



EXAMINING ONLINE NEWS: A GRICEAN MAXIM ANALYSIS OF NEWS OUTLET FACEBOOK PAGES

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Abstract

This study explored how digital news outlets adhere to and violate the Gricean conversational maxims, namely quantity, quality, relation, and manner. Using a qualitative research design, 60 Facebook posts from three digital news outlets in Sorsogon, Philippines were analyzed based on the criteria set by H.P. Grice. It was found that the news outlets adhere to the Gricean conversational maxims, especially those of quality and relation. However, there were also instances when they clearly violated the maxims such as those of quantity and manner. These findings suggest that the news outlets share truthful and relevant news, but at the same time, they also disseminate unclear messages that lack important details. The analysis further revealed that the creators of these FB posts which do not observe the Gricean maxims have different motives or purposes. The most common possible motives are to emphasize a point, so the readers' attention is drawn towards a particular piece of information in the post and to capture or sustain the readers' interest so that they stay tuned for updates about the issue. Hence, the public needs to be more critical in examining FB posts of these news outlets and the possible motives behind every news story for a better understanding and interpretation of media messages.

Keywords: Gricean conversational maxims, cooperative principle, digital news outlets

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Introduction

The main purpose of any communicative event is to exchange information and establish a shared understanding (Ayunon, 2018; Hossain, 2021). For effective communication and meaningful interactions, it is then expected that a person's contribution to a conversation is clear, appropriate, and genuine. This cooperation among participants in any communicative event is described by Grice (1975) as the Cooperative Principle (CP).

In *Logic and Conversation*, Grice (1975) asserted that CP directs people to interpret what someone else says based on four sub-principles or maxims, namely quality, quantity, relation, and manner. The maxim of quality suggests that our utterances should remain as truthful as possible, while the maxim of quantity states that we should give information as needed and not more than what is required. Moreover, the maxim of relation pertains to making the contribution relevant to the interaction, or indicating what way it is not. Lastly, the maxim of manner involves being clear, brief, and orderly to avoid ambiguity. By assuming that a speaker adheres to these maxims and combining this with one's knowledge of the world, people can decipher what is meant by what is being said in a conversation. On some occasions, however, speakers violate these conversational maxims. According to Grice (1975), violation occurs when speakers deliberately choose not to observe the maxims to cause misunderstanding or achieve other purposes.

Gricean maxims have always been at the forefront of pragmatics when analyzing utterances in a conversation (Ayunon, 2018; Hadi, 2013). For instance, Haq and Isnaeni (2021) determined the ethical value of criticizing utterances on Facebook using Gricean maxims as parameters. Adebola (2018) also revealed that undergraduate students in a university in Nigeria commonly violate the maxims of relation and manner, which lead to ambiguity and diversion from the topic during conversations. Moreover, Ayunon (2018) analyzed Facebook conversation posts and found that speakers cooperate in the conversation by providing truthful, informative, and relevant answers. Similarly, Aporbo (2022) revealed that Gen-Z users directly flout and violate the maxims in their Facebook conversations by manifesting their personal knowledge of one another. Roxas (2020) also found that Facebook users provide irrelevant responses to questions or

comments, give information unsupported by evidence, and use vulgar language in utterances.

Grice (1975) observed that not all people adhere to conversational maxims. Non-observance of these maxims may lead to generating an implicature. This means that there are instances when people choose not to observe the maxims to allow the message recipient to uncover the underlying meaning and interpret the utterances (Paltridge, 2012).

This study explores language and media by looking into Facebook posts of news outlets in the province of Sorsogon, Philippines. In this digital age, news has become more accessible than ever before. It is not only on television, radio, or newspapers that people get to be informed of the latest news but also on social media such as Facebook. Due to its accessibility, people heavily rely on Facebook for their daily news information (Mitchell, 2020). It is then important to develop media literacy to evaluate the bulk of information on different social media platforms. This paper argues that a thorough analysis of Facebook posts created by news outlets will allow for a better understanding of digital media and how it may influence the interpretation of media messages.

Research Objectives

Using Grice's Cooperative Principle, this paper explores how Facebook posts of news outlets in Sorsogon Province adhere to conversational maxims. Specifically, it aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To describe the Facebook posts in terms of the following Gricean maxims: (a) quantity, (b) quality, (c) relevance, and (d) manner
- To determine how Gricean maxims are violated in the Facebook posts
- To identify possible motives of the creators in violating a maxim

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research design to analyze the Facebook posts of three popular news outlets in Sorsogon Province, Philippines. For ethical considerations, this paper refers to these three news sites as Digital News Outlet (DNO) A, B, and C. As of December 2023, these news outlets have over 200,000 followers on their FB pages. The data consists of 60 Facebook posts such as public service announcements, news articles,

features, opinions, and 'live' coverage, among others, from the three news outlets.

To gather the data, the researchers accessed the Facebook pages of three news outlets and took screenshots of their posts last December 23, 2023. The posts were chosen based on the following criteria: (1) A text is attached to the post, and (2) The post should have been created in December 2023. Photos or videos like Facebook 'lives' without captions and/or articles are not included. After the Facebook posts were screenshot and included in the data, they were analyzed to check whether the news stories as posted, adhered to, or violated any of the Gricean Maxims: Quality, Quantity, Relevance, and Manner. Hence, all Facebook posts were explored, noting the criteria set by Grice (1975), as seen below.

Table 1. Violation of Conversation Maxims (Grice, 1975)

Maxim	Violating the maxims
Quantity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the speaker does the circumlocution or not to the point • If the speaker is uninformative • If the speaker talks too short • If the speaker talks too much • If the speaker repeats certain words
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the speaker lies or says something that is believed to be false • If the speaker does irony or makes ironic and sarcastic statements • If the speaker denies something • If the speaker distorts information
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the speaker makes the conversation unmatched with the topic • If the speaker changes the conversation topic abruptly • If the speaker avoids talking about something • If the speaker hides something or hides a fact • If the speaker does the wrong causality
Manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the speaker uses ambiguous language • If the speaker exaggerates things • If the speaker uses slang in front of people who do not understand it • If the speaker's voice is not loud enough

To illustrate how the data coding was done, a post last October 15, 2023, by DNO A was analyzed. The following announcement was posted on the news outlet's Facebook page about a dog found by a concerned citizen.

LOST & FOUND

"Nakuwa po namin yan na aso kagabi po sa may 7/11."

(We saw this dog last night at 7/11.)

-Mike Santos

In this Facebook post of DNO A, a dog's photo was attached to this public service announcement. It can be observed that several important details were not included, like the specific location where the dog was found, i.e., the 7/11 store branch, the time when it was found, identifying marks, contact information of the concerned citizen, and steps that the owner may take to find the dog. Moreover, it would have been more helpful if the details were presented in a brief news report format to avoid ambiguity. Using the name and exact statement of the citizen who reported the missing dog and writing *LOST & FOUND* may not address the concern. Nevertheless, the post can be considered a public service announcement relevant to the content of the digital news outlet. It is also found truthful as there is enough evidence to verify the accuracy of the post, such as the name of the citizen who reported it, his exact statement, and even the dog's photo. Hence, this Facebook post of DNO A is found to adhere to the maxims of quality and relation but violates those of quantity and manner.

Moreover, to identify possible motives of digital news outlets for violating a maxim, the researchers further analyzed the Facebook posts based on the context of their respective media messages. The analysis was guided by the findings of Ayunon (2018), who studied the pedagogical implications of Gricean maxims in Facebook posts and conversations. In the study, possible motives of interlocutors in violating a maxim were also identified, such as (1) to inject humor in the conversation; (2) to reflect sarcasm in the statement; (3) to emphasize a point; (4) to hide identity; (5) to convince buyers to purchase; (6) to elicit sympathy; and (7) to impress.

Lastly, to establish accuracy and consistency in data coding, the researchers individually coded and analyzed the corpus based on the criteria set by Grice (1975). After the individual coding, the researchers discussed discrepancies and agreed on the corrected results.

Findings and Discussion

Guided by the criteria set by Grice (1975) in determining how utterances adhere to or violate the conversational maxims, 60 Facebook posts from three digital news outlets in Sorsogon province were analyzed. Several of these FB posts are presented to discuss further the observance and violation of the maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner. The FB posts were assigned alphanumeric codes to facilitate the discussion, and pseudonyms were used for ethical considerations. Faces in the pictures were also blurred to comply with the Data Privacy Act.

Observance of the Maxims

As emphasized by Grice (1975), conversational maxims direct speakers to make their utterances as informative, truthful, relevant, and clear as possible. Table 2 shows the total number of instances when FB posts of DNO A, B, and C were found to adhere to conversational maxims. Ikaria-Maina (2015) pointed out that adherence to CP results in orderly and effective communication as it allows participants to take turns smoothly and contribute significantly to the discourse. The table below reveals that the three digital news outlets seem to share truthful and relevant news.

Table 2

Maxim Observances Distribution

Maxim	Total Instances Found	Percentage
Relation	58	34.12
Quality	54	31.76
Manner	40	23.53
Quantity	18	10.59
Total	170	100.00

Maxim of Relation

Grice's maxim of relation pertains to making the contribution relevant to the interaction, or indicating what way it is not. This suggests that utterances should match the topic being talked about so that other participants in a conversation can respond accordingly. In news writing, the maxim of relation may also include ensuring that news reports are relevant to the audience. This means that they should cater to the different needs and interests of the audience while also providing new and important daily news information (Kheirabadi & Aghagolzadeh, 2012).

For instance, the FB post below by DNO A last December 13, 2023, invites Sorsogueños and possible tourists to visit a new commercial complex with different food establishments. This post is deemed relevant to readers because of the elements of recency and proximity especially to Sorsogueños.

(from A14)

L FONTANA Commercial Complex

A newest spot where you can dine and chill with your friends and loved ones especially this Christmas.

Here, you'll find a wide range of food establishments — Kochi Café, Nonna Comfort Kitchen, Romboph — and a variety of street-food and local delicacies.

Come and see its picturesque Christmas colors and decors, and enjoy:

See you there! ❤️

Location: Diversion Rd. Sitio Baribag, Bibincahan Sorsogon City

A13 is also an example of an FB post that adheres to the maxim of relation. This news announcement explains the cause of the sudden power service interruption in the different municipalities of the province and is deemed relevant to the affected residents.


(from A13)

Inako ng NGCP ang nangyaring unscheduled power interruption nitong December 14, 2023 mula 12:04 A.M. hanggang 6:07 A.M. na nakaapekto sa Donsol, Pilar, Castilla, Sorsogon West, East, Bacon, Gubat, Barcelona at Prieto Diaz dahil sa snake intrusion sa pole 553-3T of Daraga-Sorsogon 69kV Line.

(NGCP took responsibility for the unscheduled power service interruption today, December 14, 2023, from 12:04 A.M until 6:07 A.M. in Donsol, Pilar, Castilla, Sorsogon West, East, Bacon, Gubat, Barcelona, and Prieto Diaz due to snake intrusion at pole 553-3T of Daraga-Sorsogon 69kV Line.)

Furthermore, C3 is an FB post by DNO C that is found to adhere to the maxim of relation. The post is about whale shark sightings in Donsol Bay, Sorsogon, which seems to have been posted to promote the place to those who would like to travel and explore the province. This further suggests that the digital news outlet is not just focused on sharing news about crime stories, weather updates, reviews, etc., but also features possible travel destinations and other entertainment news.

(from C3)

Two (2) Whale sharks sighted in Donsol Bay, Sorsogon. 

#WhaleShark #Butanding #SorsogonProvince #DonsolSorsogon

Maxim of Quality

The maxim of quality suggests that utterances in a conversation should remain as truthful as possible. In the context of digital news writing, this may also mean that creators should not distort information for the benefit of a particular group or individual. Evidence for the truthfulness of news reports such as photos, videos, or interviews may also be provided so readers can verify their accuracy. The use of numbers, statistics, facts, and figures also indirectly shows that the news adheres to the maxim of quality as it convinces the audience about the truthfulness of the news (Kheirabadi & Aghagolzadeh, 2012). The maxim of quality is observed in the following FB posts of digital news outlets.

As shown in the FB post of DNO B below, an interview with the Agricultural Technologist for Livestock from the Municipal Agriculture Office was included in the report. This added to the truthfulness of the news report because readers can hear updates regarding the matter from personnel who is directly involved with the agency handling the concern. The FB post is then deemed truthful, which is beneficial to the public.

(from B8)

BAYAN NG CASTILLA PATULOY NA TINUTUTUKAN NG MUNICIPAL AGRICULTURE OFFICE UPANG MAPANATILI ANG PAGIGING ASF FREE NITO

(Municipal Agriculture Office continuously monitors the municipality of Castilla to maintain its ASF-free status)

Similarly, C6 is another FB post that adheres to the maxim of quality. The post is an invitation to the public to watch the University Marching Band in their Christmas concert. Details such as the date, time, and venue are also indicated. These details contribute to the truthfulness of the post and are deemed helpful to anyone who would like to watch the event.

(from C6)

CHRISTMAS CONCERT 🎤🎄🎁 The Sorsogon State University Marching Band will be having a Christmas Concert tomorrow, December 19, 2023, 6:00 PM at the Ground Level, The Event Center [SM City Sorsogon](#)

Come and join the marching band as they play various Christmas musical pieces. 🎄🔥

Let us bring everyone together and create memories with the Sorsogon State University Marching Band and Majorettes. See you there! ✨

[#HappiestChristmasAtSM](#)

Moreover, A4 is a news story posted by DNO A on their FB page. It is about the arrest of a robbery suspect who killed one and injured two residents of Manapao, Gubat, Sorsogon. The truthfulness of this news story is evident as it is posted along with the photo below, taken during the said police operation.

(from A4)

MANANABAS ng Gubat nahuli na ng pulisya nitong umaga. Isa ang napatay at ilan din ang nasugatan sa mga hinabol nito ng itak matapos magwala kahapon bago dumilim sa Barangay ng Manapao. Ang lalaki ay sinasabing inaatake ng problema sa pag iisip.

Magdamag na nagbantay na balot sa takot ang mga residente sa karatig barangay na pasukin ng suspek.

(A robbery suspect in Gubat was arrested by the police this morning. One died, and several were injured due to the incident. The suspect who was holding a bolo chased the victims yesterday afternoon at Barangay Manapao. He appears to be suffering from a mental illness.

Residents in nearby barangays spent the night worriedly watching out for the suspect.)

Figure 1 shows police officers arresting the robbery suspect. It can be observed that they are wearing their uniform so readers could easily recognize their identity. The suspect also appears to be in handcuffs. Hence, this photo allows the readers to validate the information in the post.

Figure 1. Photo attached to A4



Maxim of Manner

The maxim of manner involves being clear, brief, and orderly to avoid ambiguity. This also means that participants should ensure their utterances are understandable to the intended audience. In the case of digital news reports such as those found on the FB pages of news outlets, the maxim of manner further suggests that the posts are brief, easy to read, and use ordinary language. News stories should not be highly scientific, requiring background information to be understood by the audience (Kheirabadi & Aghagolzadeh, 2012). The following FB posts are found to adhere to the maxim of manner:

A6 is an announcement posted by DNO A about a resident who assaulted several individuals in Gubat, Sorsogon. This post was created prior to his arrest the following day. It can be observed that the announcement is

directly quoted from an interview with the Municipal Mayor. It is brief and specifically addresses the residents in nearby communities for their safety. The post does not need to be elaborated, and the way it is posted implies the urgency of the matter.

(from A6)

"As of 9:45 PM, hindi pa nahuhuli ang nag-amok sa Manapao. Pinapayuhan ang mga karatig-barangay na manatili muna sa kani-kanilang sariling bahay ngayong gabi." - Mayor of Gubat

("As of 9:45 PM, the suspect who ran amok at Manapao has not been caught. Residents in nearby barangays are advised to stay indoors tonight." - Mayor of Gubat)

The FB post below from DNO B is also found to observe the maxim of manner. Similar to A6, this post is also straightforward and easily understandable for the readers. It captures the important details of the news, like the topic, locale, and the concerned government agency. After reading this post and watching the attached interview, readers may be able to formulate sound judgments about the issue.

(from B3)

HILING NA MORATORIUM SA MGA QUARRY OPERATIONS SA BAYAN NG IROSIN, WALA NAMAN UMANONG PROBLEMA AYON SA PENRO-LGU-SORSOGON

(PENRO-LGU- SORSOGON sees no problem against a request for a moratorium on quarry operations in Irosin)

Another example of an FB post that is brief and clearly written is the post below by DNO C. The words *Fireworks Display* are formatted in boldface so readers can easily understand the post. The date and venue are also mentioned for clarity.

(from C1)

Fireworks Display 🎆🎇

Embrace the holiday spirit as we light up the skies with a dazzling fireworks display on December 25!

Join us at [SM City Sorsogon](#) for a celebration filled with joy and sparkle that will leave you mesmerized. Don't miss the enchanting magic in the

air — exclusively here!

#HappiestChristmasAtSM

Maxim of Quantity

This maxim relates to ensuring that the utterance is informative enough for the participants in a conversation. It allows the speaker to give information as needed and not more than required. For digital news outlets, the maxim of quantity may also mean that the news they share with the public should include all the important information that the community should know. Hence, they are well-informed and, in some cases, can respond accordingly. Kheirabadi and Aghagolzadeh (2012) also emphasized that news articles adhering to the maxim of quantity are informative enough. In the following FB posts, the digital news outlets show how they adhere to the maxim of quantity.

In the FB post below of DNO A, it can be observed that all the needed information about the conducted activity was mentioned. These include details such as what the activity was, who was involved, and where it was held. A reader who may read this later will not have to ask questions because the post is informative enough.

(from A9)

SM Employees Spread Joy through ChrisSMiles Volunteerism Program in Sorsogon City

Under the banner of their annual #HappiestChristmasAtSM campaign, employee volunteers from SM City Sorsogon brought smiles to 30 children in Brgy. Old Bato, Bacon District, Sorsogon City. Through the #ChrisSMiles Employee Volunteerism Program, kids enjoyed a day of fun activities and special surprises.

SM continues to demonstrate community support and commitment through SM Cares and the SM Foundation, Inc.

B13 is an FB post by DNO B about a fake memorandum circulating online stating that December 22, 2023 is only a half-day workday for all employees. To clarify the matter, the digital news outlet posted the information below.

The FB post may be brief, but it is deemed to be exactly what the public needs so they can be guided about the matter.

(from B13)

MAY PASOK (REGULAR WORKING DAY): December 22, 2023

*Presidential Communications Secretary Cheloy Garafil says a circulating document declaring half-day work for December 22 is **FAKE**.*

Another example of an FB post that adheres to the maxim of quantity is the following post from DNO C. It can be noted that the post is about a robbery in a pawnshop in Sorsogon City. Important details are mentioned, including the time, location, and how the pawnshop was robbed. The post is neither too brief nor too lengthy but is informative enough for the public to know what happened.

(from C19)

Orient Gold Pawnshop sa Sorsogon City pinasok ng kawatan; 1.5 milyong piso halaga ng alahas at pera natangay

Natangay ang humigit kumulang 1.5 milyong pisong halaga ng alahas at pera ng mga kawatan sa Orient Gold Pawnshop sa Sorsogon City, Huwebes, ika-7 ng Disyembre 2023.

Sinasabing duman ang mga suspek sa kanal mula sa bakanteng lote na dating kinatatayuan ng gusali ng Robertson Department Store na mismong nasa sentro o commercial district ng lungsod. Tinahak ng mga suspek kanal hanggang sa pawnshop at binutas nito ang kongkretong sahig at vault kung saan naroon ang mga alahas at pera. Habang sinusulat ang balitang ito wala pang opisyal na pahayag ang pulisya hinggil kung anong grupo o sino ang mga suspek.

(Orient Gold Pawnshop in Sorsogon City robbed; Php 1.5 million worth of jewelry and cash stolen

An estimated Php 1.5 million worth of jewelry and cash was stolen at Orient Gold Pawnshop in a robbery in Sorsogon City last Thursday, December 7, 2023. Suspects were said to have passed through a tunnel from a vacant lot where Robertson Department Store was previously located in the city commercial district. Suspects moved through the city drainage system to reach the pawnshop and made a hole on the floor where the vault containing jewelry and cash was placed. As of this time, the police have not yet issued

an official statement regarding the group or the identity of the suspects.)

Violation of the Maxims

Violation of the conversational maxims happens when participants in a conversation choose not to observe the maxims of quality, quantity, relation, and manner to cause misunderstanding or to achieve other purposes (Grice, 1975). There were clear instances when FB posts created by digital news outlets illustrate this violation. Table 3 shows the summary of non-observance or violation of the conversational maxims.

Table 3

Maxim Non-observances Distribution

Maxim	Total Instances Found	Percentage
Quantity	42	60.00
Manner	20	28.57
Quality	6	8.57
Relation	2	2.86
Total	70	100

It can be observed that the FB posts shared by the three digital news outlets in Sorsogon Province mostly violate the maxims of quantity and manner. This suggests that there is a need to improve the posts by ensuring that all the necessary information that readers should know are included and that they are clearly written to avoid ambiguity.

Maxim of Quantity

Grice (1975) argues that the maxim of quantity is violated in a conversation when the speaker is not direct to the point, uninformative, and either talks too little or too much. Repetition of certain words may also result in a violation of the maxim. The following FB posts of news outlets in Sorsogon illustrate how the maxim of quantity is violated.

For instance, it can be observed that the following post by DNO A is not definite. The first sentence of the post poses a question for the readers about the suspects being members of a particular group of robbers. Other important details about the crime are also not mentioned, such as the date and time when the robbery took place and the exact worth of stolen jewelry items. Moreover, the manner in which the robbery was done was not clearly discussed. It was also not mentioned if there were employees or customers injured. Although it was stated in the post that the police have yet to release an official statement, these details are important for the readers to fully understand what happened.

(from A20)

Was it a Termite/Acetylene Gang? Unidentified robbers dug a hole and broke inside the Orient Gold Pawnshop located at the Cathedral Arcade and took away millions worth of jewelry items. The police has yet to release an official statement.

B9 is a post from DNO B about a suspect who assaulted several residents in a municipality in Sorsogon. It was mentioned in the post that the said suspect who first ran away has now decided to turn himself to the police. However, this post is too brief and may not be understandable for readers who do not know any background information about the crime. It may also be confusing for readers who is being referred to as a suspect in the post.

(from B9)

SUSPEK SA PANANAGA NA UNANG TUMAKAS, NAGPASYANG SUMURENDER SA MGA AWTORIDAD

(Suspect in a stabbing incident decides to surrender after escaping from authorities)

Similar to A20 and B9, C5 is also an example of an FB post that is found to violate the maxim of quantity. It is too short and does not include important information for readers, such as the specific schedule of the event, including the date and time the concert is held. The post just informs the public that the Christmas concert is currently happening and may raise several questions from the readers.

(from C5)

THE CHRISTMAS CONCERT 🎤🎄🎁 of Sorsogon State University

Marching Band and Majorette at the Ground Level, The Event Center SM City Sorsogon.

Maxim of Manner

The maxim of manner is violated when the speaker is unclear with the delivery of the message. This happens when the speaker exaggerates the statements, and the language is ambiguous. The use of slang or jargon which may not be understood by other participants in a conversation can also result in the violation of the maxim of manner. The following FB posts violated the maxim because they contain unclear messages.

A1 is a post from DNO A about a resident who was unable to receive assistance from the municipality. The said assistance is said to be given to LGBTQ members. The resident is asking about the guidelines as there were several LGBTQ members in their area who were not included in the distribution of assistance. Analyzing the post, it can be seen that the statements are directly quoted from a supposed resident who sent the message to the news outlet for dissemination. There was no report from the news outlet confirming the said situation. Hence, readers may find the message unclear and may not be helpful to clarify the issue.

(from A1)

AYUDA SA LGBTQ

"Hi po good day po."

"Hide mona lng po kung sinu ako..hehehe

Residenti po aq kng castilla member po ako kng lgbtq ask lng po anu po an guidelines pra mkasabay s ayuda s kng lgbtq nta po kmi dakul an dae nkasabay unfair mn po samu n dae nkasaby pakusurugan nlng po b ini sa municipal ta halos sinda na sna nkakuha kng ayuda permi..sna po mapansin man ini na chat ko..ta dakul an mas deserv mkakuha kng ayuda.."

"slamat po 😊"

(Hi, good day.

Please hide my identity...hehehe

I am a resident of Castilla and a member of LGBTQ. I would like to ask about the guidelines for the assistance given to LGBTQ members. Why are we not included? There were actually several of us who were not included. Is this about having connections with those working in the municipal hall? They are always the ones receiving aid. I hope you notice this message because many are more deserving of the assistance. Thank you 😊

- From Inbox

Another example of an FB post that violates the maxim of manner is B6 uploaded by DNO B. The post says that the coastguard in the province is on heightened alert this Christmas. This may be too brief for the readers, which may result in confusion. For instance, the words *heightened alert* may not be understood by other members of the community, so it would have been better if important details were provided in the post, such as what the community can anticipate due to this situation. Qassemi et al. (2018) also noted a frequent violation of the maxim of manner in news reports, especially in sports and political news. Data analysis suggested that writers use implicit and vague language which may result in ambiguous news stories.

(from B6)

*COASTGUARD SORSOGON, NAKA HIGHTENED ALERT
NGAYONG KAPASKUHAN*

*(COASTGUARD SORSOGON IN HEIGHTENED ALERT THIS
CHRISTMAS SEASON)*

Maxim of Quality

The maxim of quality is violated when the speaker intentionally says something that is not true, makes ironic and sarcastic statements, denies something, and/or distorts information (Grice, 1975). In the case of FB posts by news outlets, the maxim of quality may also be violated when the posts disseminate unverified information without credible sources, which may mislead the public. Sharing inaccurate information may also result in violating the maxim. The following are examples of FB posts by news outlets that are found to violate the maxim of quality.

The post below is taken from DNO A's Facebook page. A photo was attached to this post with the caption stating that the man in the photo is the suspect for assaulting several individuals in Gubat, Sorsogon. The quoted statement is from someone named C. Domingo, who is said to be a relative of one of the victims. In analyzing the post, it can be noted that there is not enough evidence presented that may prove that the man in the photo was, indeed, the one responsible for the crime. There was also no mention of a police investigation being conducted which may validate the claim.

(from A5)

SUSPEK SA PANINIGBAS SA MANAPAO GUBAT

"Mag iringat po sa tawo na ini mao po ya ang nag tigbas sa tiyoon ko nan may iba pa na nagkatirigbas!!! sana madakop na ini please hustisya para sa tiyoon ko na mabooton pinatay mo lang 🤔🤔🤔" - C. Domingo

(Suspect in a stabbing incident in Manapao, Gubat

"Beware of this person who stabbed my uncle and several others!!! I hope this person gets caught and justice is served for my kind uncle who was killed 🤔🤔🤔" - C. Domingo)

C11 is also an example of an FB post by DNO C which includes unverified information that can mislead readers. The post is an update about two popular Filipino singers who will have their concert in Sorsogon later that night. A photo was attached to the post where the singers were seen preparing for the concert. However, stating that the Governor personally sponsored the free concert for the birthday celebration of his daughter is something that the readers may not verify. There was no evidence for the claim, so the FB post is found to distort information and may mislead the public. Similarly, Qassemi et al. (2018) revealed that quality is the most violated maxim based on their analysis of news reports published by *Tehran Times* in Iran. The findings suggested that reporters fabricate, manipulate, and disadvantage a party in their news stories.

(from C11)

LOOK: Ogie Alcasid and Regine Velazquez nasa Casiguran, Sorsogon na para sa kanilang concert.

Makikita sa larawan na nasa stage ang dalawa para sa sound checking.

Ang free concert ay hatid ni Sorsogon Governor Edwin 'Boboy' Hamor para sa kaarawan ng kanyang anak na si Casiguran Mayor Minez Hamor (LOOK: Ogie Alcasid and Regine Velasquez are in Casiguran, Sorsogon, for their concert.

The photo shows the two on stage while doing a sound check. This free concert is brought to you by Governor Edwin 'Boboy' Hamor in celebration of her daughter's birthday, Casiguran Mayor Minez Hamor)

Maxim of Relation

Violating the maxim of relation may happen when a speaker says something irrelevant in a conversation, changes the topic abruptly, or hides a fact. In the following FB posts by the news outlets, it can be noted that they are not necessarily relevant to the public, especially to Sorsoguenos.

For example, the following post by DNO B is about a dietary supplement capsule. It encourages the public to take the said capsule for better and healthier eating habits. The post is an advertisement for the product, which may not be relevant to the public who visits the page for daily news information. Hence, the post violates the maxim of relation. Additionally, it was found that these digital news outlets post sponsored advertisements on their Facebook pages, including exchange deals that help support their operations.

(from B19)

Masarap kumain, pero ang tanong healthy ba 'yan? Change your eating habit at sabayan ng pag-inom ng Maxan Capsule.

Ang Maxan Capsule ay may sangkap na Barley powder. Nakakatulong ang soluble content nito upang mapadali ang absorption sa mga kinakain at mailabas ang mga toxins na nagdudulot ng constipation.

(It feels good to eat, but is it healthy? Change your eating habits and drink Maxan Capsule. Maxan Capsule contains Barley powder. This soluble content helps absorb food nutrients and eliminate toxins that cause constipation.)

C12 is also found to be irrelevant for Sorsoguenos. Although the post is about a Bicolano, it does not contain information that may be helpful for

readers, especially those in the local community. Hence, the readers may not appreciate the update about the former Senator's recent activities.

(from C12)

Former Bicolano Senator & Justice Secretary Leila De Lima reunited with friends and allies

In her FB post De Lima said, "So happy to be reunited with friends, allies and kindred spirits during Liberal Party's Christmas party last night (my 1st time after 7 yrs). Kitang-kita at ramdam ang init ng pagkakaisa at pagiging pamilya. We may be relatively few in no. but the vibrancy of spirit lingers."

Possible Motives for Violating the Maxims

Grice (1975) asserted that only some observe all the maxims of quantity, quality, manner, and relation in a conversation. This means that there are instances when people choose to violate the maxims. This also suggests that there are purposes behind the deliberate decision of not adhering to the maxims. In analyzing the 60 FB posts by digital news outlets, it was found that only 15 of them observe the four sub-principles of CP. The findings revealed that 45 of these FB posts violate one, two, or even three of the maxims. These violations were further analyzed to determine the possible purposes or motives of the creators in violating the conversational maxims. Table 4 summarizes these possible motives based on the context of their respective media messages.

Table 4. Possible Motives for Violating the Maxims

Possible Motives for Violating the Maxims	Frequency
To emphasize a point	12
To capture/sustain the interest of readers	11
To provide updates on previous news posted	6
To directly relay information from the members of the community without the need to comment about the issue	6

To emphasize the recency of the news	6
To convince the readers to think favorably of an individual/group	3
To convince buyers to purchase a product	1
Total instances of violation	45

Out of the 45 instances of violation, the most common possible motives are to emphasize a point and capture/sustain readers' interest. Emphasizing a point means that the creators want to draw the readers' attention to a particular piece of information in the post. This may be why they tend to violate the maxim of quantity, as there are details that are intentionally not included in the post. To illustrate, examples are presented below:

(from B1)

"PAMASKONG HANDOG PARA SA KINABUKASAN" NG BFP SORSOGON CITY MULING NAGPASAYA NG MGA KABATAAN"

(BFP SORSOGON CITY AGAIN CONDUCTS CHRISTMAS GIFT-GIVING PROJECT FOR YOUTH)

(from B15)

NA SERBISYUHAN NG FREE DENTAL CLINIC NG LGU CASTILLA UMABOT NA SA MAHIGIT 100K

(FREE DENTAL CLINIC OF LGU CASTILLA PROVIDED SERVICE TO MORE THAN 100K)

B1 and B15 are FB posts by DNO B. Both posts were found to violate the maxim of quantity as they are too brief and lack important details that may raise several questions from the public. Another similarity observed in these posts is that they both emphasize specific points. B1 is about a community outreach project conducted by the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) Sorsogon City to celebrate the Christmas season. According to the post, the activity brought joy to the children who were the project's beneficiaries. The post emphasizes the impact of the activity more than the equally important details such as the nature of the project and the specific community where the activity was held. Moreover, B15 is about the free dental clinic project by a local government unit. The post emphasizes that

more than a hundred thousand beneficiaries have availed of the services in the said clinic. The post highlights this information more than the type of services available, consultation schedule, and/or requirements that may be asked.

Another possible motive of creators for violating the maxims is to capture or sustain readers' interest. This means that creators prompt the readers to stay tuned for updates about the issue. In some cases, like travel stories, creators deliberately choose not to mention all the details so readers become curious and actually visit the place.

A20 is a post from DNO A, which is found to violate the maxims of quantity and manner because it lacks details, resulting in an unclear message. It is also observed that the post aims to convince the readers to stay tuned for updates regarding the issue. This is shown by raising a question in the post's first sentence, asking the readers if the unidentified robbers are members of a particular gang and mentioning that the police have not yet released an official statement about the incident. This seemingly builds suspense that piques the readers' curiosity. This also suggests that the creators will keep the readers updated, so they must keep checking the page for new information.

(from A20)

Was it a Termite/Acetylene Gang? Unidentified robbers dug a hole and broke inside the Orient Gold Pawnshop located at the Cathedral Arcade and took away millions worth of jewelry items. The police has yet to release an official statement.

C9 and C17, on the other hand, are FB posts related to travel stories. Photos of the places mentioned are attached to these posts for reference. It can be noted that these are too brief and aim to capture the readers' attention, so they visit the place and see the attractions for themselves. The posts do not include important details, such as directions on how to get to the exact locations and the ideal time to visit.

(from C9)

LOOK: Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish Casiguran, Sorsogon 🌲



#SorsogonProvince #CasiguranSorsogon

(from C17)

LOOK: Aerial view of Blue and Pink Light Roses at Casiguran Pier Site in Sorsogon Province

#CasiguranSorsogon

Other possible motives of creators in violating the maxims include convincing the readers to think favorably of an individual/group, which creates partiality and preference among the public; convincing buyers to purchase by promoting a particular product on the page; directly relaying information from the members of the community without the need to comment about the issue; and emphasizing recency of the news resulting in lack of details. Rizal (2016) also observed that participants in daily conversations violate Gricean maxims for several reasons, including cultural factors. It was found that culture influences people's preference for a more direct or indirect means of communication.

Conclusion

The analysis of Facebook posts of digital news outlets in Sorsogon reflected adherence to the Gricean conversational maxims, especially those of quality and relation. However, there were also instances when they clearly violated the maxims to achieve different purposes. The maxims of quantity and manner are the most commonly violated maxims in their FB posts. These findings suggest that the three digital news outlets share truthful and relevant news, but at the same time, they also seem to disseminate unclear messages that lack important details. It is then necessary to ensure that all the necessary information that the public should know are included in the posts of these news outlets and that they are clearly written to avoid ambiguity.

Moreover, creators of these FB posts that violate the Gricean conversational maxims were found to have different motives or purposes. The most common motive is to emphasize a point, which means that the creators would like to draw the readers' attention to a particular piece of information in the post. Another is to capture or sustain the readers' interest so that they stay tuned for updates about the issue. Other possible motives or purposes of creators in violating the maxims include convincing the readers to think favorably of an individual/group, convincing buyers to purchase, directly relaying information from the members of the community without the need

to comment about the issue, and emphasizing recency of the news resulting in lack of details. With these possible motives or purposes behind every news story, it is imperative to raise awareness on the importance of media literacy. The public needs to be more critical in examining the bulk of online digital news stories, such as those on Facebook, for a better understanding and interpretation. The National Association for Media Literacy Education (2021) emphasizes that developing media literacy skills allows people to be more critical thinkers, effective communicators, and active citizens. Through media literacy, people can fully comprehend the varied media messages they receive from different platforms, empowering them to make sound decisions.

Media literacy should, therefore, be emphasized more in the classroom. Teachers, especially those in language and social science classes, should highlight the importance of developing media literacy skills in their lessons. Additionally, UNESCO (2024) advocates for media and information literacy policies and strategies to help deal with issues and challenges in the 21st century, such as mis- and disinformation and hate speech, the decline of trust in media, and digital innovations, including artificial intelligence. By developing a more critical stance towards media messages, people will be able to raise questions that can help them verify the truthfulness and relevance of news stories.

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