

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that focuses on the relationship between language and its users in a particular context. It is concerned with how speakers use language in social interactions and how listeners interpret meaning beyond the literal content of words. According to Yule (1996), pragmatics is “the study of speaker meaning,” which involves understanding what people mean by their utterances rather than just what the words or phrases mean themselves. Similarly, Levinson (1983) defines pragmatics as “the study of the ability of language users to pair sentences with the contexts in which they would be appropriate.” These definitions underscore the significance of context in communication and how meaning can be influenced by social, cultural, and interpersonal factors. Pragmatics, therefore, provides a framework for analyzing how language functions in real-life situations, especially in uncovering the implied or hidden meanings in conversation.

One of the central concerns of pragmatics is how speakers sometimes communicate in ways that are not entirely direct. This includes the concept of flouting maxims, where a speaker deliberately flouts a conversational rule to suggest an implied meaning. According to Cutting (2002), flouting a maxim happens when “a speaker blatantly fails to observe a maxim not with the intention of deceiving, but to prompt the hearer to look for a meaning which is different from, or in addition to, the expressed meaning.” Such indirect communication is

often used for humour, sarcasm, irony, or to express complex emotional states. Flouting is an intentional pragmatic strategy used to engage the listener in interpreting what is really meant, rather than taking the utterance at face value. This concept is closely related to Grice's Cooperative Principle, a theory proposed by H.P. Grice (1975), based on his book *Logic and Conversation*, which suggests that effective communication relies on cooperation between speakers and listeners. Grice introduced four conversational maxims to explain how communication typically works, which are the Maxim of Quantity (provide the right amount of information), the Maxim of Quality (do not say what you believe to be false), the Maxim of Relation (be relevant), and the Maxim of Manner (avoid obscurity and ambiguity). When these maxims are followed, conversations flow smoothly, and meaning is easily understood. When a maxim is deliberately flouted, it encourages the listener to infer an implied meaning. Grice's theory of implicature shows how meaning can be constructed beyond what is explicitly stated, making it a powerful tool for analyzing language use in various contexts, including film.

The present study explored how these theoretical concepts were reflected in the film *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009), directed by Ken Kwapis. The film told the story of several characters navigating complex romantic relationships, including Gigi, who was hopeful yet naïve, and Alex, who was realistic and emotionally distant. As their relationship developed, their conversations revealed layer-implied meaning often communicated through flouting conversational maxims. For instance, Gigi's overly hopeful and sometimes irrelevant remarks often flouted the

Maxim of Quantity, while Alex's blunt yet emotionally detached responses often flouted the Maxim of Relation Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar. These dialogues provided a valuable data source for pragmatic analysis, particularly in examining how indirect communication contributed to character development, humor, conflict, and emotional expression in the film.

Despite the widespread use of Grice's theory in linguistic studies, there remains a research gap in analyzing how flouting maxims function within film dialogues, particularly in multi-plot, character-driven films such as *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009). Most previous studies have focused on literary texts, interviews, or everyday conversations, leaving film dialogue relatively underexplored. What makes this film especially relevant is its multi-plot narrative, which interweaves several romantic storylines and presents diverse relational conflicts ranging from Gigi's naïve optimism, Janine's restrained suspicion, to Alex's pragmatic detachment. This complexity of relationships naturally leads to frequent flouting of conversational maxims, as characters often rely on indirect language to protect feelings, avoid conflict, or express emotions implicitly. The richness of these interactions, combined with the emotional depth and humor of the film, provides fertile ground for examining how indirect communication shapes both narrative progression and character development. Therefore, analyzing flouting maxims in *He's Just Not That Into You* is not only linguistically significant but also contributes to a deeper appreciation of how pragmatic strategies are employed by scriptwriters to convey subtle meanings, enhance emotional resonance, and create realistic and engaging conversations.

1.2. Problems of the Study

Based on the background, two problems are discussed in this study. The two problems discussed in this study:

1. What types of flouting maxims were used by the characters in the movie *He's Just Not That Into You*?
2. What were the reasons behind the characters' flouting of conversational maxims in the movie

1.3 objective of the study

The objectives of this study are to provide answers to the research problems discussed. These can be characterized as follows:

1. To identify the types of flouting maxims that were found in the movie *He's Just Not That Into You*.
2. To analyze the reasons why the characters in the movie *He's Just Not That Into You* flouted conversational maxims in their dialogues.

1.4 Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to the analysis of conversational maxims flouted by the characters in the movie *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009). The scope of the analysis focused specifically on the types of flouting maxims and the reasons behind their use, based on Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle and conversational implicature theory. Other pragmatic aspects, such as politeness strategies, speech acts, or conversational structures, were not included in this research. Furthermore, the analysis was confined to the dialogues in the movie

and did not extend to non-verbal elements such as tone, gesture, or facial expression that might also have contributed to meaning

1.5 . Significance of the Study

The significance of this study can be explained in two ways. Namely, theoretical and practical significance. Below are the explanations:

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

This study contributed to the field of pragmatics by providing a deeper understanding of how conversational implicatures operated in film dialogues through the perspective of Grice's Cooperative Principle and by analyzing the reasons characters flouted the maxims. By examining how characters in the film *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009) flouted conversational maxims, this research deepened the understanding of indirect communication and its role in shaping character relationships and narrative progression. In addition, the study served as a reference for future linguistic research on maxim flouting in fictional discourse, offering insights into how language could be used creatively to convey implicit meanings.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

Practically, this study benefits students, researchers, and language enthusiasts by illustrating how conversational maxims function in everyday speech and media. For students of linguistics and communication studies, it provides concrete examples of maxim flouting that can aid in understanding pragmatic theories in real-life contexts. Additionally, for scriptwriters and filmmakers, the study highlights how dialogue can be strategically crafted to add

depth to character interactions and enhance storytelling. Finally, general audiences can gain a better appreciation of the subtle ways in which language conveys meaning beyond the literal level.



CHAPTER II

CONCEPTS AND THEORIES

This section is divided into three subchapters. The first is a literature review of previous studies related to this study. The second concerns concepts related to this study. The third discusses the theory and the theoretical framework.”

2.1 Review of Related Literature

Several previous studies have investigated the phenomenon of flouting maxims in film dialogues using Grice’s (1975) theory of the Cooperative Principle. These studies serve as a foundation and point of comparison for the current research, which will analyze the flouting of maxims in the movie *He’s Just Not That Into You* (2009) movie.

The first study was conducted by Kristiana Aurel Alua (2025), entitled “*Flouting Maxim Found in To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before Movie Done by the Main Character Lara Jean*” aims to identify the types of flouting maxims and to analyze the conversational implicatures performed by the main character, Lara Jean, in the movie *To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before*. The research is based on Grice’s (1975) Cooperative Principle, which consists of four maxims, Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner, that regulate cooperative communication between speakers. The findings of Alua’s study revealed that Lara Jean flouted all four maxims to express implicit meanings such as irony, humour, sarcasm, and emotional tension. The Maxim of Quantity was the most frequently flouted, followed by strategies such as providing excessive or insufficient information, irrelevance, and ambiguity.

Both Alua's studies and this present research use Grice's Cooperative Principle to analyze maxim flouting in movie dialogue, to reveal implied meanings and deep pragmatic usage, as well as descriptive qualitative methods. However, the difference lies in the focus and context of the research; Alua studied romantic teen films with personal emotional nuances and humor, while this study focuses on the comedy-drama film *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009), which highlights character development and social contrasts between characters. In addition, this study combines Leech's Politeness Principle to explain maxim flouting as a politeness strategy, unlike Alua, who only uses Grice's theory.

The second previous study was conducted by Ferdina Anggraini (2021), entitled "*Flouting Maxim in the Speaking Class of Eleventh-Grade Students at SMA N 2 Metro.*" This study aims to identify the types of flouting maxims and to analyze the reasons why students flout these maxims during their speaking activities. The research is based on Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, which consists of four conversational maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner. These maxims serve as the foundation of cooperative communication, ensuring that speakers provide sufficient information, remain truthful, stay relevant, and express their ideas clearly. The findings of Anggraini's study show that the students flouted all four maxims, with the Maxim of Quantity being the most frequently flouted. The reasons behind these flouting include efforts to make the conversation more interesting, imply additional information, and express criticism indirectly. The study also found that the frequent flouting of maxims by the students was caused by a lack of understanding of pragmatic principles and limited

contextual awareness, which indicates that pragmatic competence plays an important role in developing effective communication skills. Therefore, Anggraini emphasized the importance of pragmatic-based instruction in speaking classes to help students improve their communicative awareness and their ability to use language appropriately in context.

The similarity between Anggraini's study and the current research is their use of Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle as a theoretical foundation and a qualitative descriptive method to analyze types of maxim flouting and the pragmatic meanings conveyed through indirect speech, highlighting flouting as a strategy for humor, emphasis, or politeness. However, the difference lies in their contexts: Anggraini's study focuses on spontaneous student speech in an educational setting, reflecting real-life interactions, while the current research analyzes scripted dialogue in the movie *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009), where maxim flouting is intentionally crafted to develop characters and emotions. Additionally, the current research integrates Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle to deepen the explanation of pragmatic motivations behind maxim flouting.

The third study is the article by Misiantari et al. (2022), which is an article entitled "*Analysis of Flouting Maxim in the Tall Girl Movie*" that aims to analyze the types of flouting maxims and the reasons why the characters flouted them in the movie *Tall Girl* (2003). This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, integrating Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle to identify the types of flouted maxims and Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle to interpret the reasons behind the flouting. The findings revealed four types of flouting: Quantity,

Quality, Relation, and Manner. Among them, the Maxim of Quantity and the Maxim of Manner were the most frequently flouted. The underlying reasons included the speaker's intention to emphasize ideas and to persuade the listener that the information fulfilled its communicative purpose.

When compared with this research, both Misiantari et al. (2022)'s and this present research employ Grice's theory and focus on identifying the types of flouting maxims. They also share the use of Leech's theory to explore the pragmatic reasons behind the flouting. The difference lies in the focus of the object: Misiantari et al. analyzed the characters in *Tall Girl*, while this research investigates the maxim flouting of the characters in *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009). Furthermore, the dominant results also differ: their research found Quantity and Manner as the most frequent types, while this research highlights a different maxim depending on the findings.

The fourth study, Hakim (2022), in his article entitled "*A Pragmatic Analysis of Maxim Flouting to Create Verbal Humor in the Netflix Series Pretty Smart*," conducted a study to identify the types of flouting maxims and to examine how they were used by characters in the series to create verbal humour. This research employed Grice's (1975) theory to analyze maxim flouting and Shade's (1997) theory to interpret humour. The findings indicate that all four types of flouting maxims, Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner, were present in the data. The most dominant type was the flouting maxim of Quality. Furthermore, the study concludes that flouting maxims can generate humor, particularly verbal jokes, which occurred most frequently in the series.

In comparison to this research, both Hakim's and this present research share Grice's theoretical framework and examine maxim flouting across the four categories. However, Hakim's study differs in its emphasis on humor as the communicative function of flouting maxims, supported by Shade's theory, while this research applies Leech's theory to highlight pragmatic purposes. Another distinction lies in the data source: Hakim analyzed a Netflix sitcom (*Pretty Smart*), whereas this research investigates a movie, *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009).

The last literature review is from Cahyadi (2023), in his article entitled "*A Conversational Analysis of Flouting Maxim in Ariana Grande's Interview Video in Zach Sang Show YouTube Channel*," who researched to analyze the types and functions of flouting maxims appearing in Ariana Grande's interview videos on the Zach Sang Show. This study applied Grice's (1975) theory to identify the types and functions of maxim flouting supported by Leech's (1993) theory to further interpret the pragmatic functions. The findings show that all four types of flouting maxims, such as Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner, appear in the data, with the maxim of Quantity being the most dominant.

These two studies have differences and similarities, namely that both Cahyadi's and this present research use Grice's theory as their main framework and examine the four types of maxim flouting. Both are also interested in exploring the pragmatic functions of these flouting. The differences lie in the focus of the research and the data sources: Cahyadi's research analyzes interview discourse, while this research focuses on the characters in the movie *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009). In addition, while Cahyadi emphasizes the functions of

maxim flouting, this research highlights the strategies and reasons behind them, supported by Leech's theory.

2.2 Concepts

This section explains important concepts related to the study, including the Cooperative Principle, flouting maxims, *He's Just Not That Into You* (2009), and the movie.

2.2.1 Cooperative Principle

The Cooperative Principle is a theory introduced by Grice (1975), which explains how people engage in meaningful conversations. According to this principle, speakers generally follow four conversational rules or maxims: the Maxim of Quantity (giving the right amount of information), the Maxim of Quality (being truthful), the Maxim of Relation (being relevant), and the Maxim of Manner (being clear and avoiding ambiguity). These maxims help ensure that conversations are logical and effective. For example, if someone asks, "Where is the nearest hospital?" and the response is "Just two blocks ahead on your right," the speaker is following all four maxims by providing sufficient, truthful, relevant, and clear information. However, in real-life conversations, people do not always strictly follow these maxims, which leads to flouting maxims. Maxim of Quantity (giving the right amount of information), the Maxim of Quality (being truthful), the Maxim of Relation (being relevant), and the Maxim of Manner (being clear and avoiding ambiguity). These maxims help ensure that conversations are logical and effective.

2.2.2 Flouting Maxims

Flouting maxims occurs when a speaker deliberately makes a statement that is not directly relevant to one of Grice's conversational maxims, not to mislead, but to convey an implied meaning that the listener is expected to infer. According to Grice (1975), flouting maxims often appears in forms of sarcasm, humor, or indirect responses, where the literal meaning becomes secondary to the intended implication. In the film *He's Just Not That Into You*, this phenomenon can be seen across different characters, such as Gigi who rationalizes why a man has not called her back by saying he might be busy or lost her number, and her friend bluntly replies, "Or maybe he's just not that into you," which flouts the Maxim of Quantity because it is overly brief yet carries a sharp implied meaning.

2.2.3 *He's Just Not That Into You*

He's Just Not That Into You (2009) is an American romantic comedy-drama film that interweaves the stories of several characters navigating the complexities of love, dating, and relationships. The film portrays Gigi, Alex, Janine, Ben, Beth, Neil, and other characters whose interactions highlight the misunderstandings and expectations that often arise in modern romance. From a linguistic perspective, this film is particularly relevant because its dialogues provide rich examples of pragmatic phenomena, especially the flouting of conversational maxims and conversational implicatures. The conversations among the characters frequently involve indirect speech, sarcasm, humor, emotional expression, and pragmatic inferences, which demonstrate how speakers convey meanings beyond the literal interpretation of words. Therefore, *He's Just Not That Into You* serves as an

effective data source for analyzing how Grice's Cooperative Principle operates in naturalistic conversation and how characters intentionally flout maxims to achieve communicative purposes such as persuasion, emotional defense, or social bonding.

2.2.4 Movie

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (n.d.), a movie is defined as “a story or event recorded by a camera as a set of moving images and shown in a cinema or on television.” In the field of linguistics, movies are often regarded as valuable sources of authentic language data because the dialogues are designed to closely resemble natural speech (Bordwell & Thompson, 2010). As such, films provide rich material for analyzing real-life communication patterns, including the use of indirect language, sarcasm, irony, and implicature. In movies, He's *Just Not That Into You* (2009), characters frequently engage in nuanced conversations where they flout Grice's maxims, such as providing irrelevant, exaggerated, or ambiguous responses to create deeper, implied meanings. These forms of conversational implicature, as introduced by Grice (1975), help audiences uncover the unspoken intentions behind what is said. By studying such film dialogues, researchers can gain valuable insights into how meaning is constructed and understood in everyday communication.

2.3 Theories

Theory is part of an essential rule used to analyse problems in a study. The theory used in preparing the paper must be relevant to the topic discussed. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this research focuses on topics related to flouting maxims. Since this research focuses on flouting maxims and the

reasons why the main characters flout them, it adopts Grice's *Cooperative Principle* (1975) and Leech's *Politeness Principle* (1983) as its main theoretical frameworks. Grice's theory provides the foundation for identifying and classifying the types of conversational maxims that are flouted, namely, Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner, while Leech's theory offers a pragmatic explanation for the reasons underlying those flouting. Together, these frameworks facilitate a comprehensive analysis of how speakers intentionally flout maxims to achieve specific communicative and interpersonal purposes in the dialogues of *Just Not That Into You* (2009). Below is a further explanation of the theoretical concepts proposed by Grice and Leech that are relevant to this study.

Although this research focuses on two main problems, identifying the types of flouting maxims and explaining the reasons behind them, it also employs the theory of context of situation to strengthen the analysis. The concept of context of situation, first introduced by Malinowski (1923) and further developed by Halliday (1985), emphasizes that meaning cannot be fully understood without reference to the situational factors surrounding an utterance. Halliday (1985) identifies three key components of the context of situation: field (what is happening or the topic of discourse), tenor (the participants and their social relationships), and mode (the channel or medium of communication). By applying this framework, the analysis in this study is able to interpret the flouting of conversational maxims not only through linguistic form but also through the situational and relational context in which the utterances occur.

2.3.1 Cooperative Principle

The Cooperative Principle is a concept introduced by Paul Grice in 1975. Grice argues that making a conversational contribution is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the expected purpose or direction of the conversational exchange in which a person is engaged. This is called the Cooperative Principle. This principle explains how effective communication usually occurs by following certain rules that support the cooperation between the talker and the hearer. In the Cooperative Principle, there are 4 maxims used to fulfill an effective conversation, as follows:

2.3.1.1 The Maxim of Quantity

As proposed by Grice (1975) and further discussed, the maxim of quantity states that speakers should provide as much information as is required but no more than necessary. This principle helps maintain balance in communication, ensuring that conversations remain relevant, concise, and informative. Flouting this maxim can lead to miscommunication or confusion. To get a clearer understanding of the maxim of quantity, below is an example:

A : May I borrow your pencil?

B :Yes, sure. (Grice, 1975)

In the above example, speaker A asks to borrow a pencil, and speaker B responds briefly and appropriately with “Yes, sure.” This response follows the maxim of quantity as it provides just the right amount of information, not too much and not too little. If B responds with excessive details such as “Yes, you can borrow my pencil, I bought it last week, and it works well,” then the additional

information is unnecessary. Otherwise, if B simply says “Yes” without confirming the action, A may not be sure if the borrowing is really allowed.

2.3.1.2 The Maxim of Quality

As proposed by Grice (1975), the maxim of quality requires speakers to avoid saying anything they believe to be false or for which they lack sufficient evidence. This principle ensures that conversations are grounded in truth and that participants share information that is both reliable and verifiable. By following this guideline, speakers uphold credibility and foster meaningful discussions based on factual content. To get a clearer understanding of the maxim of quality, below is an example:

A : Do you think Jane can win this competition?

B : I think so. I saw her practice a lot last week. **(Grice, 1975)**

In this example, speaker B follows the maxim of quality by giving an honest and fact-based response. Instead of making a random guess, B supports their answer with real evidence, saying, “I saw her practice a lot last week,” which makes the response more trustworthy. B also avoids exaggeration by saying, “I think so,” instead of a definite statement like, “Jane will definitely win,” which could be misleading without proof. Additionally, B provides a valid reason rather than an opinion without evidence, ensuring the statement is based on facts. If B had falsely claimed, “Jane trains with a professional coach every day,” without knowing for sure, it would have violated the Maxim of Quality by deliberately providing misinformation and misleading speaker A. Instead, B’s response

remains truthful and based on firsthand knowledge, ensuring clarity and reliability in the exchange.

2.3.1.3 The Maxim of Relation

The maxim of Relation, as proposed by Grice (1975), states that speakers should provide information that is directly connected to the topic being discussed. This principle ensures that communication remains logical and that all contributions are meaningful to the conversation. If a response is off-topic, it can lead to confusion and hinder understanding. For example, if someone asks about a cooking recipe and the response is about a new bicycle, the conversation loses coherence because the information does not match the context. To get a clearer understanding of the maxim of relevance, below is an example:

- A : Where is my car key?
 B : It's in the drawer. **(Grice, 1975)**

In this example, B follows the maxim of relevance by providing a direct and appropriate answer. A's question specifically asks about the location of the car key, and B responds with precise and useful information such as "It's in the drawer." This response is relevant because it directly addresses A's concern and allows for effective communication. If B had responded with unrelated information, such as "I bought a new book yesterday," the response would have been confusing and unhelpful, as it does not contribute to solving A's problem. Additionally, if B had given an incomplete or vague answer, like "Somewhere in the house," it would have left A uncertain and searching for more information. By providing a response that is both relevant and specific, B ensures that the

conversation remains smooth, logical, and purposeful. Adherence to the maxim of relevance helps keep the exchange efficient and prevents unnecessary misunderstandings.

2.3.1.4 The Maxim of Manner

Grice (1975) introduced the maxim of manner as one of the \conversational principles that guide effective communication. This maxim requires speakers to be clear, avoid ambiguity, be concise, and maintain an orderly structure in their speech. A message should not be overly complicated to understand, nor should it contain unnecessary information that might confuse the listener. By following this principle, speakers ensure that their communication remains precise and easily comprehensible. To get a clearer understanding of the maxim of manners, below is an example:

A : Do you know when the graduation is?

B : It is on Monday next week. (Grice, 1975)

In this example, B follows the maxim of manner by providing a clear and well-structured response. When A asks about the graduation date, B answers directly and concisely, “It is on Monday next week.” This response avoids confusion, unnecessary details, or vague wording. If B had answered, “Well, it’s sometime in the next few days, maybe after Sunday but before Wednesday,” the statement would have been unclear and could have caused misunderstanding. Similarly, if B had given excessive details about the event rather than answering the specific question, the conversation would have been unnecessarily long and

complicated. By keeping the response straightforward and structured, B ensures that the message is easily understood, adhering to the maxim of manner.

2.3.2 The Flouting Maxim

The most interesting way to break a maxim is by flouting the maxim. It occurs when a speaker blatantly disobeys a maxim without any intention to deceive or mislead the listener during the conversation. Grice (1975) says that to observe maxims, 4 ways need to be considered, as follows:

2.3.2.1 The Flouting Maxim of Quantity

The Maxim of Quantity, as proposed by Grice (1975), emphasizes that a speaker should provide the right amount of information, which is neither too little nor too much, for effective and cooperative communication. Flouting this maxim occurs when a speaker deliberately gives either insufficient or excessive information, thereby prompting the listener to infer an implied or hidden meaning. Such a flouting often leads to conversational implicature, where the actual message lies beyond the literal words spoken. To get a clearer understanding of the flouting maxim of quantity, below is an example:

A: Well, how do I look?

B: Your *shoes* are nice... (Grice, 1975)

In this example, B does not provide a full assessment of A's appearance but instead focuses only on A's shoes. By omitting any comment on the rest of A's outfit, B implies that the sweatshirt and jeans may not be as nice. This response forces A to infer that B might be indirectly criticizing their overall look. In the example, B flouts the Maxim of Quantity by providing less information than expected. Instead of giving a direct opinion on the entire outfit, B highlights only

the shoes, leading A to deduce that the rest of the outfit is not particularly appealing. This indirect communication allows B to express an opinion without explicitly stating something negative, which might be considered rude.

2.3.2.2 The Flouting Maxim of Quality

The Maxim of Quality, as formulated by Grice (1975), asserts that speakers should not say what they believe to be false or make statements for which they lack sufficient evidence. When this maxim is flouted, the speaker's utterance may seem untruthful or exaggerated on the surface; however, the intention is not to deceive but to invite the listener to uncover an implied meaning. Rather than lying outright, speakers often employ rhetorical devices such as irony, humour, or disclaimers to express their thoughts indirectly. These strategies allow the speaker to soften the impact of their words while still conveying a deeper or critical message. In such cases, the listener is expected to move beyond the literal interpretation and infer the speaker's true intent, leading to the creation of conversational implicature. To get a clearer understanding of the flouting maxim of quality, below is an example:

- A : I'll ring you tomorrow afternoon then.
- B : Erm, I shall be there as far as I know, and in the meantime, have a word with Mum and Dad if they're free. Right, bye-bye then, sweetheart.
- A : Bye-bye, bye. (Grice,1975)

In this example, B flouts the Maxim of Quality by using the phrase "as far as I know." This phrase introduces uncertainty into the statement, implying that B is unsure about their availability. If A calls and finds B unavailable, B can avoid

being accused of lying because they have already expressed a lack of certainty. This technique allows B to provide a potentially misleading response without directly violating social norms of honesty. The listener, A, is expected to infer that B might not be entirely certain or committed to their availability.

2.3.2.3 The Flouting Maxim of Relation

Flouting the Maxim of Relation occurs when a speaker deliberately gives a response that appears unrelated to the topic being discussed. In conversation, relevance plays a crucial role in maintaining effective communication, as people generally expect responses to be directly connected to the preceding utterance. However, when a speaker intentionally provides an irrelevant reply, the listener is prompted to search for an implied meaning. This phenomenon, identified by Grice (1975) under the *Cooperative Principle*, is known as flouting the Maxim of Relevance. It often appears in sarcasm, humor, indirect refusals, or situations where a speaker seeks to avoid addressing a particular topic directly.

To get a clearer understanding of the flouting maxim of relation, below is an example:

A : So what do you think of Mark?

B : His flatmate's a wonderful cook. (Grice,1975)

In this example, B does not provide a direct opinion about Mark. Instead of answering A's question, B shifts the focus to Mark's flatmate, which seems unrelated to the topic. However, by deliberately avoiding any mention of Mark, B subtly implies a lack of enthusiasm or interest in him. The listener, A, is expected to infer that B's response is not just an irrelevant remark but an indirect way of

expressing disinterest or dissatisfaction with Mark. Flouting the Maxim of Relation, as demonstrated in this example, serves various functions in communication. It can be used to imply opinions indirectly, introduce humour, soften criticisms, or avoid discussing sensitive topics. By providing an unrelated response, the speaker encourages the listener to make their own conclusions rather than stating something outright.

2.3.2.4 The Flouting Maxim of Manner

The Maxim of Manner, as outlined by Grice (1975), emphasizes that speakers should avoid obscurity and ambiguity, refrain from unnecessary wordiness, and present their thoughts in a clear, orderly manner. Flouting this maxim occurs when a speaker deliberately employs vague, ambiguous, or overly complex language to communicate an idea indirectly. This communicative strategy may be used to obscure sensitive information, soften a harsh truth, or produce effects such as humor, irony, or subtle criticism. Instead of providing a direct or transparent statement, the speaker invites the listener to infer the true meaning through contextual and conversational cues. As with other types of maxim flouting, this form encourages deeper listener engagement by relying on shared understanding and interpretation. To get a clearer understanding of the flouting maxim of manner, below is an example:

A: Where are you off to?

B: I was thinking of going out to get some of that funny white stuff for somebody.

A: Ok, but don't be long- dinner's nearly ready. (Grice,1975)

In this example, B deliberately speaks vaguely by using phrases like “that funny white stuff” instead of saying “ice cream” and “somebody” instead of specifying “Michele.” This lack of clarity is not due to an inability to express the idea clearly but is instead a conscious choice. In this context, B’s vagueness is likely intended to prevent a young child from getting too excited about the ice cream before dinner. By using unclear language, B flouts the Maxim of Manner to conceal the truth while still providing enough information for A to understand.

2.3.3 Reason of Flouting Maxim

In daily communication, speakers do not always convey their messages directly. Instead, they may intentionally flout one or more of Grice’s conversational maxims to achieve specific communicative goals. According to Grice (1975), flouting a maxim is not meant to deceive but rather to encourage the listener to infer a deeper or alternative meaning beyond the literal expression. These indirect strategies often lead to what is known as *conversational implicature*, where the implied meaning is understood based on context, shared knowledge, and inference.

However, Leech (1983), in *Principles of Pragmatics*, explains that speakers often flout maxims not merely for communicative efficiency but to maintain politeness and social harmony. He introduces the Politeness Principle (PP) as a complement to Grice’s Cooperative Principle (CP), arguing that linguistic behavior is also governed by the need to minimize conflict and maximize respect between interlocutors. According to Leech, flouting a maxim can serve several pragmatic functions:

2.3.3.1 To Observe the Politeness Principle

Speakers may flout a maxim to avoid being impolite or too direct. Indirectness allows them to express refusals, criticisms, or disagreements more tactfully.

Example:

Alan: *Are you going to Paul's party?*

Barb: *I have to work.*

Barb flouts the Maxim of Relation to refuse politely, allowing Alan to infer the real meaning without confrontation (Leech, 1983: 82).

2.3.3.2 To Save Face and Maintain Social Harmony

Leech states that indirect speech protects both the speaker's and listener's *face* (self-esteem). By flouting a maxim, the speaker avoids embarrassing, offending, or imposing on the hearer. "Indirectness allows a speaker to avoid offending and to minimize the expression of impolite beliefs." (Leech, 1983: 108)

2.3.3.3. To Create Conversational Implicature for Politeness or Tact

By deliberately violating a maxim, the speaker generates implicatures that convey meaning politely or strategically. The listener must interpret the intended message from context and tone rather than from the literal expression.

2.3.3.4. To Achieve Humor, Irony, or Sarcasm

Leech (1983: 88) also notes that speakers sometimes flout maxims to produce irony or humor, which still aligns with the Politeness Principle because the intention is not to deceive but to entertain or express an attitude indirectly.

2.3.3.5 To Strengthen Social Relations

Flouting maxims may help establish solidarity, intimacy, or shared understanding among speakers. By using indirectness, a speaker can align with the listener's emotions and maintain a harmonious relationship. These motivations highlight that flouting maxims is often a strategic linguistic act guided by Leech's Politeness Principle rather than a mere breach of cooperation. Understanding these reasons provides insight into the speaker's intention, emotional state, and relationship with the listener. Therefore, in this study, the analysis of conversational implicatures is essential to reveal how the characters' flouting of maxims reflects their communicative purposes and adherence to Leech's principles of politeness.

