

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings

After analyzing Hannibal Lecter's dialogues during throughout the Season 1 of *Hannibal*, the researcher found statements that contradict Grice's conversational maxims after examining a few of Hannibal Lecter's lines from the script. The results are presented based on the type of violation of conversational maxim.

Table 4. 1 Violations of Grice's Conversational Maxims by Hannibal Lecter in 'Hannibal' Season 01

Maxim Violated	Frequency	Percentage
Maxim of Quantity	3	2,78 %
Maxim of Quality	104	96,30 %
Maxim of Relation	1	0,92 %
Maxim of Manner	0	0 %
Total	108	100 %

The table above shows there are a total of one hundred and eight instances of conversational maxims violations uttered by Hannibal Lecter in Season One of *Hannibal*. The findings indicate that the Maxim of Quality is the most frequently violated maxim with 104 (one hundred and

four) occurrences, followed by both Maxim of Quantity with 3 (three) occurrences and Maxim of Relation with 1 (one) occurrences, and last Maxim of Manner with zero instance. This suggests that Hannibal mostly manipulates and deceives other characters by out rightly lie and concealing the truth to hide his identity as “Chesapeake Ripper”, the cannibalistic serial killer.

Hannibal intentionally provide false or deceptive statements despite knowing that they were incorrect which enabled him to hide his direct involvement with the murders while simultaneously painted himself as a trustworthy psychiatrist.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that Hannibal Lecter’s conversational behavior is characterized by his frequent violations of Grice’s maxim. These violations are not random but occur throughout each episode and function primarily as ways that allow him to manipulate other characters, influence other investigators, and uphold his position as a trustworthy and reliable consultant.

1. Violation of Maxim Quantity

Table 4. 2 Maxim of Quantity Violations by Hannibal Lecter

CODE	Episode	Maxim	Lines	Implication	Reason
D-002	S1E03	VQn	"It was one of many considerations."	Hannibal conceals that he wanted Abigail back for his own purposes.	He deliberately withholds his true reasons, providing an incomplete answer.

D-005	S1E03	VQn	"I know."	Hannibal reveals only minimal information while concealing why he knows Hobbs did not kill Cassie Boyle.	He deliberately withholds crucial information because he himself murdered Cassie.
D-070	S1E12	VQn	"That this could be more than a fever? No. I haven't told him."	Hannibal admits he has not informed Jack but omits that he is intentionally hiding crucial information.	He provides only partial information while withholding facts necessary for a truthful understanding.

D-05 (Ep. 03 - Potage)

Line: "I know"

The statement comes after Will Graham clarifies that Cassie Boyle was not killed by Garrett Jacob Hobbs. Hannibal responds right away, "I know." While Jack and Will already knew that Cassie Boyle was killed by the copycat killer, they were unaware that Hannibal was the murderer. As a result, Hannibal is significantly more knowledgeable than the other speakers.

Hannibal: The young woman on the stag head.

Will: Cassie Boyle. Had a brother, Nicholas. But Garrett Jacob Hobbs didn't kill Cassie Boyle.

Hannibal: I know.

(Will glances at him slightly)

Hannibal: Garrett Jacob Hobbs would've honored every part of her.

According to Grice's Cooperative Principle, Hannibal purposefully gives less information than is necessary, which is a violation of the quantity maxim. He just provides a brief statement that hides the source of his knowledge rather than outlining how he knows Hobbs was not at fault. He does, however, immediately offer some justification to his claim about the distinction between Hobbs and the copycat method of operation. His response makes him seem agreeable while preventing the other participants from coming to the right conclusion.

The audience is aware that Hannibal's confidence stems from his personal involvement in the crime, despite the conversational implicature that he appears confident in Will's judgment. Therefore, rather than being an act of true cooperation, the statement serves as a technique of concealment. Grice's explanation that a speaker may break a conversational principle to trick the hearer without making the deceit immediately apparent is supported by this result.

D-70 (Ep. 12 - Relevés)

Line: "That this could be more than a fever? No. I haven't told him."

This conversation occurs when Will asks Hannibal whether he has told Jack Crawford that Will's condition might be more serious than a simple fever. Hannibal acknowledges that he hasn't informed Jack. He purposefully leaves out the more crucial information, though, which is that he has twisted the diagnostic for his personal gain and has concealed Will's actual medical condition.

Hannibal: Fevers can be symptoms of dementia. Dementia can be a symptom of many things happening in your body or mind that can no longer be ignored, Will.

Will: Does Jack know?

Hannibal: That this could be more than a fever? No. I haven't told him.

Will: Shouldn't you?

Hannibal: Not until we know for certain. What we must do now is continue to support and monitor your recovery.

Hannibal has already learned that Will has encephalitis prior to this conversation. As Will's psychiatrist, Hannibal is aware that many of Will's symptoms are caused by the sickness rather than mental instability. Despite being aware of this, Hannibal purposefully conceals the diagnosis in order to watch Will's mental decline.

Will inquires as to if Jack Crawford is aware of his predicament. Hannibal responds that since Hannibal hasn't told Jack, he doesn't know.

The maxim of quantity is violated by Hannibal's statement since he purposefully gives minimal details. The maxim of quantity, according to Grice (1975), mandates that speakers provide as much information as is required for the conversation's current goal. In this case, Hannibal already has the diagnosis of encephalitis, which Will needs to know. But rather of disclosing this information, Hannibal simply says that the disease "could be more than a fever," omitting the vital details that would enable Will to fully comprehend his condition.

The modal verb "could" that Hannibal used is especially noteworthy. The word conveys ambiguity and indicates the diagnosis is still pending. In reality, Hannibal already has enough proof of Will's condition. As a result, the statement gives the appearance that more observation is still necessary, which enables Hannibal to keep controlling Will without drawing too much attention to himself.

Will is encouraged to conclude from Hannibal's statement that his condition is still medically unknown, and that hiding the knowledge from Jack Crawford is thus justified. Will accepts the narrative without considering Hannibal's motivations because he believes that Hannibal is cooperating as a psychiatrist and a reliable colleague. Although Hannibal

is already aware of the severity of the condition, the implication is that there is no urgent reason to be concerned.

Hannibal's communication objective is to maintain his continuing psychological experiment in addition to providing an answer to Will's query. Hannibal's observations of Will's mental decline would be hampered if the diagnosis were made public because it would probably result in medical intervention. In order to keep control over Will while coming across as helpful and professional, Hannibal purposefully withholds information from Will.

Hannibal's particular communication style throughout the series is reflected in this violation. He manipulates people by carefully limiting the quantity of information he divulges, as opposed to using outright lies. Because of his intelligence, he is able to maintain technical honesty while keeping others from learning the whole truth. Consequently, one of Hannibal's main tools for psychological manipulation is language.

This result supports the psychoanalytic theory that Hannibal constantly aims to mold and affect Will's psychological growth rather than safeguard his welfare. By showing that Hannibal's manipulation is accomplished through deliberate disregard for the Cooperative Principle, the current analysis expands on that viewpoint. Hannibal turns a routine medical discussion into a way to keep psychological control over Will by going against the quantity principle. As a result, this violation

demonstrates how concealing information may be an effective tool for deception (Yuliani et al., 2025).

D-05 (Ep. 03 - Potage)

Line: "It was one of many considerations."

The statement comes after Abigail asks Hannibal why he permitted her to go back to her family's house. Abigail believes that one of the reasons she was brought back might have been the investigation itself. In response, Hannibal says, "It was one of many considerations." Unbeknownst to Abigail and the other characters, Hannibal has his own ulterior objectives for sending her back to Minnesota, which include preserving his identity as the copycat killer and keeping control over her.

Abigail: My dad didn't seem delusional. He was a perfectionist.

Will: Your dad left hardly any evidence.

Abigail: Is that why you let me come home? To find evidence?

Hannibal: It was one of many considerations.

According to the implication, Hannibal seems to have acted in accordance with a number of professional concerns, giving Abigail the impression that his choice was made for valid therapeutic or investigative purposes. But the audience is aware that Hannibal's main goal is self-

interest. He can continue to control Abigail, hide his role in earlier killings, and keep her from disclosing information that would expose him if he keeps her close. As a result, Hannibal is able to maintain his secrets and appear honest by giving an imperfect response.

This result is in line with Grice's theory of the Maxim of Quantity breach, which occurs when a speaker purposefully gives the hearer insufficient information in order to deceive them. Hannibal's statement is accurate in its literal sense, but it leaves out important details that are necessary to fully comprehend the circumstances. Hannibal is able to preserve the confidence of everyone around him while protecting his secret identity by using the omission as a calculated kind of deception.

2. Violation of Maxim Quality

Table 4. 3 Maxim of Quality Violations by Hannibal Lecter

CODE	Episode	Maxim	Lines	Implication	Reason
D-001	S1E02	VQI	"Pork." (<i>while serving human flesh</i>)	Jack is deceived into believing he is eating pork.	Hannibal knowingly states something false. This is a genuine violation of the Maxim of Quality because he intends to deceive, not generate implicature.

D-006	S1E03	VQI	"I think he was provoked. Nicholas Boyle murdered this girl and his own sister."	Hannibal falsely frames Nicholas Boyle as the killer to divert suspicion.	He knowingly provides false information to deceive Jack and protect Abigail (and ultimately himself).
D-018	S1E04	VQI	"You were right... I only gave her half a Valium..."	Hannibal conceals that he actually administered psilocybin.	This is a direct lie intended to mislead Alana, making it a textbook violation of the Maxim of Quality .
D-022	S1E06	VQI	"Perhaps not so good a memory after all. I don't recall a patient with that name, but it sounds familiar... That's why he sounds familiar. It was all over the news."	Hannibal pretends not to remember Jeremy Olmstead because he is actually the Chesapeake Ripper.	He knowingly provides false information to mislead Miriam.
D-033	S1E08	VQI	"And then he broke Franklyn's neck, and then he attacked me."	Hannibal fabricates the sequence of events to conceal his own murder of Franklyn.	This is a direct lie intended to deceive Jack Crawford and Will Graham.

D-01 (Ep. 01 - Aperitif)

Line: "Pork"

When Jack Crawford asks Hannibal what meat he is serving for dinner, this statement is made. Even though the spectator is aware that the dish involves human flesh, Hannibal merely responds, "Pork." Jack takes the response without question as he has no reason to doubt Hannibal. Although the talk seems routine, Hannibal purposefully takes advantage of his guests' trust in order to hide the truth.

The Maxim of Quality mandates that speakers give accurate information and refrain from stating anything they know to be untrue, according to Grice (1975). This rule is obviously broken by Hannibal's answer, since he purposefully labels the meat as pork even though he is aware that it is human flesh. His statement is a purposeful lie intended to mislead the listener rather than being ambiguous or metaphorical.

The conversational implication is that Jack thinks he's eating regular cuisine that Hannibal has prepared. In the meantime, the spectator is aware that Hannibal is subtly making fun of his visitors, who unintentionally eat human flesh. This dramatic irony enhances Hannibal's portrayal as someone who takes pleasure in deceiving people while preserving an air of integrity and elegance. As a result, the infraction serves to both reinforce his dual identity and conceal his misdeeds.

D-06 (Ep. 02 - Amuse-Bouche)

Line: "I think he was provoked. Nicholas Boyle murdered this girl and his own sister."

The statement is made while Marissa Schurr's murder is being investigated. Jack wonders why Garrett Jacob Hobbs and the copycat killer would kill in different ways. In response, Hannibal asserts that Nicholas Boyle killed both Marissa and Cassie Boyle, his own sister. The audience is aware, nevertheless, that Hannibal killed Marissa after killing Cassie Boyle.

Grice's Cooperative Principle holds that Hannibal's statement of information that he knows to be untrue is a violation of the quality maxim. Instead of providing accurate facts to the investigation, he makes up an explanation that casts doubt on Nicholas Boyle. Hannibal tries to influence the investigation by offering a different suspect. By lying to the authorities, he shields himself and Abigail from suspicion while changing the course of the investigation. This result shows that when a speaker purposefully lies to sway the opinions of another participant, violation of maxim quality usually take place.

D-18 (Ep. 04 - Oeuf)

Line: "You were right... I only gave her half a Valium..."

Alana Bloom questions Hannibal about the medication he gave Abigail after she exhibits strange psychiatric problems. He merely prescribed half a Valium, according to Hannibal. In actuality, he used psilocybin covertly to control Abigail's psychological condition. As a result, Hannibal purposefully hides the actual care he gave.

Because Hannibal purposefully gives misleading medical information, this statement violates the Maxim of Quality. He is fully aware of the medication he gave Abigail because he is her psychiatrist. However, he tells Alana a falsehood to keep her from realizing that he is manipulating Abigail's condition.

The conversational implication is that Alana thinks Hannibal's treatment has nothing to do with Abigail's symptoms. This misconception keeps Hannibal from being suspected further and allows him to keep Abigail under his control. The infraction serves as an example of how Hannibal uses his position of authority to justify deceit.

D-022 (Ep. 06 - Entrée)

Line: “Perhaps not so good a memory after all. I don't recall a patient with that name, but it sounds familiar... That's why he sounds familiar. It was all over the news.”



Figure 4. 1 Hannibal Lecter confronted by Miriam Lass (Episode 06 - Entrée)

This exchange takes place when Miriam Lass asks Hannibal if he recalls Jeremy Olmstead. Because he killed Jeremy, Hannibal, who is actually the Chesapeake Ripper, is intimately familiar with Jeremy. Hannibal, however, feigns to remember the name only dimly.

Because Hannibal purposefully gives misleading information, this statement transgresses the quality maxim. He says he just knows the name from news reports, but in reality, he recalls Jeremy because he was directly involved in the murder.

Hannibal tries to put some distance between himself and the victim while seeming cooperative, which is the verbal implication. He avoids drawing attention to himself and safeguards his secret identity by feigning a typical memory loss. As a result, the violation serves as a purposeful deceptive tactic.

D-033 (Ep. 08 - Fromage)

Line: “And then he broke Franklyn's neck, and then he attacked me.”

Hannibal makes this claim when he tells Jack Crawford and Will Graham about the killings of Franklyn Froideveaux and Tobias Budge. Hannibal claims that Tobias killed Franklyn before attacking him. In actuality, after Tobias entered Hannibal's office, Hannibal killed Franklyn.

Because Hannibal purposefully gives incorrect information regarding the order of events, this statement blatantly transgresses the quality maxim. Instead of portraying himself as the murderer, he makes up a narrative in which he acts as a victim defending himself.

According to the conversational implicature, Hannibal wants the FBI to determine that Tobias was the only one who killed Franklyn. Through this lie, Hannibal successfully removes suspicion from himself and builds his trustworthy public image. This finding illustrates how violations of quality enable Hannibal to maintain his double identity throughout the series.

3. Violation of Maxim Relation**D-64 (Ep. 11 – Relevés)**

Line: “This young woman you were visiting, how's her recovery?”

The conversation begins with Will expressing concern that his loss of time, sleepwalking, and other disturbing symptoms may have been caused solely by his fever. Hannibal initially responds by explaining that fevers can be associated with dementia and other serious conditions, emphasizing that these symptoms should not be ignored. After Will asks whether Jack Crawford knows about the possibility that his condition is more serious than a fever, Hannibal replies that he has not informed Jack because they are not yet certain of the diagnosis. Hannibal then states that they should continue monitoring Will's recovery.

However, instead of continuing the discussion about Will's illness, Hannibal abruptly asks, "This young woman you were visiting, how's her recovery?" This question shifts the conversation from Will's deteriorating neurological condition to Georgia Madchen's recovery. Since the preceding conversation focuses entirely on Will's medical condition and the uncertainty surrounding it, Hannibal's sudden inquiry about another patient is not directly relevant to the topic under discussion.

This utterance can therefore be classified as a violation of the Maxim of Relation, as Hannibal intentionally changes the subject rather than maintaining the current topic. Unlike a flouting of the maxim, Hannibal does not provide clues that invite Will to infer a hidden meaning from the topic shift. Instead, he expects Will to simply answer the new question. The irrelevance is deliberate and serves to redirect Will's attention away from pursuing further questions about his own condition.

The conversational implicature generated by this violation is that Hannibal wishes to prevent Will from dwelling on the seriousness of his illness. As the audience later learns, Hannibal already knows that Will is suffering from encephalitis but deliberately conceals this diagnosis in order to observe the progression of the disease for his own psychological and scientific interests. By redirecting the conversation to Georgia Madchen, Hannibal avoids discussing information that could lead Will closer to the truth while maintaining his control over the therapeutic session. Thus, the topic shift functions as a manipulative strategy to conceal crucial information rather than to advance the conversation about Will's health.

4. Violation of Maxim Manner

The study revealed no instances in which Hannibal's statements throughout Season 1 violated the precept of manners. Grice argues that the maxim of manner demands that speakers communicate in an ordered, concise, clear, and unambiguous manner. When a speaker purposefully creates a vague or unclear statement in order to trick the listener while anticipating that the listener will understand it as clear, this is considered a breach.

Even though Hannibal regularly used metaphors, figurative language, and psychologically sophisticated terms, it would be more accurate to describe these statements as flouting rather than violating the

maxim of manner. Rather than purposefully hiding information through ambiguity, his cryptic language frequently enables the listener to deduce an intended meaning. By withholding information, giving misleading information, or changing the subject from potentially incriminating matters, Hannibal, on the other hand, more frequently violates the maxims of quantity, quality, and relation when he attempts to deceive other characters. Because Hannibal's misleading tactics mostly rely on omission, untruth, and irrelevance rather than purposefully ambiguous speech, no statements were found to violate the maxim of manner.

Overall, the research shows that in order to hide information, control other characters, and protect his identity, Hannibal Lecter regularly violates the maxims of quantity, quality, and relation. These representative findings illustrate the dominant communicative strategies employed throughout the series. Only a few examples have been covered in detail in this chapter because many violations exhibit comparable circumstances and functionalities. For completeness and transparency, the complete coding result contains the entire dataset of 109 identified maxim breaches, including the episode, line, violated maxim, implication, and reason for categorization is available in Appendix 2.

B. Discussion

This section presents the discussion of the findings in relation to the research objectives and theoretical framework of the study. The discussion focuses on interpreting the data analysis results to provide a deeper understanding of these maxim violation and implications caused by them.

Three of Grice's (1975) conversational maxims—Quantity, Quality, and Relation—are broken by Hannibal Lecter throughout Season 1 of *Hannibal*, according to the current study. These infractions are intentional pragmatic tactics used to dominate current investigations, manipulate other individuals, and hide his identity as the Chesapeake Ripper rather than haphazard departures from cooperative communication. Grice (1975) asserts that effective communication is predicated on the Cooperative Principle, which states that participants must supply adequate information (Quantity), accurate information (Quality), related information (Relation), and clear information (Manner). Because his main communication objective is deceit rather than cooperation, Hannibal frequently violates these principles.

Violations of the Maxim of Quality are the most important of the three categories since they entail outright lies meant to deceive other characters. According to him, speakers are required by the Maxim of Quality to refrain from making statements that they feel are untrue or for which there is insufficient evidence. But Hannibal often gives information

that he is aware is false. For instance, he fabricates the circumstances surrounding Franklyn's death, falsely accuses Nicholas Boyle of killing Cassie Boyle, says he only gave Abigail half a Valium despite giving her psilocybin in secret, and pretends not to remember Jeremy Olmstead despite killing him as the Chesapeake Ripper.

Because Hannibal anticipates that his audience will believe these statements to be true, they constitute actual violations. Hannibal's lies are intended to completely hide the truth, as contrast to flouting, when the hearer is meant to deduce an additional meaning. As a result, only the audience with additional contextual knowledge may identify the intended implicature, which is concealed from the story's hearers.

From a pragmatic perspective, these violations demonstrate that deception can be accomplished by intentionally disregarding the Cooperative Principle. According to (Levinson, 1983), effective communication is predicated on the idea that speakers typically cooperate by being honest. Because Jack Crawford, Alana Bloom, Miriam Lass, and Will Graham all assume that Hannibal is telling the truth, Hannibal takes advantage of this presumption. As a result, his credibility as a reputable psychiatrist enhances the potency of his trick. Instead of coming across as suspicious, his cool-headed and logical justifications boost his reputation and enable him to control inquiries while deflecting attention from himself.

Hannibal regularly breaks the Maxim of Quantity in addition to Quality by purposefully giving less information than is necessary for the conversation. Speakers should contribute as much information as is required for the engagement, according to Grice. However, Hannibal frequently provides scant or insufficient replies to inquiries while purposefully omitting important details. Phrases like "I know," "It was one of many considerations," and "That this could be more than a fever? No" show this trend. "I haven't told him." These answers leave out crucial details that would allow the hearer to fully comprehend the issue, even though they are not factually incorrect. Hannibal keeps other characters from learning his true motivations and role in the crimes by hiding information.

The results corroborate Cutting's (2002) theory that speakers often violate Quantity when they purposefully withhold information to deceive others without outright lying. As a result, Hannibal's answers are strategically economical; he withholds information that would expose him while disclosing just enough to seem cooperative. Because partial truths frequently seem more plausible than complete fabrications, this tactic is especially successful. Rather than making up extensive tales, Hannibal lets his interlocutors make mistakes based on the scant information he gives. As a result, deceit is accomplished by carefully chosen omissions rather than just making misleading claims.

The current results also align with research on conversational tactics in political and institutional discourse. According to research, speakers frequently break the Maxim of Quantity by giving partial responses in order to conceal private information while appearing cooperative. In a similar vein, Hannibal employs evasive answers to further his own agenda. However, Hannibal's omissions serve to hide evidence of murder and influence those looking into his crimes, whereas political figures typically seek to maintain their public image or steer clear of scandal. This implies that when speakers have information that jeopardizes their own goals, violations of quantity are a useful pragmatic tactic.

The third pattern identified is the violation of the Maxim of Relation, in which Hannibal deliberately redirects conversations away from potentially dangerous topics. According to Grice (1975), conversational contributions have to be pertinent to the subject under discussion. But anytime questions start to get close to the truth, Hannibal usually brings up irrelevant topics. For example, Hannibal suddenly inquires about Georgia Madchen's recuperation rather than Will's illness when Will starts to worry about his worsening mental state. In a similar vein, instead of addressing suspicions about himself, he shifts the conversation to forensic evidence or Will's psychological state. These topic changes obstruct the conversation's natural flow and stop delicate subjects from being further explored.

From a pragmatic standpoint, violating Relation functions as a conversational control strategy. Instead of declining to respond directly, Hannibal gently steers discussions in the direction of subjects that are advantageous to him while deterring further investigation. According to Levinson (1983), because listeners typically presume that speakers react properly to earlier statements, relevance is essential to conversational coherence. Hannibal takes advantage of this assumption by bringing up new themes that seem appropriate for conversation while purposefully diverting attention from things that could be used against him. Because the transitions seem sufficiently natural within the flow of discourse, other characters seldom notice that they are being controlled.

The results are consistent with earlier research on political interviews, in which speakers regularly break the Maxim of Relation by shifting the subject to dodge challenging questions. However, Hannibal's rationale for using irrelevance is different. Politicians usually reroute conversations to protect their public image or steer clear of contentious topics, but Hannibal uses the same practical tactic to hide murders, sway investigations, and psychologically affect people around him. Thus, even though the underlying intentions differ depending on the speaker's objectives, the study shows that violations of Relation function identically across communicative situations.

When considered collectively, the results show that Hannibal consistently violates Grice's Cooperative Principle in his conversational

behavior. Violations of Relation allow him to steer talks away from risky subjects, Violations of Quantity allow him to conceal information through selective disclosure, and Violations of Quality allow him to directly lie through false claims. Together, these three tactics form a complex manipulation system that preserves his identity while giving the impression of cooperation. Each kind of violation enhances the others rather than operating separately, demonstrating how pragmatic principles can be used to deceive in fictional discourse.