out...@

C1: Yeah...I mean all this while we don't have it in the house and now he said are you going to do this again...are you going to do this again...and I think about the third and fourth time...by that time I was already in tears...

MC1: Oh...

When Anna said "...could you go out and take that thing that I just bought," MC1 is able to understand that she implied that she was going to be caned because he mentions "could you go out and get that cane pulled out." The only knowledge that MC1 had at that time was the fact that Anna's angry father had just returned home and he had some souvenir products made of cane outside the house. The laughter of the deejays also indicates that they realized that Anna was caned.

4.7.3 Summary

In summing up, we can see all the nine extracts indicate how the maxim of quantity is violated. The first seven extracts violate this maxim when the speakers say more than is required or necessary in their conversations while the last two indicate that the maxim is violated when the speakers say less than is required or necessary. The first four extracts show that the speakers have blatantly violated this maxim with an intent at strategic or artful cooperation. Extracts 5 and 6 indicate that the speaker is faced

with a clash of maxims. By being indirect, he is violating the maxim of quantity because he is saying more than necessary. But if he were direct, he would violate the maxim of quality since he cannot be completely truthful in matters pertaining to smelly feet and a marriage proposal in Malaysian culture. Extract 7 indicates that the speaker has violated the maxim quietly and unostentatiously.

The first seven examples show that the strategy employed by the speaker is overstatement. Even though overstating gives the connotation of being untruthful because one has exaggerated matters, in this case specifically, the speaker exaggerates for two different purposes. The examples show that exaggeration is employed in order to inject humour or in order to be polite to older people. The final two examples indicate that even when one does not contribute sufficiently to a conversation, and the maxim of quantity is violated, implied meaning can still be conveyed quite successfully because listeners are able to calculate the conversational implicature based on the choice of words used in the utterances.

4.8 Violations of the Maxim of Quality

According to Grice's maxim of quality, a contributor to spoken discourse should try to make his contribution one that is true. In other words, he should not say what he believes to be false. This appears to be a maxim that is easily adhered to yet there are times when it is also violated because of the circumstances of an interaction. While it is desirable for every speaker to speak the truth in any matter, sometimes the truth spoken may clash with another maxim or sometimes the truth may be expressed or withheld for reasons justified by the speaker. In other words, there are times

when it may be difficult to speak the truth. Thus, in not saying what we know to be true, we are violating the maxim of quality.

Likewise, this maxim also states that the speaker should not say that for which he lacks adequate evidence. In verbal interactions, many times a speaker's opinion is called for. One is asked to comment on what has been said or to express an opinion. In doing so, one may say something for which one lacks evidence. That is why speakers normally hedge their way through an utterance in order to preserve the truth of what they are saying. Hedges provide the licence for speakers to violate the maxim of quality.

In this study, it is seen that where the maxim of quality is violated, an implicature is created. The surface meaning of the utterance violates the regulations imposed by this maxim but one will see that this is necessary in order to convey the underlying meaning or implied meaning in a more effective manner.

4.8.1 Hedges

In the first segment and the context of relating spanking stories, we hear the two deejays exchanging some comments. They are saying almost everyone has an experience or two to share concerning spanking.

Extract 1: Sample #1 Lines 36-38

MC1: Yeah..I think everybody's got that
too..

MC3: Yeah..I had it too

MC1: You had it too..Yeah you bad bad
girl..

In this example, MC1 does not really mean that MC2 is bad in the very sense of the word. According to the Oxford Dictionary, 'bad'

means 'of poor quality or below an acceptable standard'. Just because one gets spanked does not necessarily mean one is below the accepted norm. The word 'bad' and the repetition of it has been artfully used to tease the speaker. Therefore, it is a display of language competently used to convey his opinion but the degree of severity of the offense has been downplayed.

It is not always possible to make one's contribution in a conversation, one that is always true to the surface meanings of words even though it is hoped that whatever is contributed to a conversation represents what is always true. The following example shows that the speaker exaggerates what he is saying. But in order to preserve truth in what he is saying, he masks his utterances with hedges. Hedging gives the speaker the licence to violate the maxim and yet remain perfectly truthful in his conversation.

This segment is still about spanking stories. The deejay relates a story about siblings. He notes that sibling rivalry may result in spanking even though the one spanked may be innocent and the fact that the 'crime' committed may be quite a minor one. Often, the 'crime' committed is magnified to make it more serious than it actually is. Even though there is some truth to this, he overgeneralizes the issue making it one which is not absolutely true. By doing this, he violates the maxim of truth because he is saying something he lacks sufficient evidence for. However, by violating the maxim in this manner, he is conveying the implicature that spanking is quite common as a result of fights and quarrels among brothers and sisters. He makes a general statement which can be understood and accepted by the listeners even if they do not absolutely agree with him. He does this based on his own

experiences. Listeners grant him the licence to violate this maxim and make the implication without arguing the issue.

Extract 2: Sample #1 Lines 63-79

MC2: You know just now..just now..the girl was talking about how she pushed her brother down..

MC1: Sibling rivalries.

MC2: The sibling always *kena*..when I was a kid..I got to tell you this really..when I was a kid..me and my sister were really close..

MC1: Yeah

MC2: We used to run around beating each other up lah and we were like sword fighting with *lidis*..@ you know, the *lidis* so we sword fight..and I always used to get away with all that..I used to beat her up a little bit more and one day we were fighting fighting and I ..accidentally whacked her really hard on her leg..

MC1: Yeah?

MC2: You know the *lidis* thing..they can actually slice your leg like this thin skin..so she *kena lah* Joe like little blood all..you know...

To make this story convincing, MC2 uses hedges such as "you know" (three times) and "I've got to tell you this really" (once). When he hedges, he is defending the truth of his story and is given the license to exaggerate or violate the maxim of quality. There is irony in this story too. MC2 is the one who bullied his sister and ought to have been the one spanked. However, the sister got spanked instead because the mother thought it was the sister who pushed the brother down the stairs causing him to bleed. So, the real culprit MC2 got away with his act.

The next example also shows how the speaker hedges his way through a conversation and thus violates the maxim of quality. He does this by asking unrelated questions before asking the intended one. By doing so, he is implying that in certain matters such as 'smelly feet' one cannot be direct as it will be offensive to the other person.

Extract 3: Sample # 6 Lines 157-177

Nick: Ok ok um all I want to say is..
 Aunty: Ah..
 Nick: The day that time I brought my
 parents see you at the dancing
 that time one time right you all
 don't know lah..
 Aunty: Ah..
 Nick: You look quite good in that dress..
 Aunty: What what what I was wearing?
 Nick: She wants to know where you buy
 the dress..
 Aunty: Dress?
 Nick: Ya
 Aunty: What dress?
 Nick: The blue one..
 Aunty: Which blue one?
 Nick: Er..never mind lah..anyway Aunty
 ..er..um..when dance that time
 right..
 Aunty: Ya
 Nick: Your feet don't smell ah..I mean
 how to prevent the thing right
 sweat and everything..
 Aunty: Oh the feet sweating is it
 Nick: Ya..

Nick finds difficulty in asking the question about the smelly feet. He hedges by complimenting her on her dress, by pretending that his mother was interested to know where she had bought the dress and when she was a little confused he mentioned the "blue one". Finally, he asks her "your feet don't smell ah.." but was quick to add "I mean how to prevent the thing right sweat and everything." By doing this,

we see that he was trying to be as polite as he could even though he had to violate the maxim of quality. He was not asking directly. All his initial questions helped him set the stage for his actual question. He had to do this if he did not want to offend her. When he finally got his question across and the girlfriend's mother said, "oh the feet sweating is it?" , he hastily replied "Ya" and that expression was uttered in relief.

4.8.2 Obvious exaggeration

In the following segment, the deejays invite two callers to participate. The theme for that hour is 'Women's accessories'. For this, in order to win twelve compact discs and eight movie passes, one of them has to give the clues while the other has to guess the women's accessories. For example, one gives the clue - "the thing on your leg" and the answer is "anklet".

Extract 4: Sample # 4 Lines 105-109

MC1: Now today's theme for Hitz double trouble is women's accessories..so that's why Kumar is going to give the clues cos he's a man..I don't I don't know..doubt if he can get this but Kumar if you can then then you'll actually tell everybody that you wear women's dresses lah..@

MC1 has just said something he lacks adequate evidence. He violates the maxim of quality because what he says is not true. MC1 has just implied that if Kumar is able to complete this quiz successfully, he is telling the audience he wears women's dresses. This is absolutely absurd because one cannot deduce something from a general premise like this. Yet, we laugh together with MC1 at his comments because we know that his utterance is strategically

and artfully conveyed and is successful in creating humour. Kumar does not seem to be offended by what has been said and neither is the audience appalled by this overgeneralized statement.

In the next example, Kumar and his partner have successfully completed the quiz and they have managed to win the prize. The twelve CDs and eight movie passes will be split between them. Once again the deejay comments on their win.

Extract 5: Sample # 4 Lines 133-148

- MC1: Kumar you know your fashion accessories very well..
 C2: Yeah..
 MC1: I'm afraid for you guys but I tell you what..congratulations..
 C3: ok..
 MC1: you both share in the loot twelve CDs that means six each..
 C3: [ok..]
 C2: [alright]
 MC1: plus eight movie passes at Tanjung Golden Village movies..
 C3: alright
 MC1: that means four each lah..thanks a lot..you guys were a great team there you have..what a wonderful couple..we should put both of them together and..who knows what will happen they can all share accessories and stuff like that...

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the word 'couple' means 'two people that are seen together or associated in a romantic relationship'. In this case Kumar and his partner do not know each other. Therefore, they cannot be called a couple. MC1 is trying to play the matchmaker here. Since they collaborated well and were successful in their quest, MC1 thinks they make a 'wonderful couple'. He is being presumptuous. He goes further to exaggerate that since they are a 'wonderful couple', they could share accessories. His

whole utterance appears inappropriate. He is saying what he does not know to be true yet he says it. By doing this, he violates the maxim of quality. He has boldly proclaimed that Kumar and his partner make a "wonderful couple". There is no truth in this but the violation of the maxim of quality conveys the implicature. He is implying that they make a good team. His statement is bold but the listeners laugh because it has been done with such wit and humour.

4.8.3 Summary

There are only five examples of violation of the maxim of quality. The speakers in Extracts 1 and 2 violate the maxim quietly and unostentatiously while those in the other extracts blatantly violate the maxim with an intent at strategic or artful cooperation. In the examples where the speakers hedge their way through their conversation, they do so not to speak untruth but because telling the truth is not advisable, desirable or even appropriate. These are instances when a speaker needs to convince his listeners of his story or when he does not wish to offend his listener. In other examples where the maxim is blatantly or purposely violated, the outcome is humour because laughter is prevalent in those examples. The laughter here is a response to humour and a means of maintaining a cordial relationship between speakers and listeners.

4.9 Violations of the Maxim of Relation

This maxim states that utterances must be relevant to the current exchange. The maxim is violated if the utterances are not relevant to the current exchange. In this study, the most striking violation occurs when the deejay and the callers engage in obvious exaggeration. This is so because the utterances are so exaggerated

that they become irrelevant. In the following extracts, obvious exaggeration is a strategy which has been employed. Many of the exaggerations appear to be irrelevant to the current exchange but usually there is a purpose when the speakers exaggerate.

4.9.1 Obvious Exaggeration

In the first example, the violation of the maxim of relation is seen when MC1 makes an irrelevant remark. In the opening, MC2 has just announced that Arsenal had beaten Manchester United in football. He was commenting on how well Arsenal had played. Manchester United was saved by Michael, a team player who had scored the winning goal. MC1 was merely listening, initially.

Extract 1: Sample # 3 Lines 8-20

MC2: Michael saved the day for Manchester United...

MC3: Yeah Michael...

MC2: A goal was disallowed..it was just a mental, mental match..yeah full of excitement..full of entertainment and coming from me a big time Arsenal supporter I will definitely have to give credit where it's due..they deserve to win...Manchester United deserved to win...

MC3: Yeah..

MC2: They are going to the finals but they will lose to Newcastle lah..

MC3: No of course they will not..actually some people just cannot cope with the fact...

MC1: Was Michael..was Michael Jordan there?

MC3: @ah no @ as far as we know

MC1: Oh..oh @

While the topic was centred around football, MC1's question "Was Michael..was Michael Jordan there?" seems odd and thus violates

the maxim of relation. This is because Michael Jordan is a famous basketball player and he has nothing to do with football. What is MC1's intention? He is implying that he knows nothing about football let alone the Manchester United or Arsenal teams. At the same time, he may have deliberately mentioned Michael Jordan who is not associated with football in order to be funny. There are two possible implied meanings here. MC1's intention is successful because both the listeners, the researcher for instance, as well as MC2 and MC3 laugh in response. MC1 has violated the maxim of relation quietly and unostentatiously with his question. The laughter is a response to humour and closes the conversation on an informal note.

4.9.2 Punch Lines

Next, there are two stories each containing a punch line. Usually, punch lines in stories appear totally unrelated to the rest of the story. Thus, they violate the maxim of relation. Yet, the punch lines convey the implicatures. In the first story, the deejays have just invited listeners to call in and share any comical story they might have. Ken calls in and relates his story.

Extract 2: Sample # 2 Lines 9-22

- C1: Ok..I've got two guys working on
a desert..they're very, very
hungry looking for food...
- MC1: Um..
- C1: They're going to die
- MC1: Oh no...
- C1: Ok.. suddenly they found a dead
body ok..ok oh..the guy A doesn't
eat it and the guy B decide to eat
it.
- MC3: Ok..
- C1: So the guy A go ahead and eat it
until his stomach feels full.. so the
second guy continue

walking..suddenly the guy B hit
on the guy A stomach, so the the
guy A started vomitting.

MC1: Right

C1: Because he's too full you
see..guy A ask the guy
B..why you hit me and then the
guy B said..oh buddy I like
my food to be warm.

With the line "I like my food to be warm", the speaker may imply two meanings. One, hit him hard enough and the food will become warm enough to eat while the second, hit him hard enough, so that he gets warm enough for B to consume him. It is a 'sick' joke as the deejays note in their response. Yet, that totally unrelated line to the whole story, while violating the maxim of relation, also contains implied meaning. That punch line is very essential to the whole story. If it is not effective, it will fail to produce the desired result; that is, laughter in response to this example. But it is successful and the meaning is inferred by the listener. Whichever inference the listener chooses to make, the intention of the speaker to produce humour is achieved. The laughter affirms the fact that the story is humorous.

Another example involving a punch line is when the deejay himself relates a comical story.

Extract 3: Sample # 2 Lines 37-47

MC3: Ok let's hear it..

MC1: Ok um..um..((clears his throat))
you know comedy, don't don't
leave it to little kids and animals
because it could be
dangerous..now an old doctor
went out to deliver a baby..somewhere
in Ampang somewhere @ out
there there was like no electricity
right..when the doctor arrived no
one was home except the
labouring mother and her five-year

old daughter..now the doctor instructed the child to hold the lantern quite high so he could see while he delivered the baby..the child do so..the mother pushed..push push and after a while the doctor lifted the newborn baby by the feet and spanked him on the bottom..to get him his first breath..hit him again the child said..he shouldn't have crawled up there in the first place.

The story moves on very smoothly and nothing seems irrelevant until the last line "he shouldn't have crawled up there in the first place.", which is the punch line. Without that last punch line, there is no violation of any maxim and therefore, there is no implicature created. With the punch line, the maxim of relation is violated because that line has no connection with the rest of the preceeding utterance. We know that a doctor spanks a newborn on the bottom to let him have his first cry and therefore his first breath. For the first time the baby will breathe on his own using his own lungs. Therefore, the act of the doctor is crucial. The response of the five-year-old child "he shouldn't have crawled up there in the first place", is witty though factually incorrect. His response implies and confirms that he is only a child giving his perspective of the situation. Perhaps, to a child, it is not funny at all. However, to an adult, the child's response though irrelevant is funny and may create a twist to the story. Many stories depend on punch lines that will give the added twist to make them interesting and amusing.

4.9.3 Irony

The next two examples show violation of the maxim of relation involving the use of irony. The deejays have just asked the

Malaysian Book of Records to accept their record breaking feat as the first deejays in the country ever to go on air stark naked with a goat, the air-conditioner up and a naked woman. The representative from the Malaysian Book of Records does not appear to accept this as a record-breaking feat and merely says that she would think about it. After reasoning with her, the following takes place.

Extract 4: Sample # 5 Lines 113-129

- C2: I'll think about that..
 MC1: Thanks anyway..ok
 MC2: Ok we just thought we'd give it a shot and and but obviously..
 C2: And in case you got new ideas call me.
 MC1: [Bye]
 MC2: [Bye] I'm hurt lah
 MC1: Ai
 MC2: I'm hurt
 MC1: How many..
 MC2: I'm hurt
 MC1: I'm shocked..
 MC2: I mean common would you rather have a record of Malaysian deejays completely naked with a goat in it?
 MC1: Ah ha..
 MC2: or the biggest *e-cha kway?* @ which one would you have?..I'm upset lah..hey look Christina..one hundred ringgit could be yours on hits...

In recent times, there has been much talk about Malaysians trying to create records for some ridiculous feats. For example, there were stories about the longest *safay*, the biggest pizza and the longest dragon lantern. One would think that Malaysians in their attempt to break records would go for more outstanding and challenging feats that the country would be proud of. For example, the first solo sailing around the world by Azhar Ahmad is a worthwhile feat to be recognized as record-breaking. When the deejays of the Morning

Crew suggested including their ridiculous record-breaking feat, listeners may have been able to infer that it was with the intention of implying that we should not make preposterous claims about trivial record-breaking feats. By means of sarcasm, they were able to provide other examples like the biggest '*tau-foo-fah*' (a local Malaysian desert), the first artiste who performed at the KL Towers revolving restaurant and the longest '*e-cha- kway*' (a local delicacy). The listener gets the impression that these are not likely to be regarded as record-breaking feats and they are not significant enough to be listed in the Malaysian Book of Records. When their suggestion to be the first deejays in a studio to go naked, with a goat and a woman and the air-conditioner up was rejected by the representative, they responded by saying "I'm hurt" and "I'm upset". In actual fact, it is unlikely that they are hurt or upset. The ironical expressions are uttered with the intention of being sarcastic and to convey the underlying meaning that Malaysians should not attempt to perform any ridiculous feat and expect it to be regarded as record-breaking. In fact, if we do, we will only become the object of ridicule and contempt. The deejays' violation of Grice's maxim of relation is a clever and artful strategy at conveying a more serious message.

Another example of irony occurs when the Morning Crew invite listeners to call in and relate their experience of being spanked. Someone called Anna calls in and relates the following story.

Extract 5: Sample # 1 Lines 9-16

C1: Yeah and hm..we were in Sarawak..in Kuching to be exact
hmm.. I got my results hm..my report card and my results were not too good..not up to my

father's expectations..

MC1: Yeah

C1: So I hid it..I hid it..

MC1: Like a hero lah

C1: Yeah..I hid it thinking that later on
I could always duplicate my
father's signature..

When the caller said that she hid her report card to try and escape her father's wrath, the deejay describes her action as heroic. The deejay's response "like a hero lah", appears to be unrelated to the story and so may be said to be violating the maxim of relation. Yet, in uttering those words, he may be implying two things. First, he may be acknowledging that her act is a brave one indeed. Second, he may be implying that her 'heroic' action may not have been so wise after all and that there might have been repercussions. Implicature is created here. There is a double message conveyed and more than one interpretation of the utterance. The use of the word 'hero' is also ironic because the expression appears to be the direct opposite of the action because hiding a report card with poor grades from one's father may not be the best thing to do. In other words, what MC1 might have meant is that it was a foolish act after all.

4.9.4 Summary

There are altogether five examples of the violation of the maxim of relation. The strategies used are obvious exaggeration (one example), punch lines (two examples) and irony (two examples). The obvious exaggeration and ironic expressions violate the maxim of relation 'quietly and unostentatiously with an intent to mislead' while the stories with punch lines violate the maxim blatantly in an attempt at strategic or artful cooperation.

4.10 Violating the Maxim of Manner

According to Grice, the maxim of manner states that conversations should be orderly, perspicuous and brief. Any unnecessary obscurity and prolixity should be avoided as well. In this study there are four examples of brief exchanges but the meaning that the speaker may have in mind is quite obscure to the listener. The listener can only infer the meaning of the utterances based on the surface meaning of the utterances, the context of situation and the background knowledge. Another two examples of the violation of manner appear obscure in meaning but upon further examination, the researcher discovered that the speaker(s) actually employed the use of metaphors to make their meaning more effective.

4.10.1 The Use of Ambiguity

In the first example, the deejays had invited callers to call in and relate any comical story because on that day the theme was 'Comedy'. After one of the caller had related one of the stories, the deejays responded as indicated below:

Extract 1: Sample # 2 Lines 24-29

MC1: Oh...@

MC3: That's sick..oh..that's sick..you are a sick person.

MC1: Do you hear that ambulance in the background?

C1: No..@

MC3: That's for you you know..that ambulance in the background's for you man..I've talked to the doctors and they say you're gonna be your old self in a couple of weeks.

'Sick' in this utterance does not mean 'ill' in a physical sense but 'perverted' or 'morbid' in a moral or psychological sense. This is the implied meaning. Literally, the ambulance is the means of transporting a person to a hospital in emergencies. A person who is very ill may need to be sent to the hospital. However, here, the listeners (the deejays) are implying that the story the caller told them is so incredibly exaggerated and morbid that he may be regarded as being almost mad to have come up with such a story. The response of the deejays does not refer to the story related at a literal level. They have violated the maxim of manner because they were not brief in their response. If they had been brief and orderly, what they had said would not have caused their meaning to have the impact on the listeners that it had. By violating the maxim of manner 'quietly and unostentatiously, they are able to convey their meaning and intention through an implicature by using words such as 'sick' and 'ambulance'.

In the next example, MC1 has just received a caller. In his brief interview with her, the following transpired.

Extract 2: Sample # 2 Lines 83-85

MC1: Do you work for a living?

C2: Er..temporary housewife

MC1: Temporary housewife..whatever
that means...

MC1 has just asked a very direct question, "Do you work for a living?". The reply of the caller is obscure albeit brief. Even MC1 is not able to decipher the meaning of her answer "temporary housewife". The caller has violated the maxim of manner. However, the listener is able to infer that she is probably a career woman who

is temporarily out of work and so is staying home, and that she does not intend to stay home permanently. The very fact that she also paused before replying also gives the listener the impression that she was conveying more than just the surface meaning of the utterance.

4.10.2 Obvious Exaggeration

Next, two people call in to join the Hitz Storybook competition and the deejays have to decide who goes first. The deejays method of deciding who goes first is exaggerated.

Extract 3: Sample # 3 Lines 69-71

MC2: ...ok we want to find out who's
going to go first..ok Alan and
Phang hit your heads really
hard..ok..ready go ahead..ok it's
Phang..you are going to [x x] our
hitz storybook..put Alan into a
cage..

The conventional meaning of the utterance, "ok Alan and Phang hit your heads really hard..." is to have the participants knock their heads together really hard as a means to see who should go first. If defined using Searle's constitutive rules, this is a command. But the listeners know that this cannot possibly be a command. The deejay is certainly not commanding the participants to literally knock their heads together nor does he expect them to actually do so. The utterance here is an exaggeration and the participants know it. The deejay is implying that only one can go first so they have to find a way to decide who it should be. The listener at home is probably well aware of the meaning of this utterance and is pleasantly entertained. This example also indicates why participants of a

conversation must not go for the literal meaning at times but attempt to understand the unstated meaning that might be conveyed.

The following example is taken from the segment when MC2 pretends he has gone to China to obtain a special root called *chong long dong*. He says this root has to be fermented in the Kwangsi River. Only after this is done, will it help to improve the vitality of those who consume it.

Extract 4: Sample # 4 Lines 55-61

MC1: But dude you're going to come home soon..

MC2: Dude I will be as soon as I check out this *chong long dong* lah

MC1: Oh man you take care there..

MC2: Please my brother..

MC1: There you have it..celebrity ah..

MC3: The things we find out from celebrities.

MC1: Exactly...

MC1 refers to MC1 as a celebrity. His utterance "There you have it..celebrity ah..." and MC3's utterance "The things we find out from celebrities." appear to have violated the maxim of manner because their meaning is exaggerated and not very clear. From this, one can interpret the underlying meaning that celebrities are strange in their habits or behaviour based on the context that MC2 was looking for the strange *chong long dong*. MC1 appears to agree with MC3 when he says, "Exactly". He seems to have understood MC3's meaning.

4.10.3 Metaphors

The final two examples violate the maxim of manner because the expressions used by the speakers do not appear to be absolutely clear initially. Closer examination actually shows that the speakers employed the use of metaphors. These metaphors are not the conventional ones known to the users of the English Language. However, they can be regarded as metaphors because they fit the definition of metaphors, that is, 'to apply a name or descriptive term or phrase to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable' (Oxford Dictionary, 1989:498).

Extract 5: Sample # 3 Lines 80-88

- C2: and I rush in and I was the first
one to be there..actually I saw you
guys there..I was so happy..I really
adore you guys so I ask for your
autograph but *ai yah* you guys
were busy with other things that
you guys ignore me..hello hello am
I actually on the air ah?
- MC2: Is that part of the story? I think you
better put an end to this one
because Phang we don't know
where you're going lah Phang..
- MC1: Have you..have you heard of
mercy killing? We're gonna do
it..we're gonna put you aside for a
while.

In this segment, Phang was taking part in the Hitz Storybook competition whereby the caller had to continue a story the deejays started in the most imaginative and interesting way. Phang appears slightly unsure whether he was really on air when in the middle of the story, he goes "hello hello am I actually on the air ah?". This prompted the deejay to cut him short and put an end to his participation.

Euthanasia or mercy killing is the practice of allowing someone to die painlessly in order to stop their suffering when they are seriously ill with an incurable disease. In the programme with the Morning Crew, the deejays have the authority to cut a story-teller short should they find his story uninteresting or simply leading nowhere. The sample above provides an example of the latter. Conventionally, MC1's response means he is going to perform mercy killing on C2. But what he is implying is that he is simply going to end their 'suffering' at having to listen to his story by cutting him short. The term 'mercy-killing' is a metaphor and very aptly used because it is a descriptive term applied to an action. In other words, the speaker is 'killed' as an act of mercy to the listeners. The deejay is kind to the listeners by preventing C2 from going any further with his story. Despite the fact that it violates the maxim of manner, it is still a display of artful competence in conversation. At the same time, there is humour. Competent conversationalists often engage in the artful use of words in order to convey underlying meaning.

The next example shows the use of another metaphor to create an implicature. In this example, the deejays of the Morning Crew are giving their usual weather update.

Extract 6: Sample # 3 Lines 127-142

MC2: Today morning..cloudy over the coastal area of Penang..Kelantan..

MC1: How about Pahang?

MC2: Pahang no..sorry it's just going to be cloudy..

MC1: No rain?

MC2: No..no no rain nothing like that but later in the evening it's showers..

MC1: Uh..

MC2: and thunderstorms over in the capitals and a high of thirty-two..

MC1: Wow..that's it?

MC2: That's it..that's it my friend..that's it..

MC1: Oh it sound similar..actually sound like yesterday's weather..

MC2: Yeah..

MC1: Are we recycling the weather?

MC2: No..no way oh come on..

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the word 'recycling' means to reuse or to reclaim (1989:667). MC1 has already said that the weather report for that day sounds "like yesterday's weather..". He was already clear in his intention but when he added, "Are we recycling the weather?", he violated the maxim of manner because he has not avoided unnecessary prolixity. However, the use of the word 'recycling' here is a very artful use to imply and reinforce that the weather report the day before and on that day were exactly the same. Metaphorically speaking, it is as if the deejay was 'recycling' the weather report. The use of this word in this context shows original thought and an artful competence at the language.

4.10.4 Summary

There are altogether two examples of the use of ambiguous expressions, two examples of the use of metaphors and two examples of the use of obvious exaggeration. The fact that the speakers chose to violate the maxim of manner by using ambiguous expressions, metaphors and obvious exaggeration shows that the speakers are creative; that they can manipulate the language for their own purposes and create laughter in the process. Thus, this is why five out of the six examples show that the speakers violate the maxim by blatantly violating it with an intent at strategic or artful cooperation.

4.11 Frequency counts of Violations and Strategies

The analysis shows that conversation is not a succession of disconnected remarks but a naturally accepted direction between participants in their roles as speaker and listener. The cooperative effort displayed in the conversations of the radio recordings serves to illustrate Grice's Cooperative Principle.

The meaning of an utterance lies with the speaker. He may choose to convey the meaning explicitly or implicitly. This study has shown that when a speaker chooses to convey his meaning implicitly, Grice's conversational maxims are violated. When the maxims are violated, conversational implicatures are created. The twenty-five examples of conversational implicature in this study, provide evidence of twenty-five violations of Grice's maxims. The frequency of violations was counted and recorded according to the maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner. This was tabulated and is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1: The frequency of maxim violations

Violation of the maxim	Frequency
1. Quantity	9
2. Quality	5
3. Relation	5
4. Manner	6
TOTAL	25

The high incidence of conversational implicature in the data may suggest that this phenomenon has something to do with Malaysian culture. Perhaps, indirectness is a way of life for Malaysians. It is interesting to note that the maxim of quantity is the most violated maxim, with a total of 9 out of 25 maxims or 36% of the data obtained. Out of the 9 violations, 7 violations or approximately 77% of the violations occurred when the speakers said more than what was required or necessary. This shows that Malaysians, in trying to be polite or to show humility or respect to others, find it easier to employ conversational implicatures especially with regard to controversial suggestions or issues. When they employ conversational implicatures, they employ the use of more words to convey the meaning implicitly.

There were 6 violations of the maxim of manner out of a total of 25 examples. This represents 24% of the data obtained. Mostly, speakers violate the maxim of manner by being ambiguous in their conversations. Again, perhaps this indicates that Malaysians tend to be ambiguous because it is more polite to be indirect than to be direct. Besides, at times some issues do not involve a Yes-No quality but rather a matter of degree.

The violation of the maxims of relation and quality comes next with close to about 20% each of the data obtained. It can be seen that 60% of the data violate the maxims of quantity and manner against 40% that violate the maxims of relation and quality. This shows that there is a tendency for Malaysian speakers to be indirect. By being indirect, they use more words in terms of exaggeration and ambiguity to convey their implied meaning. That is the reason why more violations occur in the maxims of quantity and manner compared with the maxims of quality and relation.

The researcher was then interested to see how the maxims were violated. Therefore, the data was categorized into four classes of maxim violation. The frequency at which they appear in each class was also tabulated and is now presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2: Maxim violation according to Grice's four categories.

Classes of maxim violation	Quantity	Quality	Relation	Manner	Total
1. violate a maxim 'quietly and unostentatiously' with an intent to mislead.	1	2	1	1	5
2. opt out of a situation by withdrawing from the interaction when one is unwilling or unable to be cooperative.	-	-	-	-	-
3. be faced with a clash of maxims such that the choice of one maxim violates another.	2	-	-	-	2
4. flout a maxim by blatantly violating it with an intent at strategic or artful cooperation	6	3	4	5	18
5. TOTAL	9	5	5	6	25

Out of the four classes of maxim violation, one class of maxim violation appears to be outstanding. Participants in the conversations of this study tended to flout a maxim by blatantly violating it with an intent at strategic or artful cooperation. This involved 18 out of 25 violations, making it 72% of the data obtained. It is interesting to note that most of the violations were committed by the deejays themselves. This finding supports the fact that deejays usually have a dominant role in a radio programme. They initiate the topics and have the power to speak as much as they want, to change topics, to cut the callers short and to make creative use of the language because they host the programme. Besides, this is a radio programme which aims to attract and entertain listeners and as such, the blatant violations are not unexpected.

Next, there are 5 out of 25 violations where the speakers violated the maxims 'quietly and unostentatiously with an intent to mislead'. This represents 20% of the data obtained. Even though the violations were not blatant the speakers still intended to mislead. This indicates that they wanted to convey their true meaning implicitly, perhaps, because the situations did not allow them to be explicit. In this study, there is no indication of a participant opting out of a situation by withdrawing from an interaction; and there are only 2 out of 25 violations where participants are faced with a clash of maxims such that the choice of one maxim violates another. This accounts for only 8% of the data obtained.

The results of this study further support the view that when the maxims are violated to convey implied meaning, certain strategies are employed. The analysis of the data suggests that the strategies present are in the forms of overstatement, understatement, obvious exaggeration, irony, metaphor, punch lines,

ambiguity, and hedges. In other words the speakers use these strategies for conveying implied meaning successfully. Table 3 presents the strategies that are employed and the frequency at which they occur.

TABLE 3: The strategies and the frequency of occurrence

Strategies	Total	Quantity	Quality	Relation	Manner
1. Overstatement	7	7	-	-	-
2. Understatement	2	2	-	-	-
3. Obvious exaggeration	5	-	2	1	2
4. Metaphor	2	-	-	-	2
5. Irony	2	-	-	2	-
6. Ambiguity	2	-	-	-	2
7. Punch lines	2	-	-	2	-
8. Hedges	3	-	3	-	-
TOTAL	25	9	5	5	6

4.12 The Cooperative Principle

The violations that convey conversational implicatures do not hinder communication because speakers and listeners assume that the Cooperative Principle is still adhered to. When a listener receives an utterance that seems to fall short of the requirements of the conversational maxims, he or she constructs an interpretation that preserves the assumption that the speaker is really being

cooperative. Speakers leave room for the added or underlying meaning; they rely on their listeners' abilities to make interpretations. The cooperative effort displayed in the conversations in the radio recordings of this study serves to illustrate Grice's Cooperative Principle. The analysis in this study indicates how participants preserved the Cooperative Principle by adhering to the maxims of conversation wherever possible. When utterances do not adhere to the maxims of conversation or whenever a maxim is blatantly violated, an implicature occurs to save the utterance from simply appearing to be a faulty contribution to a conversation.

The analysis in this study indicates that this Cooperative Principle does not universally govern all talk exchange. There are times when the Politeness Principle also surfaces. The analysis provided in this chapter shows that the Cooperative Principle and the Politeness Principle interact at times in the interpretation of conversational implicatures. This supports what Leech (1983:82) describes; that there is a 'trade-off' relation between these two principles. Grice (1975:47) also acknowledged the importance of politeness as a factor in the account of conversational meaning.

4.13 Maxim violations and the strategies involved

The findings also indicate that there are indications of overstatement, understatement, obvious exaggeration, irony, metaphor, punch lines, ambiguity and hedges within the violations

that produced the conversational implicatures. These strategies appear to be a particularly salient way for the speaker to convey underlying meaning and hence convey the implicature. These strategies used within the violations of the maxims of conversation, are also crucial for the listener to draw an inference and hence recover the implicature.

4.13.1 Obvious Exaggeration, Overstatement and Understatement

When a speaker exaggerates, he is overstating, amplifying and magnifying his contribution to that conversation. When he understates, he is saying less. In this study, this strategy is used to convey conversational implicature. It is interesting to note that this strategy has been employed in 14 out of 25 maxim violations or approximately 56% of the data. The high incidence of these strategies may be due to two main reasons. Firstly, the analysis shows that the use of this strategy is associated with controversial suggestions especially those involving custom and culture where one must be careful not to offend the listener(s). Therefore, the speaker would choose his words carefully and protect himself by using implied meaning rather than explicit meaning. Secondly, it shows that this strategy is commonly employed because the whole purpose and function of a radio chat programme is not only to inform but also to entertain the listening audience. Exaggerations often induce humour and so the listeners are pleasantly entertained.

The need to overstate, magnify and amplify utterances instead of being pertinent and direct seems to suggest that Malaysian ESL speakers adopt indirectness as a way of life. In this study, topics such as physical abuse, personal ambitions, marriage, or corporal punishment although common everyday topics of conversations are still considered personal, sensitive and sometimes even controversial. Thus, speakers prefer to convey their opinion indirectly by sometimes exaggerating the issues concerned. This defuses the tension that may arise. Stronger opinions and comments on topics such as breaking Malaysian records in ridiculous feats are treated gently and indirectly by means of exaggeration. Verbal judgments are laced with understatements, such as in the case of corporal punishment because this is a more peaceful way of communicating. Malaysians want to avoid conflict as far as possible. These strategies assume also that speaker and listener can access a meaning which is conveyed but not stated directly, and in so doing, maintain solidarity and reinforce common knowledge.

These strategies are useful for conveying implied meaning especially when the suggestions concern custom and culture that involve either elders or social superiors. The social behavior of Malaysians emphasise respect for elders, humility and tact. These are values shared by the major ethnic groups in Malaysia and are reflected in patterns such as these strategies in the spoken discourse of Malaysians.

The findings also suggest that exaggeration is used as a strategy in conversational implicatures because of the whole function and purpose of a radio chat programme. A radio programme has the potential to wield immense social power. The deejays in the programme control the content, style and duration of talk, topic selection, talk format, the approach taken, how the programme shall begin and end, who the participants are and what part they should play. This study shows that the deejays are the ones who exaggerate the most in their conversations because they have the power to do so.

A radio programme provides the illusion that spatial distance does not exist. Speakers and listeners strive to create rapport even though the deejays and the participants in the programme do not see each other or the other listeners at large. This is significant because it has a bearing on how the conversations are structured owing to the absence of physical proximity and face-to-face communication. There is then no fear of exaggerating or conveying any opinion or suggestion. That is why these strategies are striking in the violations of the maxims of conversation.

4.13.2 Irony

A person who is being ironic may appear to be deceiving or misleading the listener but is in fact being honest in his deception at the expense of politeness. In being polite, one is often faced with a clash between the Cooperative Principle and the Politeness

Principle. However, in being ironic, one exploits the Politeness Principle in order to uphold the Cooperative Principle. Although this study only provides two instances of ironic expressions, they are also important. First, one concerns a controversial issue of Malaysians breaking records, many of which are quite ridiculous, while the other concerns the sensitive issue of corporal punishment. Irony is used because sometimes telling the actual truth is not advisable or socially acceptable owing to other factors such as custom and culture. Therefore, one pretends to be polite, or in other words, exploits the Politeness Principle in order to convey a deeper meaning. Being ironic is a strategy used to help speakers initiate remarks about a larger and more sensitive issue at hand. These remarks help set the stage for the real issues as the speakers try to preserve the truth of the matter.

4.13.3 Ambiguity

In this study, there are two instances of the strategy of ambiguity being used in an attempt to convey meaning implicitly. Although this encompasses only 8% of the violations in the conversation, these two instances are quite significant because what starts off as an apparent contradiction often yields a truth that is more interesting. The examples where the ambiguous expressions occur involve the use of the words such as 'sick', 'ambulance', and 'temporary housewife'. Generally, these words convey explicit meaning. However, when they are artfully used,

they can convey implicit meaning. Therefore, they have become ambiguous in meaning and as such can perhaps lead to more than one interpretation of the utterance. This finding is quite significant because it shows that Malaysian ESL speakers are competent enough to employ this strategy in their conversations. Perhaps with further research, there may be more indications of the use of this strategy in the ordinary conversations of Malaysian ESL speakers. This finding shows the effect of style in a radio chat programme that seeks to entertain and attract listeners. Being ambiguous, in other words, can be a style that the speakers in a radio chat programme adopt in order to allow the listeners to infer and interpret implied meanings. This supports the view of Wilson and Sperber who noted that the "choice of words determines the style the speaker chooses..." (1986:5). The speakers are witty and assumptions are left implicitly and open to the interpretation of the listener. These assumptions have an effect on the listeners in that they entertain, inject humour, tease or persuade. Therefore, the use of this strategy in conversational implicatures has a function and purpose.

4.13.4 Punch lines

Punch lines often appear at the end of a joke or story. In this study, there are two elaborate stories told which end in a punch line each. These make up 8% of the violations of the maxim of conversation that convey an implicature. Punch lines in jokes or

stories help sustain the attention of the listener and invite a reaction from them. Interest lies in the contrast the punch lines make with the rest of the story, and the way they are different from what one might have expected.

Speakers may use this strategy to convey a more serious message or at times it is used just to inject humour by the tone of the joke or story. The fact that it does not occur as readily as the strategy of exaggeration is an indication that it is a more difficult skill to acquire and, perhaps, only employed by those who are more competent in the language.

4.13.5 Hedges

The three instances of hedges occur when the participants of the conversation were engaged on the topics of 'Smelly feet' and 'Proposing marriage'. In both these instances, we see how the speakers go through lengthy explanations before arriving at their intention. This is necessary to avoid any unpleasantness and embarrassment. These three instances are clear indications of the influence of custom or culture also, and throughout the data, the influence of custom and culture are reflected in the language use of Malaysian ESL speakers.

4.13.6 Metaphors

The metaphors in this data are original and creative. The metaphors of 'mercy-killing' and 'recycling the weather' provide

evidence of an economical use of words that has immediate effect. Even though the metaphors constitute only 8% of the data, the very fact that they exist within the spoken discourse of Malaysian ESL speakers indicates the artful and strategic use of words. The use of metaphors also points to the competence of Malaysian speakers of English who are able to put words to creative and effective use in order to convey implied meaning.

4.14 The conclusion

This study shows that Grice's Cooperative Principle and the conversational maxims can be used for the analysis of ordinary conversations. Implied meaning appears to be conveyed quite convincingly by relatively competent ESL speakers in Malaysia. Malaysian ESL speakers in this study are quite competent in the English Language and are able to employ simple strategies such as exaggeration as well as more complex ones such as irony, metaphor, ambiguity and punch lines. This high incidence of conversational implicatures in the spoken discourse lends support to the fact that utterance meaning involves not only surface meanings but implied meanings as well. The high incidence of conversational implicatures in the data also suggests that this phenomenon may have something to do with our culture. Therefore, it would be interesting for future researchers to explore conversational implicatures in relation to culture.