

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Human beings are social creatures that cannot live without others. Therefore, the role of communication is vital in daily life as a tool to make people understand each other. Most people cannot stand living without communication. In the communication process, people express their thoughts, principles, emotions, attitudes, beliefs, and plans. People can interact with others to exchange ideas, share feelings, and solve problems through communication. “Humans put into words information through a variety of methods: speaking, telephones, email, blogs, TV, art, hand gestures, facial expressions, body language and even social contexts” (“What is Communication? The Definition of Communication”).

Communication is a social activity. What is important in communication is it needs two or more people involved in discussing a topic. Through the communication process, people usually send their message in two ways. The first

way is that the speaker says what she/he wants to say directly. This kind of process is when the speaker gives his/her idea explicitly, plainly, straight to the point, without any intention to imply something behind his/her utterance. In other words, it is aimed to make the hearer have no difficulties in receiving the message from the speaker. The second way to express ideas in what the speaker is saying is actually not what she/he really means.

Grice suggested that there is a fundamental principle that “determines the way in which language is used with maximum efficiency and affectively” (Huang 25). This fundamental principle is called cooperative principles. The principles rule the human interaction, make the conversation have the accurate information and are “conducted with truthful, relevant, and perspicuous manner” (Huang, 25). The cooperative principles are divided into four rules which are called *maxims*. The four maxims are quality, quantity, relation, and manner (Huang 25). By following the maxims, people will be able to send and receive a clear and understandable message.

The speaker, however, may fail to observe or comply with the maxim. This occurrence is called the non-observance of maxim as what Grice claims in *Meaning in Interaction* (1995) by Jenny Thomas. There are five ways for failing to observe a maxim: flouting a maxim, violating a maxim, infringing a maxim, suspending a maxim, and opting out a maxim.

There are so many reasons why people fail to observe a maxim or to break the rule of the cooperative principles. Some may intend to hide a thing or reveal a thing, some may be determined to mock or to save a face. When a person fails to observe a maxim, his/her utterance may lead to varieties of results. One of the

results leads to a conflict between the speaker and the hearer. This issue is what I am going to analyze in this study.

This study will highlight some examples of non-observance of the maxim in conversations that lead to conflict in a drama series *Desperate Housewives* Season 8. It is observed that in the film there are numerous occasions when different characters fail to observe a maxim which generates a conflict. The purpose of this study is to look for the various types of non-observance of the maxim in the film which lead to the conflict.

Desperate Housewives is a drama-comedy TV series created by Marc Cherry and produced by one of the national television channels in America, ABC. The eighth season of this film began to be broadcasted in the United States on September 25, 2011 and concluded on May 13, 2012. The film is about the life of a group of women living in a fictional American suburb, Wisteria Lane. They are Susan Mayer, Lynette Scavo, Bree Van De Kamp, and Gabrielle Solis. The story exposes their domestic struggles, crimes, hidden deadly secrets which contrast to their lives that seem perfect and beautiful on the surface. This film is popular and has been nominated and won a lot of awards, such as the Emmy Awards, Golden Globe Awards and People's Choice Awards ("Desperate Housewives"). Those records appeal to me as such that I decide to make this film my source of data in my study.

This study will be beneficial for students at the English Department, Faculty of Letters, Maranatha Christian University because after reading my study, they will understand how the non-observance of the Gricean maxim contributes to the conflict in a film. It is also beneficial for people outside the

English Department so they will understand conflicts which occur in daily life because of the non-observance of maxims.

(739 words)

1.2 Statement of the Problem

1. What types of non-observance of the Gricean conversational maxim occur in the utterance?
2. What are the implicatures generated from the non-observance of the Gricean conversational maxim?
3. How does the non-observance of the Gricean conversational maxim contribute to the conflict in the film?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

1. This study seeks for the types of non-observance of Gricean conversational maxim that occur in *Desperate Housewives* Season 8.
2. This study finds the implicatures that are generated from the non-observance of the Gricean conversational maxim in the film.
3. This study also searches for how the non-observance of the Gricean conversational maxim contributes to the conflict in the film.

1.4 Method of Research

To analyze the data, first I watched *Desperate Housewives* Season 8 several times to understand the story. I transcribed the conversation in the film and used the subtitle of the film to help me transcribe the conversation which is

not clear to me. Next, I analyzed the transcription and selected the conversations which contain the non-observance of Gricean maxim that leads to the conflict. This step includes the reason of implicature implied in the speech events. Finally, I draw some conclusions based on the analysis of the data.

1.5 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of four chapters. Chapter One is Introduction, which contains Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research and Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two is Theoretical Framework, which discusses the theory and approaches used in this study. Chapter Three is my analysis of the data. Chapter Four is Conclusion, which conclude the study and offers suggestion for any researchers who intend to analyze the same topic as I do. Then the last is Bibliography, which records the sources used in this study and Appendix, which contains a table of the list of data.