

## THE FLOUTING MAXIMS OF HUMOROUS LYING IN “HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER” TV SERIES

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### Abstrak

Selain digunakan untuk konteks yang luas dalam kehidupan sehari-hari, kita juga bisa melihat bagaimana kebohongan digunakan sebagai media dalam komedi dengan melihat pada kecenderungannya untuk berputar pada pola tertentu. Hal ini menjadi dasar pada studi ini untuk berfokus pada akting bohong berkarakteristik humor yang dilakukan oleh karakter dalam serial TV *How I Met Your Mother*. Tujuan dari studi ini adalah membahas pelanggaran maksim dalam proses bohong pada tataran Implikatur yang dilakukan dalam serial TV *How I Met Your Mother* selain juga untuk mendeskripsikan kontribusi dari pelanggaran maksim dan implikatur dari percakapan terhadap bohong yang ditunjukkan dalam serial TV *How I Met Your Mother* terkait hal nya dengan memunculkan efek humor. Teori yang digunakan adalah teori implikatur percakapan, prinsip kerjasama, dan mekanisme humor. Data dalam studi ini diambil dari kumpulan percakapan dalam serial TV *How I Met Your Mother* yang sudah dipilih terlebih dahulu. Studi ini menemukan hubungan yang kuat antara pelanggaran maksim dan implikatur percakapan dalam pembentukan fenomena bohong berkarakteristik humor. Tipe kebohongan tersebut menjadi mudah dikenali dengan adanya eksploitasi oleh pelanggaran maksim. Sedangkan implikatur percakapan dibutuhkan untuk memahami adanya kebohongan dimana eksploitasi kebohongan berperan sebagai titik kulminasi nya.

**Kata Kunci:** Bohong, humor, implikatur percakapan, prinsip kerjasama, melanggar maksim

### Abstract

Despite being used in a broad context of daily life, Lying is also seen to be an adequate device to be applied in comedy with a tendency to circulate the process around certain typical patterns. With regard to this fact, this study focuses upon the act of humorous Lying performed by characters of *How I Met Your Mother TV Series*. The purpose of this study is to examine the conversational maxims which are being flouted during the process of lying within conversational implicature performed at *How I Met Your Mother TV Series* as well as describing the contribution flouting maxims and conversational implicature toward the lie performed at *How I Met Your Mother TV Series* in terms of stimulating humorous effect. The theories of Conversational Implicature, Co-operative principles, and humor theories are used within this study. This study also uses descriptive qualitative method as a meant to do the data analysis. The data are set of utterances taken from the dialogue between the characters of *How I Met Your Mother TV Series* which has been filtered carefully beforehand. This study found that there is a well-established connection between the production of humorous lying with the flouting maxims and conversational implicature theory. Humorous lying are recognized through the exposition of lying in which the surprise element brought by the flouting maxims are somewhat useful in supporting the lying to be exposed. Meanwhile, the conversational implicature is needed in its importance to understand lying as method of asserting in which the exposition of lying is seen to be a culmination point within humorous lying.

**Keywords:** Lying, humor, conversational implicature, co-operative principles, flouting maxims

## INTRODUCTION

The study of lying is an interesting one since a long time Lying has been an important topic to be discussed across several disciplines. Marsha (2013) expressed that Lying is 'Ubiquitous' for it appears in almost all forms of communication. Although lying is essentially a verbal act, it has not got much attention by linguists in which its analysis has been primarily a matter of philosophical dispute (Maibauer, 2005). In this case, 'Many philosophers have accordingly attempted to arrive at a satisfactory account of the nature of lying itself' (Stokke, 2013). As a method of asserting, Lying are being related for the reason carried within. These motives/reasons underlying the communication may affect the actions taken by the speaker which sometimes may lead into several occasions in which some recipients must comprehend the whole idea that the speaker wants to imply or simply called implicatures within the field of pragmatics. Therefore, it is imperative that the study of lying from Linguistic point of view should be considered necessary since there are possibly a wide range of linguistic features within an act of lying.

Despite being used in a broad context of daily life, Lying is also seen to be an adequate device to be applied in comedy. There are plenty occasions in which the act lying has been used to stimulate a humorous effect by using several methods which may rather different than lying in daily context. In fact, some certain forms of lying done in comedy are having a tendency to circulate the process around certain typical patterns. Looking to the fact that Lying is very much an act that can be used within broad context as an effort of asserting which is generated from a certain reason/motives, the study of Lying in linguistic can be put into either semantics or pragmatics. Linguists such as Paul Grice, and George Yule had actually laid down some foundations to the study of lying within his previous study in the field of pragmatics. On the other hand Davide Hector Monro also had established some points within humor mechanism theory. These principles are the key features that will be applied within this study which will focus upon the act of Lying performed by characters of *How I Met Your Mother* TV Series.

*How I Met Your Mother* is one of a Television series broadcasted in the United States of America which carries comedy as its genre. The series was focused on the story of Ted Mosby as the main characters and his group of four of friends (Marshall Erikssen, Barney Stinson, Robin Scherbatsky, and Lily Aldrin) who lived in Manhattan. Ted Mosby who

is being casted as the center of the series is pictured as a young architect who had always been in trouble to get his true love. Prior to his effort to get the one destined to be with him, Ted and his friends often had to face themselves among problematic occasions in which some of the characters acting often leads into a feeling of joy among audiences. The story was built by Ted as the main characters told his kids about the story of how he met the mother of the kids using a constant flashback for almost of the episodes.

*How I Met Your Mother* depicts a typical life of young people in New York who tried to seek the true meaning their life by carrying comedy to deliver the whole point of the story. However, at some points of the story the viewer will perceive that there are some phenomena which are quite worth revealing in terms of Linguistic study. One that quite interesting is the act of lying performed by the characters. Using the theories proposed by some experts such as Grice, Monro and Yule, it will be possible to explore the patterns in play.

With regard to the previous study which was done by Ria Hermita Marsha in exploring the availability of GCI Principles within the analysis of lying at a movie with crime genre entitled *A FEW GOD MEN*, this study is brought to explore the speech act of lying performed at *How I Met Your Mother* TV Series using the theory of generalized conversational implicature (GCI) Principles and particularized conversational implicature (PCI) since it is highly necessary to analyze the types of lying that can be used to generate a comical effect. The response given by the characters prior to the theory of flouting maxims and conversational implicature will be brought as the main focus to reveal a particular act of Lying done by the Characters of *How I Met Your Mother* TV Series.

## RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on the background of the study, this paper discusses the contributions of flouting maxims and conversational implicature toward the lie performed at *How I Met Your Mother* TV Series in terms of stimulating humorous effects.

## THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

### 1. Lying

There are multiple definitions when it comes to the analysis of lying. However, most of the definition about lying is being proposed within the realm of philosophy. Paul Ekman proposed that lying is the same as deception (as cited in Aliakbari and Tazik,

2015) while Stokke (2013) argued that lying involves an assertion upon a particular thing that believed to be false. There are also other definitions of lying stated by known Philosopher such as Kant, Augustine, and etc. Meanwhile lying still has not seen a significant attention within linguistic study. As such, Meibauer (2011) insisted that lying as an interesting object within linguistic should be discussed within the field of either pragmatics or semantics. This study will focus upon the analysis of lying within pragmatics using flouting maxims and conversational implicature theory. On the other hand the theory of lying within this study is taken from the one proposed by Fallis (2009, p.6) who argued that lying happens when one asserts upon something believed to be false.

You *lie* to X if and only if:

1. You assert that *p* to X.
2. You believe that *p* is false.

Fallis (2009, p.16) also added that there are occasions when lying are not accompanied by the intention of deceiving. Fallis (2009, p.16) gave an example about a witness from a murder who was afraid of telling the murder's whereabouts to the judge since telling the truth may compromise his safety. Therefore, while he might have given the judge with a false statement, he might have intentionally wanted the judge to recognize his fear and would not get deceived by him. Nevertheless, this phenomenon is also considered as a lie. Consequently, the witness also had flouted the maxim for his intentional emotion in which he wanted the judge to understand him despite the fact that he was lying. Related with Lying in humor, flouting maxims exists as a media to exploit the lie which is used to generate the comical effect when the lie is able to be exposed.

## 2. Conversational Implicature

Implicature is a term to define Something that is delivered beyond the semantic meaning from the words within a conversation that contribute into an extra level of meaning. A *conversational implicature*, on the other hand, is when an utterance made by speaker in a conversation has more implication than the actual words. Thomas (1995) provided the example of an ambulance man who had someone vomitted in his lap and uttered "Great, that's really great! That's made my Christmas". This utterance shows that something beyond the words uttered is being implied; there is an additional set of meaning, and the man is actually expressing that he does not enjoy getting vomit all over his lap.

## 2.1 Generalized Conversational Implicature

Conversational Implicatures are needed within the process of making an inference. Yule (1996) explained that generalized conversational implicature engage within a condition in which there is no special context necessary to make an inference toward the meaning. Below is an example of generalized conversational implicature

Charlene	:	I hope you brought the bread and the cheese	( <i>b&amp;c?</i> )
Dexter	:	Ah, I brought the bread	( <i>b</i> +>Not <i>c</i> )
(Yule, 1996)			

Once Dexter says that he only brought the Bread, an inference is made that Dexter does not brought the cheese. This phenomenon is called generalized conversational implicature since Charlene has to make an assumption upon Dexter's additional meaning generated from his utterance.

## 2.2 Particularized Conversational Implicature

According to Yule (1996) particularized conversational implicatures deal with statements which demand the recipient to work the meaning through locally recognized inferences. Therefore, PCI asks the recipient to observe a specific context from the statements made by the speaker in which most of the context is probably already known by either the speaker or the hearer. Consider the following example made by Yule in explaining PCI:

Rick	:	Hey, coming to the wild party tonight?
Tom	:	My parents are visiting

In order to understand this conversation, we need to know that Tom's response are said based on Tom's assumption that Rick also understand the true meaning beyond his sentence. This leads Rick as a fellow college friends to understand that Tom actually will not attend the party since his parents are coming and he has to spend the night with his parents.

## 3. Flouting Maxims

The cooperative principles proposed by H.P Grice cover four conversational maxims. These maxims are said to be the basic foundations when an individual is engaged within a conversation. Grice (as reported by Yule, 1996) described the four conversational maxims such as follows



#### Quantity

- Make your contribution as informative as is required
- Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Quality – Try to make your contribution one that is true.

- Do not say what you believe to be false
- Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence

Relation/Relevance – Be relevant

Manner – Be perspicuous

- Avoid obscurity of expression
- Avoid ambiguity
- Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity)
- Be orderly

Yule (1996) said that the maxims above are assumed to be done within a normal conversation. As such, it would be appropriate if someone who is engaged within a conversation practiced these maxims to please the hearer. However, there are also situations which demonstrate some people who are actually do not want to obey the maxims and yet they break the maxims for various reasons. This is commonly known as non-observance of the maxims which comprises flouting maxims, violating maxims, infringement, opting out, and suspending a maxim. This study will focus upon flouting maxim which is said to be done by breaking the maxims while being cooperative. Grundy (2000) argued that when a maxim is being flouted there is still an expectation from the speaker to the addressee to draw inference and discover the implicature. Regarding to lying, the flouting maxims are used to expose the lie in accordance to Paul Ekman's argument in Gamble (2013) which said that Lying is more likely to be discovered when the speaker deliberately wanting to conceal the emotion. In this case the lying is expected to be discovered through flouting the maxims. Moreover, the use of flouting maxims also generates the comical effect needed in comedy. There are four types of flouting maxims which will be explained in the following section

### 3.1 Flouts that exploit the maxim of quality

Whenever a speaker deliberately says something which is untrue and without any proper evidence, it can be said that the speaker is flouting the maxim of quality. Since the speaker does not intend to deceive, the hearer is expected to look for the implicature which is being generated from the false statement.

Thomas (as cited in Andresen, 2013) gave an example of flouting maxim of quality such as follows

A: What do you do?

B: I'm a teacher.

A: Where do you teach?

B: Outer Mongolia

A: Sorry I asked!

The speaker A within the above conversation does not intend to deceive the hearer when he said Outer Mongolia yet he is actually annoyed by the question asked by the hearer. As the result, the hearer understands the speaker's meaning and quickly apologizes.

### 3.2 Flouts that exploit the maxim of quantity

Maxim of Quantity is flouted when a speaker gives more or less information than is necessary. Consider the following example:

A: How are we getting there?

B: Well *we're* getting there in Dave's car. (Thomas 1995)

This case shows that B wants A to know that while B has already got a ride from a friend named Dave, A will not join them (Thomas 1995). Andresen (2013) said that this kind of situation is non-observable for the hearer at a direct level.

### 3.3 Flouts that exploit the maxim of relation

According to Andresen (2013) flouting maxim of relation involves an irrelevant response given by the speaker toward the topic. Look at the following example in which the speaker is a woman named Susan who happens to be annoyed by the topic discussed by her husband

We were discussing the ordination of women. The bishop asked what I thought. Should women take the services? So long as it doesn't have to be me, I wanted to say, they can be taken by a trained gorilla. 'Oh yes,' Geoffrey chips in, 'Susan's all in favour. She's keener than I am, aren't you, darling?' **'More sprouts anybody?'** I said. (Thomas 1995)

In this case "I" implies that by saying "more sprouts anybody?" she wants the hearer to understand that she does not want to talk about the topic and prefer another conversation.

### 3.4 Flouts that exploit the maxim of manner

Flouting maxims of manner is said to be derived from the situation when a speaker fails to obey the maxims 'by not being brief, using obscure language, not being orderly or using ambiguity' (Andresen, 2013).

Interviewer: Did the United States Government play any part in the Duvaliers' departure? Did they, for example, actively encourage him to leave?  
 Official: I would not try to steer you away from that conclusion.  
 (Thomas 1995)

The above conversation show that the official is being ambiguous yet there is not enough requirements to say that the official is being unhelpful. Therefore, in order to understand the meaning, the hearer needs to find the implicature generated from the sentence.

#### 4. Theories of Humor

D.H. Monro pointed out in his book entitled *The Argument of Laughter* that there are three basic categories of humor theory. These are the superiority theory, Incongruity theory, and relief theory. There also some other contemporary theories in the recent studies, however most of them will eventually fall under those basic theories. The following section will depict the basic theories of humor in more elaborated detail.

##### 4.1 Superiority Theory

Superiority theory is based on ridicule in which it's focal point is that laughing arises from seeing other's inferiority. This theory is also supported by major philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotles. Socrates insisted that one can sense the "pleasure and pain" from ridiculous portrait of comedy.

The strongest statement with regard to the superiority theory is made by the seventeenth century political philosopher Thomas Hobbes from England. Hobbes proposes laughter as an effect of triumphant feeling over one's accomplishment which can be recognized after other's failure or inability. This reason is solely enough for one to feel joy and therefore laugh at other's mishap (Bardon, 2005).

##### 4.2 Incongruity Theory

Incongruity theory arises as a response to superiority theory in which its definition may give a brand new perspective upon the analysis of humor. Some great philosophers such as Immanuel Kant, Hutcheson, Søren Kierkegaard, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Luigi Pirandello are known to encourage the use of this theory. This theory is said to be focused upon the production of humor through 'an intellectual recognition of an absurd incongruity between conflicting ideas or experiences' (Bardon, 2005). In fact, incongruity is encouraged by many empirical evidences in comedy. This has led a contemporary

British scientist and humor theorist Richard Wiseman to study humor and come up with a statement to support Incongruity.

*'He describes the four joke themes or archetypes that keep recurring: "There seem to be only about four jokes that come up all the time: someone trying to look clever and taking a pratfall; husbands and wives not being loving; doctors being insensitive about imminent death; and God making a mistake." What is striking about this list is that each joke archetype is based on an incongruity between expectation and reality.'*(as reported by Bardon, 2005).

Wiseman's proposal provides a clearer view in which incongruity theory contains no juxtaposition between the concepts stored in the brain with the current state of affairs displayed in humor.

The incongruity has also seen another support argued by German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer stated (as cited in Bardon, 2005) that our jollification is acquired over a 'perceived conflict between thought and perception'. He gives an example from an epitaph of a doctor : "Here lies he like a hero, and those he has slain lie around him." This utterance shows that there is a distinct perception between what we face and our thought. A doctor is supposed to be a life-saver, instead this utterance comes out against that concept. This happened since there is a concept of hero which is familiar term used in war (War hero usually known for killing people) is being imposed on doctor, therefore a contradiction is made and finally the hearer would laugh.

##### 4.3 Release Theory

The relief theory is the last theory from the three major historical theories of humor which focuses upon humor as a result from escaping emotional tension. Herbert Spencer stated (as cited in Bardon, 2005) that our 'humorous laughter is a manifestation of the release of nervous excitement or emotional tension'. Spencer focuses upon the physical activity of the body when caught on 'excess nervous energy'. Spencer uses the following dramatic play to explain how laughter works

- A hero and heroine have achieved a reconciliation after a painful misunderstanding;
- At that moment, a tame kid goat wanders onto the stage, walks up to the lovers, and sniffs them as they embrace.
- The audience roars with laughter'. (Source : Bardon, 2005)

Spencer explained that this circumstance when the audience laughs is stimulated by the release of the energy after watching the goat at the climax of the drama which suddenly brings the audience out from the immersion of the drama with a pleasant laughter.

## METHOD

The study is conducted to discover a detailed insight into the act of Lying performed by the characters at How I Met Your Mother TV Series especially in the analysis of flouting maxims and conversational implicature proposed by Paul Grice. This study uses qualitative method since the data used are obtained from the transcribed conversations set in How I Met Your Mother TV Series. Therefore, descriptive qualitative method is suitable to be employed within the analysis of this study for it is necessary to describe the analysis (of the transcribed conversation) after doing the pre-requisites steps before going with the conclusion using the theories that have been discussed

The Objects of this study are the characters within How I Met Your Mother TV Series. As the characters are interconnected with each other, it will be noted that the analysis are being conducted with the focus of finding the intended form of Lying with regard to flouting maxims and conversational implicature theory. Therefore, either the main character or supporting characters within this study are being observed at the same priority to achieve the data needed. .

The data collection techniques were being conducted through the analysis toward the dialogue done by the characters of HIMYM TV series. Data are carefully sorted through several properties owned by each of theories applied within this study. The data collection techniques were being conducted through the analysis toward the dialogue done by the characters of HIMYM TV series. Data are carefully sorted through several properties owned by each of theories applied within this study.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### • Result

This study found that all of the flouting maxims within the Co-operative principles are possible to be flouted within the humorous lying of HIMYM TV Series. The same phenomena also happened with the latter two theories of Implicature and Humor theories in which both of GCI and PCI are used within the result. Meanwhile the three humor mechanisms are also able to be observed during the process of humorous lying yet the incongruity mechanism came out dominant compared to the other two mechanisms. The following chosen data are meant to give a simple insight into the result of study. Therefore, the data should represent the important point made before.

The four data within the first part of this section are examples of the result from the study which points out into the occurrence of flouting maxims as well as Conversational Implicature.

#### Datum 1

**Robin :** Hold on. Is it really funny?

**Barney :** Robin. **I am not kidding you. I almost don't want you to hear it. Because seriously, for the rest of your life, nothing else will ever be as funny and you will curse yourself for agreeing to hear it in the first place.** But, seriously you got to hear it, it's so funny.

**Season 4 Episode 16 (03.11-03.30)**

The bold section of the statement in the above conversation was actually said by Barney to inform Robin that Marshall had a very ridiculously funny story yet Barney felt that the word funny was not enough to describe Marshall Story. Therefore, he tried to exaggerate the content of the message with hyperbolic utterance. It was obvious that Barney was lying when he said that the thing with Marshall's Story would be the funniest thing in the rest of Robin's life or Robin would curse herself after agreeing to listen to Marshall's Story. This exaggeration stated by Barney was a lie with regard to the analysis of lying below;

1. Barney asserted **"I am not kidding you. I almost don't want you to hear it. Because seriously, for the rest of your life, nothing else will ever be as funny and you will curse yourself for agreeing to hear it in the first place."** to Robin.

2. Barney believed **"I am not kidding you. I almost don't want you to hear it. Because seriously, for the rest of your life, nothing else will ever be as funny and you will curse**



**yourself for agreeing to hear it in the first place.”** was false.

**(“I am not kidding you. I almost don’t want you to hear it. Because seriously, for the rest of your life, nothing else will ever be as funny and you will curse yourself for agreeing to hear it in the first place.”** was false based on the fact that Barney was just kidding and he also wanted Robin to hear the story. Meanwhile he was not serious when he said the rest of his utterance since his utterance was just an exaggeration to make Robin became curious)

Exaggeration which was committed by Barney in saying his statement had affected into Barney breaking the maxim and put Barney’s utterance into flouting maxim of Quantity. The additional information resulted from exaggeration was considered flouting the second sub-maxim of quantity. On the other hand Barney also had made the lie became obviously visible by flouting the maxims which had given a humorous effect toward the statement.

#### **Datum 2**

**Ted :** You’re in love with Robin. That’s why you don’t want us hooking up

**Barney :** What? That is crazy talk. **Can’t a bro clean another bro’s apartment like bros do?**

**Ted :** Name me one bro in the history of bros who has ever done that

**Barney :** Emm I’ll name two, Mr. Clean and Belvedere

**Season 4 Episode 12 (15.52-16.23)**

The above conversation is adapted from a situation when Barney was upset because Ted had been hanging around with Robin despite their separation. Meanwhile, Barney was kind of having a romantic feeling toward Robin. Barney who was not willing to accept the fact that Ted would have sexual intercourse with Robin each time they had an argument decided to help by providing Ted and Robin with everything they need. Unfortunately, his action was caught by Ted who was shocked with the presence of Barney in his apartment. Ted quickly asked Barney for his motives of buying all the goods and put them into Ted’s apartment. Barney answered that he just wanted to help him from fighting with Robin yet Ted was quick to realize that Barney was in love with Robin. Hearing that Barney tried to reject Ted’s statement by saying that Ted’s statement was crazy and he just

wanted to help Ted just like the other brothers do. The lie was portrayed through;

1. Barney asserted **“Can’t a bro clean another bro’s apartment like bros do?”** to Ted.

2. Barney believed that **“Can’t a bro clean another bro’s apartment like bros do?”** was false.

**(“Can’t a bro clean another bro’s apartment like bros do?”** was false based on the fact that Barney was actually reluctant to admit that he was in love with Robin and therefore he did not want Ted to hooking up with Robin again plus a general agreement that there was no bro who would clean another bro’s apartment).

Apparently, Barney’s statement had flouted the cooperative principle proposed by Grice in which Barney’s funny utterance lack of proper evidence to support his statement can be considered flouting the maxim of quality. The lack of evidence also had made Ted became easier to find out that Barney was actually lying to him and shy to tell Ted about his actual feeling to Robin. Barney’s statement was also quick to be exposed by Ted using the general fact that normal bro would never clean another bro’s apartment.

#### **Datum 3**

**(Ted told his friends about his meeting with Karen which was ended by kissing with each other)**

**Lily :** Ted, honey I want you to go outside and bite the curb, I’ll be out in a minute

**Ted :** Hey, Karen was the first girl I ever loved. Okay. And after the year I’ve had, I don’t know, I guess having lunch with her just... remind of what it was like to be 18 and have my whole life figured out. And I would like to remind everyone that I was at least wearing pants, Marshall!!!!

**Season 4 Episode 16 (11.11-11.30)**

Upon hearing that Ted and Karen (Ted’s longtime girlfriend who gave nothing but misery) ended up kissing with each other after the dinner, Lily was even more annoyed by stupid Ted and could not resist to scold him. Lily said to Ted that he better go outside and bite the curb which was responded by Ted who gave a clarification that the thing with Karen was so difficult to be avoided since Karen was Ted’s first girlfriend. Ted also added that being with Karen would be a good step to find his life again which was

slightly miserable after a rough time he had with Stella. Lily therefore was lying;

1. Lily asserted **“Ted, honey I want you to go outside and bite the curb, I’ll be out in a minute”** to Ted.

2. Lily believed that **“Ted, honey I want you to go outside and bite the curb, I’ll be out in a minute”** was false.

(**“Ted, honey I want you to go outside and bite the curb, I’ll be out in a minute”** was false based on the fact that Lily was actually just wanted to mock Ted using sarcasm. She also wanted Ted to understand about how foolish he was)

Lily’s response upon hearing Ted’s story in this case is considered flouting the maxim of relation since her response was slightly off from the expected answer. The flouting maxims of relation had made Lily’s expression became extremely obvious and easy to be exploited by Ted. Ted somehow managed to find the actual meaning by inferring the utterance with Lily’s emotional feeling. Therefore Ted had been using a special context to understand the implicature from the sentence which put Lily’s utterance into particularized conversational implicature. Another finding is compiled in the conversation within the following table.

**Datum 4**

**Robin :** And now that we're hooking up, we're not fighting anymore.

**Ted :** Problem solved. Actually, the credit belongs to Barney. This whole idea came out of your thing about world peace.

**Robin :** Yeah. Thanks, Barney. You were right. Peace was achieved.

Repeatedly.

**Barney :** **So I'm... I'm responsible for.....Excellent. Excellent. Excellent.** (His eyes blink repeatedly) ehhh. Next round's on me!

**Season 4 Episode 12 (05.48 – 06.15)**

This conversation is within the same circumstance when Barney was depicted to be upset to know that Ted had been doing sexual intercourse with Robin when Barney was actually in love with Robin. Moreover, the whole idea for Ted to have a sexual intercourse with Robin despite their separation was actually originated from Barney’s thought. Barney once suggested Ted that the only way to reconcile man with woman from having an argument is doing sexual intercourse. Although Ted did not agree to

begin with, he eventually admitted that Barney’s idea was excellent since doing sexual intercourse seemed to be effective in preventing him and Robin from fighting with each other.

Ted who was pleased with Barney’s idea praised Barney yet Barney’s response was surprisingly funny. Although seemed unnoticeable, Barney’s response **“So I'm... I'm responsible for.....Excellent. Excellent.Excellent.”** was actually understood by Lily who later tried to comfort him.

1. Barney asserted **“So I'm... I'm responsible for.....Excellent. Excellent.Excellent.”** to his friends.

2. Barney believed **“So I'm... I'm responsible for.....Excellent. Excellent.Excellent.”** was false.

(**“So I'm... I'm responsible for.....Excellent. Excellent.Excellent.”** was false based on the fact that Barney was actually so much disappointed to know that Ted had been hooking up with Robin again. He felt so unfortunate since he also had a deep feeling for Robin)

The maxim of manner was flouted by Barney’s response which was rather ambiguous and accompanied by vague tone that made his friends wonder what happened to him. Apparently Barney’s lie was made obvious by flouting the maxim of manner. Lily managed to get the implied meaning that Barney was actually jealous since Barney had told him about his feeling to Robin toward Lily. The case when a certain knowledge or special context is needed to decode the generated implicature settled Barney’s utterance within the scope of particularized conversational implicature.

With regard to humor mechanisms, the four data mentioned above are categorized within incongruity mechanism which is marked by incoherent circumstance. As an example is the fourth data which shows how humor is generated by Barney as one of the characters in HIMYM TV Series who was forced to say **“So I'm... I'm responsible for.....Excellent. Excellent.Excellent.”** despite the actual fact that he was actually upset with his condition. Meanwhile, the rest of humor mechanisms (Superiority and Release) are being represented by the following data.



**Datum 19**

**Ted** :okay! let's hear it.what's wrong with cathy?  
**Barney** :are you kidding me, ted? she's got a...  
**Lily** : wait. youn't notice it?  
**Ted** :notice what?  
**Lily** :oh, he doesn't see it. If we point it out, we're gonna ruin her for him.  
as his friends,we'll just keep him in the dark.  
**Barney** :you're right. **she's great, man.**  
**Robin** :she's a keeper. just....keep her somewhere else. (Lily laugh)  
**Season 3 Episode 8 (00.57 – 01.19)**

While Barney's statement is categorized as incongruity, Robin's statement which follows next to Barney's is fallen under the superiority mechanism. At first, Barney tried to say that Cathy is great (which is far from the truth) because he felt sorry for his friend, Ted. However, Robin's response shows a more emphasize within Robin personal standpoint rather than stating a plain lie. Despite feeling sorry for Ted, Robin also ridiculed Ted for failing

to discover such a blatant fact. At the beginning, Robin tried to give a much similar response with Barney by saying "She's a keeper" which is probably being said to relieve Ted. But, later she revealed that the word which she had said before was just a lie and used as misdirection to her next utterance "Just **keep her** somewhere else". Her further response was intended to ridicule Ted and tell that Cathy was actually no good. Hearing that, Ted is becoming more curious to find out what is wrong with Cathy. Therefore, the hearer will laugh over the situation wherein Robin ridiculed Ted's mishap. Meanwhile, the ambiguous responses given by Ted's friend were considered flouting the maxim of manner in which the speaker derives ambiguous utterance to the hearer yet this process does not directly supporting the superiority theory with regard to the basic requirements of superiority theory which demands ridicule. This conversation is also settled under the particularized conversational implicature considering the fact that a certain context from Robin's utterance "**she's a keeper. just....keep her somewhere else**" is needed by Ted to make the assumption upon deducing that his friends were actually on the same page about the opinion that there was absolutely something wrong with his girlfriend Cathy. Another type of humor mechanisms is organized in the following datum;

**Datum 12**

**Mrs. Mosby** : We are definitely goingto try and communicate more.  
**Mr. Mosby** : From now on, full disclosure.  
**Ted** :Good. Good, I think it'll be really good for the family.  
By the way, how's Grandma? She hasn'treturned my last couple calls.  
(Suddenly Ted's parents were muted by Ted's question)  
**Mrs. Mosby** :I'm gonna get some juice.  
**Ted** : No. No  
**Mr. Mosby** :You missed a great game last night.  
**Real squeaker.**  
**Season 2 Episode 3 (20.31 - 21.05)**

Looking at his mother response and also his father's, it seemed to infer that Ted's grandmother was already passed away. This forced Ted's mother to lie about wanting to get some juice instead of being open to Ted. The moment of silence between Ted's question and his mother initial response was marked as a tense situation and a resemblance of hesitation in this part of the story, yet the response given by Ted's mother had the audience escaped from the tense situation because it seems to be funny and beyond anticipation since Ted's mother was actually still the same individual who liked to avoid talking uncomfortable matters. Having that being done, the lying which was performed by Ted's mother is relevant to be put under release mechanism with regard to the presence of tense situation before the moment of release. On the other hand the existence of irrelevant response and special context to decode the message has affected the conversation into flouting the maxim of relation which consequently signified the lying to be more obvious under the domain of particularized conversational implicature.

• **Discussion**

The result of this study points out into major deduction for two scopes of the topic which will be established within this section. The first scope is laid down under the theory of flouting maxims in which all of four maxims based on the cooperative principle are able to be recognized through the lying acts done by HIYM TV Series yet the maxim of manner is the most dominant maxims which are being flouted during the process of doing humorous lying within HIMYM TV series.

With regard to the notion of lying, the maxim of manner is effective to be used when the characters of HIMYM TV series lie to one another in which the

basic principle from maxim of manner (Be perspicuous) is flouted through some ambiguous utterances. These mixed messages are considered flouting the maxim of manner especially toward the second sub-maxim of manner (*Avoid Ambiguity*) in which the use of ambiguous response may expose the lie made by the speaker and therefore stimulate the audience to laugh when there is an obvious exposition of lying.

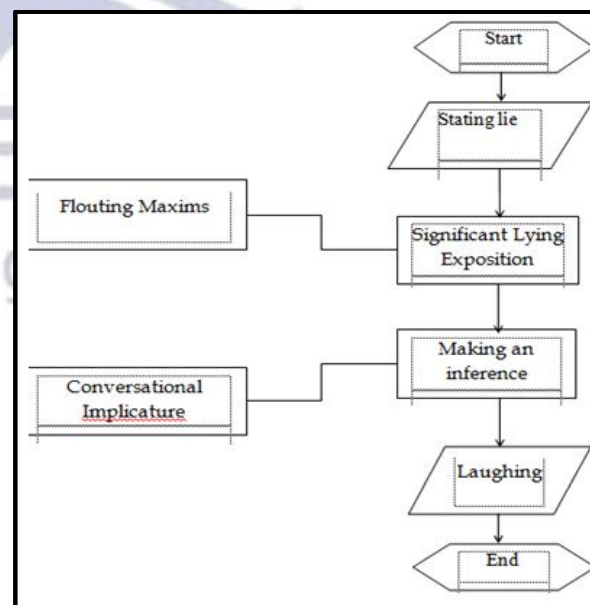
On the other hand, particularized conversational implicature comes out as the dominant type of conversational implicature which is employed during the performance of humorous lying exhibited by the characters of HIMYM TV Series. While GCI lacks the quality of uniqueness (in the sense that generalized conversational implicature is observed through the use of general knowledge), PCI sees that the nature of lying which is originated from assertion upon false belief is juxtaposed with the basic concept of PCI in which the implicature obtained by the hearer are being inferred from certain context which is often utilized in lying. A clear example is portrayed by the datum of conversational (2) in which Lily's response "**Ted, Honey I want you to go outside and bite the curb, I'll be out in a minute**" is considered flouting the maxim of relation. Although Lily was lying and did not want Ted to literally bite the curb because it would be very crazy if it was true, Lily's utterance was sent as a signal to Ted who somehow managed to understand that Lily was being mad at him by reflecting into a special context which depicted that Lily had hated Karen from a long time ago. The humor itself is obtained through the sarcastic utterance by Lily.

The conclusion which can be drawn from observing the two scope of analysis above is that the process of lying may lead into flouting all the maxims under the cooperative principle considering the fact that Lying as an act of dishonesty always wrong and therefore break the maxims. Furthermore, the act of lying is also observable within both of two categories under the conversational implicature be it GCI or PCI yet the PCI may be found dominant since lying especially those with humorous properties are supposed to be conveyed or discovered through revealing certain contexts.

A further step taken within this study is to establish a connection between lying and humor in which lying is defined through the use of assertion upon something that is untrue. Therefore the utterance of lying is usually done by delivering additional information to cover the truth. However, humorous lying distinguishes itself from the usual lying by the

use of significant feature of lying which may be used to show the lying in more obvious way. That the obvious way within committing this type of lying is functioned as a meant to show entertaining performance may be laughable for the audience. As such the major properties owned by humorous lying is the tendency from the lying itself to be observable by both the characters and the audience. Some phenomena may involve significant signs of lying to the extent of making the lie feasible to be guessed effortlessly.

With regard to the theories of lying, the Incongruity is seen as being the dominant mechanism within the production of humorous lying. In this case, the incoherent property needed within incongruity is very much effective in stimulating the humorous effect as well as exhibiting lie. This study found that there is a well-established connection between the production of humorous lying with the flouting maxims and conversational implicature theory. Humorous lying are recognized through the exposition of lying in which the surprise element brought by the flouting maxims are somewhat useful in supporting the lying to be exposed. Meanwhile, the conversational implicature is needed in its importance to understand lying as method of asserting in which the exposition of lying is seen to be a culmination point within humorous lying. The following figure may help understanding the role of flouting maxims and conversational implicature within the process of humorous lying.



## CONCLUSION

This study sees that the flouting maxim of manner as the most flouted among the four conversational maxims proposed by Paul Grice. It may worth to take a look into the availability of maxim of manner in which the process of flouting maxim of manner may produce ambiguity, unnecessary prolixity, and etc. that will be useful within performing lie as an act of starting false belief. Another thing that can be inferred is that these processes of flouting maxims affect into excessive exposition of lying which can tease the audiences to laugh toward the obvious lying.

On the other hand, compared to generalized conversational implicature, particularized conversational implicature enjoys a significant use within humorous lying since the excessive exposition of lying by using some features such as flouting maxims may affect into the recipient became curious and quickly searching for the actual meaning through their special knowledge.

When it comes to humor mechanisms, the data from humorous lying done by the characters of HIMYM TV Series result into incongruity being recognized as the major mechanisms that had been used to generate lying. The use of Incongruity becomes beneficial since the incoherent situations produced by lying are portrayed clearly. Clearer incoherent circumstances may affect into the audience to laugh easily.

## SUGGESTIONS

This study of humorous lying committed by the characters of HIMYM TV series is done under the domain of Linguistics especially in pragmatic by taking a significant consideration into three major humor theories known in philosophy. On the other hand, the study of lying is also able to be conducted under the semantics which focuses upon the study of meaning. It is also obvious that the study of lying and humor is able to be conducted from many standpoints in philosophy. There also other disciplines which can be used into the analysis of lying as stated by Meibauer (2011) that

*“Lying may be approached from a number of angles: From ethics and religion to pedagogy, (forensic) psychology (Vrij 2000), sociology (Barnes 1994), and jurisprudence (Green 2007), from novels and films to theatre and photography” (p.277)*

Therefore the studies of lying are actually feasible to be done from many subjects. With regard to the serious exposition of lying, there also other features that may be significant in helping humorous

lying such as the gestures and expression which can be studied under the non-verbal communication theory like the one proposed by Paul Ekman about bodily cues of lying.

Any criticism and suggestion related to the flaws and incorrect points made within this study will be kindly appreciated.

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