Analysis of Flouting Grice's Conversational Maxims by Syed Saddiq in a Podcast Interview

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Abstract
Grice's Cooperative Principle emphasises cooperation, understanding, and conversational standards. However, political discourse is known for its persuasion and strategic communication, making it an interesting domain to study the Cooperative Principle and political speeches. This study explored how a Malaysian politician flouted Grice's Maxims in political discourse, using Grice's Cooperative Principle Theory as the theoretical framework. This study aimed to identify the flouted maxims and investigate the strategies employed by the selected politician. To do this, a 37-minute online podcast interview featuring Syed Saddiq was transcribed, and the content analysis method was used to analyse the transcribed data based on the theory of Grice's Cooperative Principle. The analysis revealed that the interview exhibited a total of twelve occurrences of flouting maxims. All four maxims, about number, quality, manner, and relationship, were flouted by Syed Saddiq, with quantity being flouted the most often. Also, Syed Saddiq adopted eight strategies to violate the maxims, including overstatement, understatement, lack of evidence, indirect responses, irrelevant answers, subject-changing, complex, confused, and ambiguous comments. By using Grice's Cooperative Principle Theory, this study provides valuable insights for scholars in pragmatics and society to understand political language and its impact on public opinion and discourse in Malaysia.
Keywords: Grice's Maxims, Grice's Cooperative Principle, Conversational Maxims, Political Speeches

Introduction
Studies about cooperative principles can be done on all kinds of communication mediums, and one of them is interviews. According to Isma Farikha Latifatun Nuzulia (2020), an interview involves two ways of communication, and it is used to deliver the intended meaning. Meanwhile, Seftika (2015) defined an interview as a process of obtaining data directly from an individual through information exchanges. Simply put, an interview is a

process of question and answer that is done verbally to get or give information, persuading, problem-solving as well as correcting or reprimanding (Tibb & Moss, 1994 as cited in Seftika, 2015). In political discourse, interviews serve as a crucial medium of communication where politicians are expected to adhere to Grice's Cooperative Principles and follow all four conversational maxims. However, there is limited research focused specifically on the application of these principles among Malaysian politicians. Existing studies have explored the non-observance of Grice's Maxims by politicians in various contexts, revealing insights into the strategies employed and the intentions behind their communication tactics. However, these studies primarily focused on politicians from other countries such as America, Arabic-speaking, India, Indonesia, Libya, and Ukraine, leaving a gap in understanding the non-observance of these maxims among Malaysian politicians. For example, studies by Aso Ali Muhammad and Hemn Adil Karim (2019), Buddharat et al. (2017), Isma Farikha Latifatun Nuzulia (2020), Jalal Sa'dullah Hassan (2022), Seftika (2015); Taqwa Rashid Juma'a (2020), analysed the flouting of maxims by Donald Trump, Barack Obama, Robin Roberts, and Hillary Clinton, who are American politicians. The absence of research on the non-observance of Grice's Maxims among Malaysian politicians hinders understanding of the political dynamics in Malaysia's context. This knowledge gap restricts individuals' ability to critically analyse the language used by politicians, including their persuasive techniques, narrative shaping, and influence on public opinion. To address this research gap, this study aims to identify Grice's maxims flouted by a Malaysian politician, Syed Saddiq, in a podcast interview. Also, by examining the communicative strategies employed by Syed Saddiq in flouting Grice's maxims, this study aims to provide clearer insights for society to understand and differentiate the nature of political language, particularly in Malaysia's political context.

Literature Review
Cooperative Principle Theory
According to Grant and Osanloo (2014, as cited in Adom et al., 2018), a theoretical or conceptual framework serves as a guide on how a research is constructed. This framework is important as it assists researchers to analyse and apply the existing theories to their studies, mainly guiding them. In this study, Grice's Cooperative Principle is used as the framework. In pragmatics, Grice (1975) was interested in learning interaction in communication, predominantly how the hearer can understand expressed and implied meaning (implicature) from the speaker's utterances (as cited in Massanga & Msuya, 2017). Hence, he developed a theory called Grice's Cooperative Principles (CP henceforth) that laid the groundwork for how speakers should contribute to conversations. Grice (1989, p. 445) defined his CP theory as follows: *"Make our conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the exchange in which we engaged" (*as cited in Aso Ali Muhammad & Hemn Adil Karim, 2019). Thus, for a conversation to be successful, Grice proposed that the interlocutors must obey the CP, which is classified into four conversational maxims: (1) Maxim of Quantity, (2) Quality, (3) Relation/Relevance, and (4) Manner (Grice, 1975; 1978; 1989 as cited in Ali Suleiman Awwad et al., 2019).

Table 1
Types of Maxims

Types of Maxims	Definitions
Maxim of Quantity	Speakers must provide enough context information to meet the maxim of quantity. Information should also be sufficient and not too much or little. Amer Mohammad Ayasreh et al. (2019) stated that appropriate information is needed to complete the dialogue. Furthermore, overstatements might mislead listeners and waste speaker time (Grice, 1975, as cited in Ali Suleiman Awwad et al., 2019).
Maxim of Quality	Speakers' truthfulness is governed by the maxim of quality. Grice (1975, cited in Ali Suleiman Awwad et al., 2019) proposed that in conversations, speakers should state what they believe to be true or accurate. Speakers should likewise avoid unsupported claims (Grice, 1989, cited in Taqwa Rashid Juma'a, 2020).
Maxim of Relation/ Relevance	Speakers must make their contributions relevant to the conversation's subject or context (Buddharat et al., 2017). According to Seftika (2015), speakers that follow the relevance maxim will keep the debate on track. Thus, speakers should address context and earlier conversational utterances (Grice, 1989, as cited in Taqwa Rashid Juma'a, 2020).
Maxim of Manner	Buddharat et al. (2017) classified manner into four sub-maxims: (1) avoid obscurity of expressions, (2) avoid ambiguity, (3) be concise, and (4) be well-ordered. Speakers must also avoid complex statements (Grice, 1975, cited in Buddharat et al., 2017). The maxim of manner, according to Grice (1975), focuses on how utterances are delivered rather than what conversational speakers say (Ali Suleiman Awwad et al., 2019). The speaker must avoid ambiguity, be brief, and talk clearly and orderly.

Observing the Maxim
Speakers are said to observe the maxims when they cooperate and follow Grice's conversational maxims in their conversations. Speakers only observe the maxims when they choose to cooperate in the conversations (Grice, 1975, as cited in Aso Ali Muhammad & Hemn Adil Karim, 2019). Therefore, hearers would not need to make assumptions or inferences about the speakers' utterances just to understand what is being said (Aso Ali Muhammad & Hemn Adil Karim, 2019). Simply put, speakers are assumed to observe the maxims when they cooperate in the conversation by (1) following the maxims in the utterances and (2) helping the hearers to understand their utterances directly. However, people sometimes fail to observe the maxims in their conversations for different reasons. This failure to observe the maxims is called the Non-Observance of Grice's Maxim. The non-observance of Grice's maxims governs how speakers fail to follow the maxims in a conversation. There are several reasons that cause people to fail in observing the maxims, including the inability to speak clearly due to anxiety, fear, and nervousness, or the disability of stuttering (Alvaro, 2011, as

cited in Ali Suleiman Awwad et al., 2019; Massanga & Msuya, 2017). However, several studies show different findings where people purposefully do not observe the maxims as they have the intention to mislead or deceive the hearers (Amer Mohammad Ayasreh et al., 2019; Aso Ali Muhammad & Hemn Adil Karim, 2019; Nibras Khalil, 2020; Taqwa Rashid Juma'a, 2020) or intentionally to evoke humorous effect and discomfort to the hearers (Masangga & Msuya, 2017). In regard to this matter, Grice (1975) illustrated five ways of failing to observe maxims adopted by speakers: (1) flouting a maxim, (2) violating a maxim, (3) opting out a maxim, (4) infringing a maxim, and (5) suspending a maxim (Ali Suleiman Awwad et al., 2019; Aso Ali Muhammad & Hemn Adil Karim, 2019; Seftika, 2015). However, this study will only focus on flouting a maxim.

Grice's Cooperative Principles and The Flouting of Grice's Maxims in Political Discourse
Grice's CP has been analysed in several discourse disciplines, including political discourse. According to Ali Suleiman Awwad et al. (2019) and Amer Mohammad Ayasreh et al. (2019), political discourse includes legislative debates, speeches, interviews with politicians or leaders, and government discussions or advertisements. Political discourse involves politicians and employs political vocabulary. Political language is full of euphemism and fuzziness and is used to mould others' perceptions to back politicians' assertions or introduce new ideas, according to Bayley (2000, as cited in Mohammad Jabbar Lazim, 2020). There are several research identified political discourse maxims that were violated. The study conducted by Isma Farikha Latifatun Nuzulia (2020) examined the violation of the maxim of conversation in the interview between Donald Trump and TIME magazine in the Oval Office. The research also aimed to identify the specific maxim that was most frequently violated. The study's findings revealed that Donald Trump flouted only three maxims, specifically the maxims of amount, relation, and manner. The violation of the maxim of quality was not observed in the interview conducted with Trump. Trump flouted the maxim of quantity the most, doing so 11 times out of the total 16 exchanges. Trump flouted the maxim of quantity by overstating his points or showing interest in the question. However, he violated the quantity maxim to demonstrate his social rank and strength. Taqwa Rashid Juma'a (2020) conducted a similar study on the violation of Grice's maxims in a Trump political interview with TIME. His findings supported Isma Farikha Latifatun Nuzulia (2020), who found the maxim of quantity flouted 13 times throughout the interview. Trump employed a rhetorical approach characterised by the use of overstatement and repetition to deliberately violate the maxim of quantity.

Furthermore, a study by Nibras Khalil (2020) analysed to what extent President Zelensky and Prime Minister Modi broke Grice's maxims in their presidential speeches. The findings of this study also showed that the maxim of quantity was most flouted by President Zelensky (55.6%). Conversely, the maxim of manners was frequently flouted by Prime Minister Modi (37.4%). Thus, the findings of Nibras Khalil (2020) study show that the occurrence of flouting Grice's maxims cannot be generalised to all political figures, and it is worth noting that some studies may show different findings. Next, Amer Mohammad Ayasreh et al., (2019) analysed the interview with the president of Libya and Syria. His findings showed that Gaddafi flouted the maxim of quality the most by incorporating rhetorical strategy and not supporting his statements with sufficient evidence. However, a study by Muhammad Manzoor Alam et al. (2022) showed different strategies were adopted in the context of Pakistani political discourse, whereby the politicians merely expressed unconfirmed facts and made deductions. The reasons for this flouting of the quality maxim are to conceal the truth from the public,

prove himself innocent of the accusation, and justify his or the government's action (Amer Mohammad Ayasreh et al., 2019; Aso Ali Muhammad & Hemn Adil Karim, 2019; Muhammad Manzoor Alam et al., 2022; Rahmi et al., 2018). However, they did not incorporate adequate evidence to support his contributions, implying that his statements could be false or lies. Additionally, a study by Mohammad Jabbar Lazim(2020) analysed conversational implicature in the political talk of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah. He found that the maxim of relation was the most flouted, with four occurrences out of 11 collected excerpts. Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah flouted the maxim of relevance by providing indirect and irrelevant answers to the question asked, as he wanted to create implicature or humour. Lastly, a study by Amadi (2020) titled *Implicatures in President Goodluck Jonathan's Election Campaign Speech* showed distinct results from Isma Farikha Latifatun Nuzulia (2020), Nibras Khalil (2020), and Taqwa Rashid Juma'a (2020). Among four of Grice's maxims, the maxim of manner was found to be frequently flouted, occurring 13 times out of the 23 exchanges collected. It was observed that the speaker corporated hedges such as 'they', 'us', 'somebody', 'them', and 'we' in his utterances but failed to state to whom this hedge refers. Studies by Aso Ali Muhammad and Hemn Adil Karim (2019), Buddharat et al. (2017), and Seftika (2015) added that flouting of manners can also be done by giving prolix statements, long and convoluted answers, and unclear explanations to the opinions stated.

Grice's Maxims in Political Discourse and Strategies Used in Flouting the Maxims.
Several studies showed that American and Lebanese politicians flouted the quantity maxim by adopting an understatement strategy and short and brief responses to answer the questions asked (Budhharat et al., 2017; Issa Al-Qaderi & Ahmed Alduais, 2019; Mohammad Jabbar Lazim, 2020). However, studies by Nibras Khalil (2020) showed different findings where the Ukrainian politician flouted the quantity maxim by adopting overstatements and prolixity strategies in the interview. Additionally, American politicians, including Donald Trump, flouted the maxims of manner and relation by delivering ambiguous, irrelevant, and disordered statements (Isma Farikha Latifatun Nuzulia 2020; Muhammad Manzoor Alam et al., 2022; Taqwa Rashid Juma'a, 2020). Studies conducted by Amer Mohammad Ayasreh et al. (2019), Issa Al-Qaderi and Ahmed Alduais (2019), and Mohammad Jabbar Lazim (2020) showed similar results where Arab and Lebanese politicians did adopt similar ways to flout the maxims in their speeches. For example, Libyan politician Colonel Gaddafi was found flouting the maxims by giving overstated responses, answering questions in the form of rhetorical questions, supporting his answers with inadequate evidence, expressing unclear statements, and purposefully changing the topic through his irrelevant answers in the interview (Amer Mohammad Ayasreh et al., 2019). In contrast, the Indian politician was found flouting the maxim of manner by making ambiguous statements concerning the COVID-19 crisis in India, followed by relevance, quantity, and manner (Nibras Khalil, 2020). Consequently, it can be said that these politicians flouted Grice's maxims by adopting these eight strategies: (1) the maxim of quantity by overstatement or understatement; (2) the maxim of quality by not incorporating adequate evidence; (3) the maxim of relevance by giving indirect, irrelevant answers or changing the subject discussed; and (4) the maxim of manner by providing convoluted, unorderly, ambiguous, and unclear answers (Amadi, 2020; Amer Mohammad Ayasreh et al., 2019; Aso Ali Muhammad & Hemn Adil Karim, 2019; Buddharat et al., 2017; Isma Farikha Latifatun Nuzulia, 2020; Mohammad Jabbar Lazim, 2020; Muhammad Manzoor Alam et al., 2022; Taqwa Rashid Juma'a, 2020; Seftika, 2015). Thus, this

study adopted this strategy of flouting maxims in analysing the flouting of Grice's Maxims adopted by Syed Saddiq in an online interview and the strategies used.

Methodology
This study employed a qualitative research methodology to effectively examine the violation of Grice's Maxims by Syed Saddiq during an online interview, as well as the techniques employed. According to Punch (2013, as cited in Mohajan, 2018), qualitative research is a type of social science research that entails the collection and analysis of nonnumerical data. The primary objective of this study is to interpret meanings and acquire an understanding of social life through the study of specific populations or locations, specifically to analyse the maxims flouted and strategies used to flout maxims in an interview with Syed Saddiq. Hence, it can be deduced that the present study aligns with qualitative technique in its shared objective of comprehensively elucidating and interpreting phenomena based on the viewpoints of the individuals involved. Furthermore, according to Mohajan (2018), researchers might use qualitative techniques such as interviews, analysing diaries and journals, and doing content analysis on both visual and textual materials to collect and analyse data. Thus, this study used non-numerical data like interview transcripts to analyse Grice's maxims and techniques for flouting them, giving information on pragmatics, notably political speech.

The main data source was a 37-minute Breakfast Grille Malaysia (BFM) online podcast titled "MUDA: The Disruptive Force to Be Reckoned With?" on October 12, 2021. This interview featured guest speaker Syed Saddiq Syed Abd Rahman. Over his career, he has held important political roles in Malaysia. He is Malaysian United Democratic Alliance (MUDA) president from September 2020. From July 2018 to February 2020, Syed Saddiq was the youngest Pakatan Harapan (PH) Minister of Youth and Sports. Apart from his political activity, Syed Saddiq was known for his social media presence and outspokenness on Malaysian political and social issues. He spoke out on several issues, notably UNDI18, the proposal to decrease the voting age from 21 to 18. Due to this, The News Straits Times, Malay Mail, Channel News Asia (CNA), South China Morning Post (SCMP), The Star, Breakfast Grille Malaysia (BFM), CNA, and SCMP have requested interviews with him. Syed Saddiq's media and social media presence, cabinet role, and MUDA presidency showed his influence in Malaysian politics.

Additionally, this study used purposive sampling to identify interview sessions which corresponded to the research objective. According to Gentles (2015, as cited in Bazen et al., 2021), purposive sampling, also known as purposeful sampling, is a common qualitative research technique. Thus, this interview with Malaysian politician Syed Saddiq and this purposive sampling technique ensured that the data source closely aligned with the research objectives, increasing the likelihood of obtaining useful and relevant information. The following criteria were defined for the study's sample: (1) must have been appointed as a Malaysian Member of Parliament at least once; (2) must have been interviewed by news channels or any interview sites at least three times; and (3) must be actively engaged in Malaysian politics.

The research instrument used was a written transcription of the host and guest's conversation from an audio interview that was downloaded. This study used a data sheet template from Muhammad Asif et al. (2019) with a few adjustments to improve data analysis and meet study goals. These adjustments were performed to maximise data analysis and meet the study's objectives as this data sheet was secondary data. Next, Otter.ai was used to transcribe the downloaded video due to its free accessibility and transcription convenience. In order to improve the precision of transcription, the process of comparing and re-transcribing the

transcript was done to ensure its congruence with the original dialogue included in the audio recording. In order to preserve the authenticity of the guest's original words, a few grammatical errors were not rectified. To ensure the reliability and validity of the data, the academic supervisor reviewed it to ensure correctness and transcription standards. After verification, the data were grouped and categorised on a modified data sheet for analysis and interpretation.

Findings

The findings are categorised into two primary elements, which provide an overview of the instances where Syed Saddiq violated Grice's maxims in his utterances during the podcast interview. Additionally, the techniques employed by Syed Saddiq in flouting Grice's maxims are also summarised.

Table 2

The Frequency of Flouting Grice's Maxims

Items	*Quantity*	*Quality*	*Manner*	*Relation*
Excerpt 1	/	/	/	
Excerpt 2	/	/		/
Excerpt 3	/	/		/
Excerpt 4	/		/	/
Excerpt 5	/		/	/
Excerpt 6	/	/	/	/
Excerpt 7	/	/		/
Excerpt 8	/			/
Excerpt 9	/			/
Excerpt 10				/
Excerpt 11	/			
Excerpt 12		/		
Total	10	6	4	9
Percentage	34%	21%	14%	31%
Total Maxims Flouted	29			

Table 2 shows an overview of the number of maxims flouted by Syed Saddiq in his online podcast interview. According to the information in Table 4.1, Syed Saddiq's statement in the first excerpt flouted the maxims of quantity, quality, and manner. Similarly, in the second and third excerpts, the maxims of quantity, quality, and relation were also flouted. Whereas in excerpts 4 and 5, Syed Saddiq flouted the maxims of quality, quantity, and relation. Remarkably, all four of Grice's maxims were found to be flouted by Syed Saddiq in the sixth excerpt. In the seventh excerpt, the maxims of quantity, quality, and relation were flouted. Additionally, in excerpts 8 and 9, two maxims, namely quantity and relation, were flouted. In excerpts 10, 11, and 12, only one maxim was flouted in each, specifically the maxims of relation, quantity, and quality, respectively. The findings above also revealed that the maxim of quantity exhibited the highest frequency of flouting, occurring 10 times out of the 12 excerpts, representing a percentage of 34%. Furthermore, the maxim of relation was the second most frequently flouted, appearing eight times during the interview, accounting for 31% of the total instances. Additionally, the maxim of quality was found to be flouted six times, constituting 21% of the occurrences within the 12 collected excerpts from Syed

Saddiq's interview. Notably, the maxim of manner displayed the lowest frequency of flouting, with only four instances observed, corresponding to 14% of the total excerpts. Hence, it can be concluded that all four maxims were observed being flouted by Syed Saddiq, where the maxim of quantity was flouted the most, followed by relation, quality, and manner.

Table 3

Strategies Adopted by Syed Saddiq in Flouting Grice's Maxims

Items	Quantity	Quality	Manner	Relation
Excerpt 1	Brief and insufficient information	Brief and insufficient information	Brief and insufficient information	NA
Excerpt 2	Relatively brief answer	Relatively brief answer	NA	Indirect answer
Excerpt 3	Prolix responses and unnecessary details	Prolix responses and unnecessary details	NA	Irrelevant answer
Excerpt 4	Prolixity	NA	Complex and prolonged answer	Indirect answer
Excerpt 5	Exaggerated answer	NA	Convoluted answer	Irrelevant answer
Excerpt 6	Prolixity	General statements and not supported with evidence	Convoluted and unorderly answer	Indirect answer
Excerpt 7	Brief and insufficient information	Not supported with evidence	NA	Indirect answer
Excerpt 8	Relatively brief answer	NA	Indirect answer	Relatively brief answer
Excerpt 9	Provide inadequate information	NA	NA	Irrelevant answer
Excerpt 10	NA	NA	NA	Indirect answer
Excerpt 11	Relatively brief answer	NA	NA	NA

Excerpt 12	NA	Lack of supporting evidence	NA	NA

Table 3 presents various strategies employed by Syed Saddiq to flout the maxims of quantity. These strategies included providing brief and insufficient answers, offering exaggerated responses, displaying prolixity in his replies, and producing utterances that lacked adequate information. Regarding flouting the quality maxim, out of the 10 excerpts analysed, Syed Saddiq employed brief and insufficient responses on five occasions while demonstrating prolixity in his replies three times. Additionally, he used exaggerated statements and inadequate information once each. Thus, it can be seen that Syed Saddiq adopted four different strategies for flouting the quantity maxims. Furthermore, it was also discovered that Syed Saddiq predominantly employed several strategies to flout the maxims of quality. These strategies include not providing supporting evidence for his claims, hedging in his statements, and providing inadequate or insufficient examples. Out of the six excerpts analysed where the quality maxim was flouted, Syed Saddiq was observed not supporting his claims with evidence in four instances. Additionally, he also utilised hedging and lacked appropriate examples, each occurring once to flout the maxim. Therefore, it can be concluded that Syed Saddiq utilised three distinct strategies to disregard the observance of the quality maxims.

Additionally, in flouting the maxim of manner, Syed Saddiq employed three strategies, including providing answers that were excessively concise and unclear, offering complex and prolonged responses, and delivering convoluted statements. Among the three instances analysed, Syed Saddiq was observed to provide convoluted sentences twice, while the other two strategies occurred once each. These findings indicate that Syed Saddiq utilised three distinct strategies to flout the manner maxim. Lastly, the analysis revealed that Syed Saddiq employed two strategies to flout the maxim of relation, namely providing indirect answers and offering irrelevant responses. Out of the nine instances where the maxim of relation was flouted, Syed Saddiq was observed to provide indirect answers in six cases. Additionally, he gave irrelevant answers three times during the interview. These findings indicate that Syed Saddiq utilised these two strategies to disregard the observance of the relation maxim.

Discussion
Based on the data analysis, it was found that all four of Grice's maxims, namely quantity, quality, manner, and relation, were flouted by Syed Saddiq in his online interview. In fact, the maxim of quantity was found to be the most flouted (34%), followed by relation (31%), quality (21%), and manner (14%). The findings of this study are in line with research conducted by Isma Farikha Latifatun Nuzulia (2020), Nibras Khalil (2020), and Taqwa Rashid Juma'a (2020), where they also discovered that politicians flouted the maxim of quantity the most. However, it is worth noting that research by Mohammad Jabbar Lazim (2020) that analysed the conversational implicature in the talk of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah presented different findings. While Syed Saddiq's interview demonstrated flouting of all four maxims, Sayyed Hassan's talk exhibited adherence to the quality maxim. In Sayyed Hassan's case, not all four maxims are flouted. Instead, he adhered to the maxim of quality, where he provided information and supported it with adequate evidence. Thus, it is unlikely for him to flout the maxim of quality. This suggests that the flouting of Grice's maxims can vary among politicians and may be influenced by individual communication styles, context, and strategic objectives. Besides that, this study also demonstrates that Syed Saddiq adopted the understatement strategy in flouting the maxims. Understatement, as defined by Anisa Larassati (2019), is

when speakers give too little or short information that is needed. Out of the 12 excerpts analysed, Syed Saddiq was found to provide relatively brief and insufficient answers that did not address the question asked by the host. This finding is similar to previous studies conducted by Issa Al-Qaderi and Ahmed Alduais (2019), where politicians also provided short and brief responses to the questions. Politicians flouted the maxim of quantity by adopting the understatement strategy because they would like to avoid telling the truth, to protect their self-image, or because the issue asked is controversial (Buddharat et al., 2017; Mohammad Jabbar Lazim, 2020). However, Syed Saddiq also adopted the overstatement strategy, whereby he gave prolonged and exaggerated responses to the questions asked. Overstatement, as defined by Anisa Larassati (2019), is when the speakers give more information than is asked for. As suggested by Corbett (1990), he described overstatement as interrelated with hyperbole as overstating information is used to create an impact on the audience (as cited in Zahraa Safaa Ibrahim and Lina Laith, 2023). According to research by Seftika (2015), Obama and Roberts also adopted an overstatement strategy to flout the maxim of quantity. This overstatement was done either to avoid revealing one's opinion, display a good image, or even be unsure of the facts (Amer Ayasreh & Razlina Razali, 2018; Issa Al-Qaderi & Ahmed Alduais, 2019; Masangga & Msuya, 2017; Othman Khalid Al-Shboul, 2022). Thus, their responses hit around the bush without properly addressing the questions asked.

Similar to previous studies, this study discovered that the most common strategy adopted by Syed Saddiq in flouting the maxim of quality was not supporting his statements with adequate evidence or examples. For example, Syed Saddiq flouted the maxim of quality when he uttered general statements about MUDA's policy-based approaches and their previous actions for in-depth research and data-driven discussions. However, these statements were merely his opinions, and he did not support them with specific instances or evidence to illustrate MUDA's approach or the research that had been conducted. This finding is in line with the study by Rabia Hassan Hasson and Hani K. El-Ebadi (2022), where Donald Trump also flouted the maxim of quality by making unjustified assumptions without any evidence to prove his claim that Hillary Clinton committed tax fraud. Wajeeha Usman (2021) asserted that when the speaker provides a lack of evidence in the conversation, it is flouting the maxim of quality. Thus, it can be said that Syed Saddiq and other politicians flouted the maxim of quality by not addressing the question with sufficient evidence. Meanwhile, convoluted, prolix, and unclear statements were the strategies employed by Syed Saddiq in flouting the maxim of manners. For example, Syed Saddiq employed the strategy of providing convoluted answers to address the fact that MUDA's ideology and visions were more towards policy-based approaches, which did not answer the question of why young voters should join his party. He only provided reassurance and comfort to the young voters that his party's ideology has what they need, which is a more policy-based approach. These findings are in line with a study by Najah Zainal Abidin and Jariah Mohd Jan (2023), where they also found that Malaysia's Deputy Minister of Education provided long-drawn and obscure responses to address the question of the allocation for Sabah. The minister was found giving obscure statements to comfort the audience that Sabah would not be diminished by the development. As found in the research by Aso Ali Muhammad and Hemn Adil Karim (2019), Isma Farikha Latifatun Nuzulia (2020), Mohammad Jabbar Lazim (2020), and Seftika (2015), they mentioned that politicians uttered unclear and convoluted or prolix responses as they would like to avoid giving precise opinions on controversial issues, mislead the audience to reach an agreement with them, or because they lacked knowledge about the questions asked. Thus, they purposefully flouted the maxim

of manner by adopting convoluted and obscure expressions without clearly addressing the question.

Lastly, as discovered in previous studies too, most of the politicians flouted the maxim of relation by deliberately giving indirect answers to the questions asked, which shifted the topic of discussions. In this study, Syed Saddiq also used this strategy to flout the relation maxims. Instead of directly addressing the questions asked, he answered them with irrelevant answers, which caused the topic of the discussion to shift. A study by Issa Al-Qaderi and Ahmed Alduais (2019) showed similar findings, where Arab politicians also gave indirect and unrelated responses, which caused the topic of discussion to change unexpectedly. The flouting of the relation maxim is mostly done by politicians when the questions seem a bit confidential, to distract the audience with another topic, to conceal the real answers, or to purposefully refuse to clearly deny or agree to the accusations asked (Amer Ayasreh & Razlina Razali, 2018; Jalal Sa'dullah Hassan, 2022; Othman Khalid Al-Shboul, 2022). Thus, this showed that giving indirect and irrelevant answers to the question asked could also lead to the flouting of the relation maxim.

Conclusion

This study is expected to enhance our understanding of how the flouting of Grice's maxims is employed in political discourse. Conclusively, this study examined the instances in which Syed Saddiq flouted Grice's Conversational Maxims during an online interview. The interview revealed that Syed Saddiq had shown a total of twelve instances of violating maxims. Syed Saddiq consistently violated all four maxims, namely those pertaining to amount, quality, manner, and relationship, with the maxim of quantity being the most frequently disregarded. Syed Saddiq employed a range of techniques to contravene the maxims, encompassing overstatement, understatement, lack of evidence, indirect responses, irrelevant answers, subject-changing, complex, confused, and ambiguous comments. In this study, Syed Saddiq offered relatively brief and insufficient answers and also failed to provide adequate evidence to support his claims. This behaviour was likely due to his uncertainty about the facts and his attempt to defend himself against accusations. By employing Grice's Cooperative Principle Theory as the central framework of analysis, this study offers a comprehensive examination that holds relevance not only for scholars in pragmatics but also for society as a whole.

Yule (1996, as cited in Muhammad Asif et al., 2019) explained that pragmatics focuses on the meaning conveyed by the speaker and its interpretation by the audience, involving the examination of real-life conversations in everyday contexts. For instance, this study provides a clear explanation of the flouting of Grice's maxim in the collected instances and offers a thorough analysis of the strategies used by politicians to flout these maxims. By doing so, individuals will be able to differentiate the various strategies adopted by politicians in flouting the maxims, such as deliberately giving short and concise answers, general statements without the support of adequate evidence, convoluted answers, and purposefully providing indirect answers. The findings of this study will have significant implications for society as they contribute to increasing awareness of the strategic communication tactics employed by politicians in their speeches, particularly in how language is manipulated in political discourse. This heightened awareness enables individuals to critically analyse political messages, identify misinformation, and make informed decisions during conversations. By being able to recognise and understand these manipulative strategies, society is better equipped to navigate political discussions and engage in more successful and productive conversations.

In a study conducted by Amer Mohammad Ayasreh et al. (2019), it was found that Gaddafi flouted Grice's Maxims by providing exaggerated statements to persuade the audience and gain agreement, even without supplying sufficient evidence to support his claims. Similarly, in this study, Syed Saddiq offered relatively brief and insufficient answers and also failed to provide adequate evidence to support his claims. This behaviour was likely due to his uncertainty about the facts and his attempt to defend himself against accusations. The findings of this study will have significant implications for society, as they contribute to increasing awareness of the strategic communication tactics employed by politicians in their speeches, particularly in how language is manipulated in political discourse. This heightened awareness enables individuals to critically analyse political messages, identify misinformation, and make informed decisions during conversations. By being able to recognise and understand these manipulative strategies, society is better equipped to navigate political discussions and engage in more successful and productive conversations.

Analysing how Malaysian politicians flout the maxims in this study also encourages further research on the intersection of pragmatics and political discourse. Therefore, by encompassing a more diverse array of political figures and conducting political interviews across various mediums such as television shows, online chat shows, and numerous podcast platforms, a more comprehensive examination and comprehension of persuasive communication strategies in political discourse can be achieved. This is because each platform has unique attributes, audience demographics, and interview dynamics that might influence the strategies used by politicians to flout Grice's maxims. Hence, it is highly recommended that prospective research initiatives investigate the transgression of conversational maxims through the examination of distinct interview settings including a range of political individuals. This will ultimately yield a greater understanding of the strategies adopted by politicians in order to build narratives, influence public opinion, and promote their political objectives.

Acknowledgement

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