



Analysis of the Humors in Yue Yunpeng’s Cross Talks: Based on Cooperative Principles

LI Xin^[a]; LIANG Xin^{[a],*}

^[a]College of Foreign Languages, North China Electric Power University, Beijing, China.

*Corresponding author.

Received 12 February 2019; accepted 28 May 2019

Published online 26 June 2019

Abstract

Similar to the Talk-show in western countries, the cross talk is not only one kind of folk vocal art form but also one kind of performance art form, and the present popularity mostly is because of his humorous use of colloquial language. The Cooperative Principle proposed by the famous American philosopher Grice is an important principle in linguistics. And the violation of the maxims of Cooperative Principle often leads to unexpected humor. Based on Cooperative Principle, this paper analyzes the humor of young comic actor Yue Yunpeng’s cross talks and hopes that people have a better understanding of cross talks and traditional culture. The paper concludes that the violation of the maxim of the quality and relevance mainly produce humor. In the process, when violating the maxims, rhetorical devices are often used. People can find the humorous language of the cross talks directly by data analysis; the audience can better appreciate cross talks’ language humor.

Key words: Cooperative Principle; Cross talks; Humor; Violation

Li, X., & Liang, X. (2019). Analysis of the Humors in Yue Yunpeng’s Cross Talks: Based on Cooperative Principles. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 15(2), 29-34. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/ccc/article/view/11056>
 DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/11056>

INTRODUCTION

The cross talk is similar to the talk-show in Western countries, but the talk show is based on TV media. While

before the cross talk becoming a famous popular TV program, it was a street performance or filter performance or radio program. At the same time, the talk show is impromptu, but most of the cross talks have a fixed version. In addition, the talk show audience is mostly young people. Compared with the talk show, the audience of the early cross talk may be more inclined to the elderly. In recent years, with more talented young actors joining this team, quite a few young audiences become fascinated with this form of instatement, speciously its humors use of the popular colloquial language. It was not just an enjoyment of the linguistic art or success, but also it was an enjoyment of the irony or thinking of the contemporary issues or topics. This paper is intended to analyze the colloquial preferment of a rising new star, a young actor, Yue Yunpeng’s preferment.

The famous American philosopher Grice first proposes Cooperative Principle at Harvard’s speech in 1967. He argues that in the course of communication and conversation, the two sides seem to have intentionally or unintentionally followed a certain principle towards a common goal and direction in order to not only cooperate with each other effectively but also complete the task of communication. This principle is the “Cooperative Principle” in the conversational principle put forward by Grice. However, in the actual verbal communication, people not always adhere to the Cooperative Principle. For practical needs, people will deliberately violate the Cooperative Principle, that is to deliberately violate the surface meaning to convey their implication, thus to expressing another meaning. Humor is produced.

The paper aims to analyze the humor in Yue Yunpeng’s cross talks are based on Cooperative Principle. Cross talks’ language produces the humor by violating four maxims. This article is divided into four parts. Firstly, it gives a brief introduction of the theory of Cooperative Principle. It has four maxims and tells the violation of four maxims. Secondly, it is the most important part.

This part will use linguistic materials to analyze how Yue Yunpeng's cross talks language violates the Cooperative Principle to achieve the effect of humor from the quantity maxim, quality maxim, relation maxim and manner maxim. Finally, it clears up and analyzes the percentage of violation of four maxims and concludes that which principles the cross talk used to violate to produce humor mainly, so that the audience can better appreciate Yue Yunpeng's cross talks language humor.

1. INTRODUCTIONS TO COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

Cooperative Principle is first introduced by H. P. Grice, the famous American philosopher of language. "As phrased by Paul Grice, the Cooperative Principle is a norm governing all cooperative interactions among humans."¹ In the conversation, the listener and the speaker will must cooperate with each other and understand each other together to achieve the effective communication which is their common desire. However the precondition is that they must follow some principles, especially the Cooperative Principle.

In the general social science and linguistics, the Cooperative Principle describes how the speaker and the hearer communicate with each other effectively in a common social context. They must be mutually cooperative and mutually acceptable in one particular way. "In order to explain further the Cooperative Principle, Grice borrowed from the German philosopher Immanuel Kant four categories: quantity, quality, relation and manner."²

2. HUMOR IN YUE YUNPENG'S CROSS TALK PRODUCED BY VIOLATING COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

The cross talk is one kind of folk vocal art forms which is as popular as the Talk-show in western countries. It uses the humorous language and sarcastic mock to achieve the purpose for entertainment. There are many dialogues in cross talks and these dialogues are easy to understand. The cross talk is considered as the humorous pattern of manifestation mainly focusing on the language. So the production of the humor has the inseparable relationship with violating the Cooperative Principle

2.1 Violating the Maxim of Quantity

The maxim of quantity requires the quantity of the information. In the conversation, if one asks you to say or hopes you to say something, you need to say what you have known no matter how much the information.

However if you speaks out the information which one hopes not to say, the conversation implicature comes into being.

2.1.1 Giving Less Information

According to this maxim, the speaker should give enough information to make the listener to understand the meaning. However, sometimes people deliberately give less information to express what they want. The following is the example.

Example 1:

岳云鹏：我就喜欢这个卖，知道吗。李晨，大伙儿可能不太清楚，李晨以前就卖过，知道吗？(*The word "sell" is what I like. Maybe you don't know, Li Chen has sold something before.*)

李晨：您稍微等一小会儿，您跟大家伙把这刚才说那话给稍微说清楚一点行吗？(*Just a moment; can you make clear what do you mean by saying this?*)

岳云鹏：怎么了？(*What's wrong?*)

李晨：我怎么着了？(*What?*)

岳云鹏：卖过。(*You have sold something.*)

(岳云鹏、李晨《兄弟》)

(*Li Chen & Yue Yunpeng "Brothers"*)

In this dialogue, Yue just says that Li has sold something before. However, Yue does not tell the audience what Li has sold. That is Yue does not give us more evidences to prove it. The result is that people all associate something that Li sells with something that Li is sold. Because of the less information, it is agreed that Li is sold. So, under the circumstances, Yue uses the less information to entertain Li, thus to producing the humor.

2.1.2 Giving More Information.

This kind of the maxim is opposite to the previous one. It means that the speaker says more than the actual need. Originally one sentence can make people to understand the meaning. In the fact, the speaker says five sentences to explain it. The following is the example in the cross talk.

Example 2:

岳云鹏：好吧，咱们今天说的是《白蛇传》，白蛇的传记，讲的是四个人物 (*Ok, today we will talk about "The White Snake". As we all know, there are 4 characters.*)

孙越：主要人物。(*The four main characters.*)

岳云鹏：赵雅芝，叶童，张曼玉，赵文卓，阿萨，李连杰等。(*Such as Zhao Baizhi, Ye Tong, Zhang Manyu, Zhao Wenzhuo, A Sa, Li Lianjie, and so on.*)

(岳云鹏、孙越《白蛇传》)

(*Yue Yunpeng & Sun Yue "The White Snake"*)

In the dialogue, they talk about *the White Snake*. Yue wants to tell the audiences the four major characters. It is well known that four characters are Zhao Yazhi, Yetong, Shi Naiwen and Chen Meiqi. When Yue says Zhao Yazhi and Ye Tong, the dialogue follows the Cooperative Principle. However, Zhang Manyu Zhao Wenzhuo and other names are put out. Yue violates the principle. He tells more names than is required. He just needs to tell

1 <http://baike.so.com/doc/1925383-2037001.htm>

2 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cooperative_principle

the audiences four names, but he tells the audiences six names. He actually knows the real four names and tells the six wrong names deliberately. The purpose is to make people think that Yue is a little stupid and to entertain the audiences. The laughter is proved that humor can be created by violating this maxim.

2.2 Violating the Maxim of the Quality

This kind of the maxim requires people to tell the true things. It includes two aspects. First, you should not say the false thing that you think. Second, you should not say the thing that you have enough evidences to prove. The following are two examples coming from the Yue Yunpeng's cross talks.

2.2.1 Saying What You Believe to Be False

"Normally, people always say the true thing. However cross talk comedian sometimes deliberately says the wrong thing to reach their purposes. The hearer will deduce the language implicature." (Zheng, 2016, p.130) During this process, people can experience the humor.

Example 3:

岳: 那这俩人是怎么相识的呢, 话说, 这是在某一年的某一天(*How the two persons know about each other? Maybe someday...*)

孙: 你这连日子都没有。(*Which day?*)

岳: 我要随便说个日子行吗。(*Can I make up a day?*)

孙: 那也得有日子啊。(*As you like.*)

岳: 在1937年的7月7号。(*On July 7, 1937.*)

孙: 这白娘子和许仙和日本鬼子一起来的啊。
(*You mean Bai Suzhen and Xu Xian came with the Japs?*)

(岳云鹏、孙越《白蛇传》)

(*Yue Yunpeng & Sun Yue "The White Snake"*)

In the dialogue, Yue refers to the time of acquaintance between Bai Suzhen and Xu Xian. He says the obvious wrong time that is July 7th in 1937. It is known to all that the Japanese attacked China in 1937. Yue must know the truth, but he says the wrong time in the final. So, Yue violates the maxim of quality in the dialogue. People will associate the Tales of White Serpent with Japanese attacking China. It makes the thing very funny. The effect of humor is achieved.

2.2.2 Saying That for Which You Lack Adequate Evidence

Maybe the speaker says one thing that seems to be possible. At the same time, it lacks of enough evidences to prove it. Therefore, people think that what he said is false. For example:

Example 4:

岳: 你见过上中中中中下铺吗? (*My bed has Five-storey.*)

孙: 你这住多少个三平米啊, 五层啊这玩意。
(*Nonsense, how can this be?*)

岳: 嗯(It is true.)

孙: 听着都新鲜, 你们家是展示柜啊! (*It is the first time I heard this. Your bed maybe is a display cabinet.*)

岳: 睡觉前, 我把我爸放在第一层, 我的母亲放在第二层, 我媳妇第三层, 我孩子第四层, 我弄一被子往那一切, 都给他盖上了。(*My dad is on the first floor; my mom is on the second floor; my wife is in the third, my kid is on the fourth floor; and I am on the top floor. We only use one quilt.*)

(岳云鹏、孙越《托妻献子》)

(*Yue Yunpeng & Sun Yue "Take care of my wife and kid"*)

In the dialogue, Yue first refers to the bunk bed. However, this kind of bunk bed has five levels. Maybe it is possible, but Yue does not give the audiences some more information to prove what he has said. So, Yue leads people to follow his logical thinking. This ridiculous thing makes people laugh happily. Violating the maxim of the quality achieve the humorous effect.

2.3 Violating the Maxim of Relation

This maxim requires people to provide the relevant information.

2.3.1 Being Irrelevant

It is important to say relevant information for two sides in the conversation. However, in the real daily life, people cannot always say the relevant words. They can use this kind of way to avoid what they do not want to say. For example:

Example 5:

岳云鹏: 我说让沈腾接电话, 我说哥, 我小岳岳, 我不借钱。(*I just let Shen Teng to answer my cell, and tell him that this time I won't borrow his money anymore.*)

孙越: 借惯了怎么着。(*You have borrowed too many times from him.*)

岳云鹏: 听说您得了冠军, 我祝贺一下, 恭喜恭喜。 让我还钱呐, 喂。。。 信号不好呗, 就给挂了。(*This time I just show my congratulations to him, when he asks me to give back his money, I pretended not to hear clearly and hung up the phone.*)

(岳云鹏、孙越《看病》)

(*Yue Yunpeng & Sun Yue "See the doctor"*)

In this example, Yue calls Shen Teng. The purpose of this call is to borrow money, while Shen Teng forces Yue to pay back the money Yue has borrowed last time. However, Yue transfers the topic successfully. He says the telephone signal is not good and he cannot hear what Shen Teng said. Finally, he hangs up. It violates the maxim of relevance. Changing the topic suddenly makes Yue remove the embarrassment of borrowing money. During the process, humor is created.

2.4 Violating the Maxim of Manner

In the conversation, two sides should say that the words are not ambiguous and obscure. The language should be

in order and concise. This kind of the maxim is focused on the way or manner of communication.

2.4.1 Using Obscure and Ambiguous Expression

Normally, when the speaker communicates with each other, the speaker tries his best to say the words avoiding the ambiguity and obscurity, because the speaker worries to make misunderstand the real meaning. The result is the interruption of the conversations. But the cross talks are opposite. For example:

Example 6:

岳云鹏：不行了，住院了，在病房正抽烟呢，还喝酒呢。正抽着呢，护士进来了，说他一句，“小心肝！”，再瞅他，一副猥琐的表情，“小宝贝儿！”(One day, when he is smoking in the hospital's room, the nurse says: Take care of your liver! But he replies: My dear!)

于谦：嗨！哎呀，我又加一爱好。(You are joking! How can I be this?)

(于谦、岳云鹏《怯大鼓》)

This example tells the audiences that Yu is ill and in the hospital because of smoking and drinking. One day, the nurse sees Yu is smoking again and says that pay attention to your liver. While in Chinese, it is easy to be understood as “My honey”, so Yu responses to her, “My sweet”. The words are not obvious and easy to cause ambiguity. The nurse warns Yu that smoking is bad for his liver and suggests that he should smoke less. In the fact, Yu misunderstands what she says. So, Yue violates the maxim of the manner. This kind of the ambiguity and obscurity creates the humor.

2.4.2 Being Unclear and Disorderly

Concise words and the logical language are important in the conversation. If one side says the words illogically and verbosely, another side is unwilling to listen to what he says. However, the cross talks comedian can deliberately violate this maxim. For example:

Example 7:

岳云鹏：“肥哥，前门怎么走啊？”他人非常好，“前门啊，直走，拐过弯，有差不多一百米吧，那有卖地图的。”(I asked him: How can I get to Qianmen? He is very kind, and tells me: Go straight and turn, you can find a shop selling the map.)

孙越：我告诉他怎么走不就完啊，我让他买地图干嘛啊？(What I need to do is to tell him how to get there, why I let him to buy a map?)

岳云鹏：好人呐！(Maybe you think you are a good man by doing this.)

(岳云鹏、孙越《偷论》)

In this dialogue, Yue says that Yu Qian is a good person and is willing to help people. One day, one person asks where the Front Door is. He answers that you should go down the street, turn around and then will see one person who is selling the map. According to the normal way of thinking, Yu should tell him how to find the place directly, but he does not say this thing orderly. The sudden

and verbose language plays to our taste, and producing the humor.

Example 8:

岳云鹏：啊，五环，你比四环多一环。啊，五环，你比六环少一环。有一天，你会修到七环。修到七环，怎么办，你比五环多两环。谢谢。(Wuhuan, you are one more circle than Sihuan and one less circle than Liuhuan. How about Qihuan? It is two circles than Wuhuan.)

(岳云鹏、孙越《我是歌手》)

(Yue Yunpeng & Sun Yue “I am a singer”)

This song is very famous. It says that the fifth circle is more one than the fourth circle. The fifth circle is less one than the sixth circle. The fifth circle is less two than the seventh circle. The language is very complicated and wordy, but people like it. It makes the audiences to feel that the repeated words are very funny. It is obvious that this song violates the maxim of the manner but gains humorous effect.

3. DATA ANALYSIS OF YUE YUNPENG'S HUMOROUS LANGUAGE

As a famous rising star in the field of the cross talks, Yue Yunpeng performs the large quantity of the cross talks. Among these cross talks, some are very typical and famous. The author selects 30 cross talks which are well known to people. Some are performed in Deyun Cross talk Association's special performance. Some are performed in the Top Funny Comedian. After cleaning up these cross talks, the author studies his humorous language.

3.1 Percentage of the Violation of Four Maxims

After analyzing the 30 cross talks, the author finds out 448 cases among them violating the Cooperative Principle in details. Form these cases; the author studies the percentage that Yue often violates which kind of the maxim of the Cooperative Principle by data analysis. The following, there are two figures about the data. Figure 1 is about the percentage of the violation of the four maxims and the Figure 2 is about the percentage of the violation of the quality.

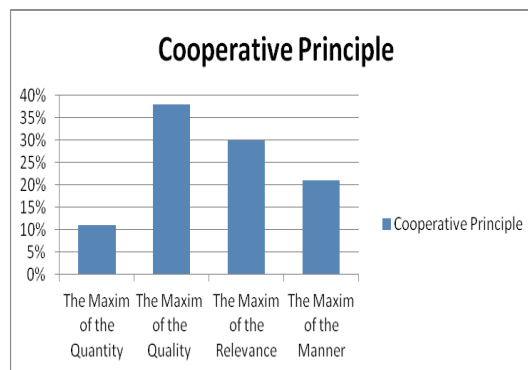


Figure 1

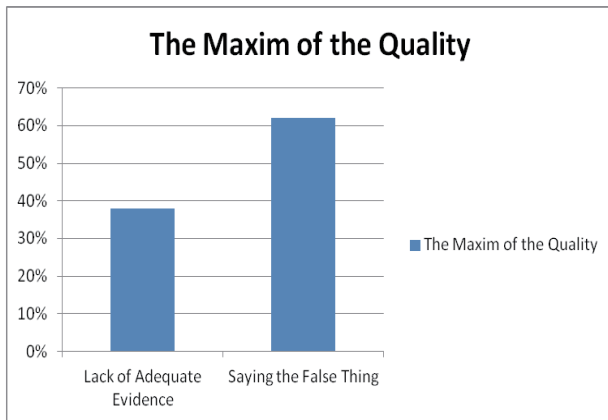


Figure 2

In Figure 1, it can be seen directly that violating the maxim of the quality takes up 38%. The figure is the largest. And violating the maxim of the quality takes up 11%. The figure is the shortest. Violating the maxim of the relevance takes up 30% and violating the maxim of the manner takes up 21%.

In Figure 2, among the maxim of the quality, saying what you believe to be false occupies 62% and saying the thing which is lack of the adequate evidence occupies 38%. Obviously, Yue violates the second maxim more frequently than the first.

After analyzing two figures, the conclusion can be drawn. Firstly, Yue Yunpeng often violates the maxim of the quality. In his cross talks, it is easy to find out that he deliberately says wrong and untrue words to entertain his partner or the audience. Then people follow his thinking way to think what he has said because the thing does not go beyond the field of the reasonable range. In the final, people will be suddenly enlightened and scream with laughter. Secondly, he also violates the maxim of the relevant. In the normal dialogue, two sides should say the same topic and the conversation can continue. However, in Yue's cross talks, he often says one thing and suddenly changes to another irrelevant thing. By this way he can resolve the embarrassed situation and make humors. When he violates the maxim, the topic and the relevance are changed to create the messed conditions. It surprises the people and gives them happiness. Then the humor is followed. Thirdly, Yue Yunpeng also uses the maxim of quantity and manner, but he uses two maxims less than other maxims, because it is more difficult for him to get the humor effects in these effects. In the conclusion, after data analysis of his humor by violating the Cooperative Principle, Yue often violates the maxim of the quality and relevance to gain the humor effects.

3.2 Rhetorical Effects by Violating Cooperative Principle

For studying the percentage of violating the four maxims, the author makes the figures in details. The figures show that Yue Yunpeng violates the maxim of the quality in

his cross talks. In the process of the data analysis of the maxim of the quality, rhetorical devices are found. There are 170 cases violating the maxim of quality. The figure of exaggeration has 68 cases. The figure of metaphor has 51 cases. Other 51 cases do not use the figures. It can be seen in the chart 1.

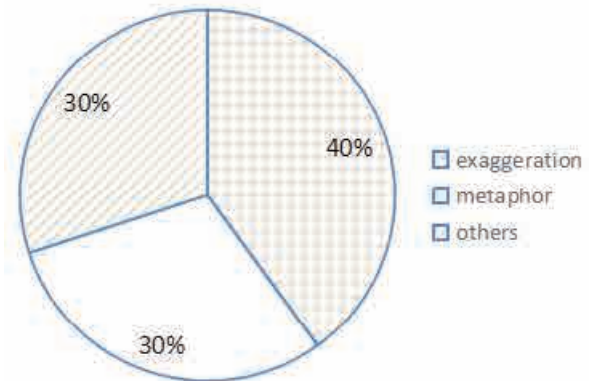


Chart 1

Firstly, Yue Yunpeng uses the figure of the exaggeration taking up 40% of these cases. When he introduces one thing, he does not follow the normal logical thinking way. He often obeys the principle to say the wrong words deliberately. And he will make the things very ridiculous. While it is not because Yue does not know it, contrarily, he says that purposely because his aim is to make the audiences laugh. Then the effect of the humor is achieved. It seems that one thing is described exaggerative. And except that, the metaphor is used frequently and takes up about 30% of the materials. Originally, the literal meaning is false. In fact, the cross talk uses the metaphor to satire something. This ridiculous expression is vivid and easier to make people laugh. So the rhetorical effects are also achieved when violating the maxim of the quality.

CONCLUSION

This paper studies the art of humor in cross talks by violating the Cooperative Principle. The authors have watched 30 cross talks and select 448 cases as the language material. According to the violation of the four maxims, this paper makes a detailed analysis on Yue Yuepeng's cross talks. During the analysis, examples are taken from Yue Yunpeng's cross talks. Statistics and figures are worked out for the discussion. The conclusion is to be drawn. Yue Yuepeng often is used to violate the maxim of the quality and relevance mainly and in the meantime, rhetorical devices are found obviously. It makes the audience feel the charm of the cross talks. It teaches the audience how to appreciate the cross talks, the key is to make the audience understand the cross talks better and respect the Chinese tradition.

Admittedly, this paper is far from perfection which

still needs to be improved, and there are some limitations in the study. Maybe these cases are not very good and accurate. The cases are not enough. So there still exists a wide space for people to study the cross talks' humor and also a large space to explore the application of pragmatics in literary criticism.

REFERENCES

- Chen, J. Z. (2006). A study on the pragmatic strategies of cross talk humorous speech. *Journal of Yanbei Normal University*, (8), 56-58.
<https://baike.so.com/doc/3162692-3333067.htm>.
- Hu, Z. L. (2011). *Linguistics course (4th ed.)*. Beijing: Peking University Publishing Company.
- Hu, Z. L. (2013). *Linguistics course (4th ed., p.177)*. Beijing: Peking University Publishing Company.
- Li, A. H. (2015). Study on the humor in Guo Degang's cross talk from the perspective of the violation of the Cooperative Principle. *Industry & Technology Forum*, (14), 2.
- Li, J. (2014) A brief analysis of the humorous effect of language deviation in Qizhi private cross talk. *Journal of Mudanjiang Normal University*, (1), 98-100.
- Mey, J. L. (2001). *Pragmatics: An introduction*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press and Publishers Ltd.
- Qiu, S. C. (2010). A study on the conceptual integration perspective of humor in Chinese cross talk. *Integrated Forums*, (10), 249-250.
- Wang, S. (2010). The principle of cooperation and the humor in Guo Degang's cross talk. *Academic Edition of College English*, (3), 35-37.
- Xu, L. S. (2017). The conversational meaning of the lines in "Downton Manor" from the perspective of Grice's Cooperative Principle. *Journal of Henan Polytechnic University (Social Sciences)*, 18(1), 78-84
- Yang, Q. L. (2016). Analysis of conversational meaning in Emma from the perspective of violation of the Cooperative Principle. *Journal of Kaifeng Institute of Education*, (3), 76-98.
- Yang, S. B. (2016). Interpreting the "non-cooperation" of "Thunderstorm" mission conversation. *Journal of Mudan University*, (8), 94-97.
- You, Y. T. (2010). Violating cooperative principle to create humor. *Read & Write magazine*, (6), 11.
- Zhang, A. Z. (2016). Pragmatic analysis of cross talk "baggage"-a case study of Yue Yunpeng and Sun Yue's cross talk "I Can't bear it". *Modern Society*, (8), 90.
- Zhang, A. Z. (2016). Pragmatic analysis of cross talk "baggage"-a case study of Yu Yunpeng and Sun Yue's cross talk "I Can't bear it". *Modern Communicative*, (8), 89-90.
- Zhang, X. X. (2009). On the deviation of the humor of Chinese cross talk from the pragmatic principle in Guo Degang's cross talk. *Read & Write magazine*, (2), 75-79.
- Zheng, T. (2016). Analysis of conversational meaning in Yu Yunpeng cross talk. *Journal of Chifeng College*, (9), 130.