

A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE FLOUTING OF GRICEAN MAXIMS IN THE DEAR DEPARTED BY STANLEY HOUGHTON

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Abstract

The application of H. P. Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle in the dialogue of Stanley Houghton's one-act play is examined in this paper, "A Pragmatic Analysis of the Flouting of Gricean Maxims in The Dear Departed by Stanley Houghton." In order to produce implicatures that disclose more profound social, moral, and emotional tensions, the study attempts to find and examine situations in which characters purposefully disregard the conversational maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner. The study employs a qualitative analytical approach to analyse 16 chosen lines from the play, each of which demonstrates a unique type of maxim flouting through practical techniques such as topic evasion, sarcasm, irony, emotional manipulation, and vagueness. Following violations of Manner through abrupt or ambiguous speech, Relation through avoidance and misdirection, and Quantity through exaggeration or purposeful omission, the results show that the Maxim of Quality is most commonly broken, frequently to convey false grief or excuse unethical behaviour. These practical transgressions are not coincidental; rather, they are crucial dramatic devices that highlight the protagonists' avarice and hypocrisy while strengthening the story's moral implications. In addition to demonstrating how conversational implicature can offer a richer understanding of character motivation and social dynamics, the study emphasises the applicability of pragmatic theory in literary discourse analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Grice's conversational maxims—Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner—are continuously broken by the characters in Stanley Houghton's *The Dear Departed* in order to reveal their hypocrisy, selfishness, and the disintegration of familial ties. The drama exposes the moral degradation that lies beneath the surface of courteous relationships through intentional violations of cooperative

communication, especially in the setting of pretence and avarice after a purported death. The play criticises the artificiality of social norms and the hollowness of relationships motivated by money gain rather than true devotion by examining these pragmatic violations. In addition to providing irony and black humour, the breaking of maxims is a structural

element that emphasises the play's main themes of deceit and dysfunctional families.

Background of the study

Analysis of Flouting Maxims in Stanley Houghton's *Dear Departed* Comedy, dramatic comedy, horror stories, and others are made for education, enjoyment, and awareness, and some are political. However, Ulfah & Afrilia (2018) take numerous portions to suit social requirements. The movie revolves around characters. Communicating properly helped them grow their positions. Movie scripts are the second most crucial. The screenplay explains the movie, helping people perform successfully. Successful conversations use cooperative concepts to expound on four maxims: quality, quantity, relation, and manner. These maxims govern conversational success. Researchers examined "The Magician's Elephant" maxims. All four maxims were found in the movie. Conversational maxims matter (Tutuarima, Nuraeningsih, & Rusiana, 2018). This movie script explained what others understood well by studying maxims. The preceding explanation analyses the cooperation principle using Paul Grice's maxims. The movie "The Magician's Elephant" was studied for Grice's maxims in its dialogue. To establish that conversational communication works, Grice's maxims (Andy & Ambalegin, 2019) and meanings in the movie screenplay are intriguing. Magician's Elephant skillfully uses conversational maxims in its writing. Discourse analysis students may benefit from this research. In Wendy Rogers' "The Magician's Elephant," this study explores maxims that are violated (Sagheer, Nadeem, & Nasir, 2023).

People use numerous social strategies. They use these methods to make sense. In this aspect, people may favour implicit meaning. They like to make meaning in a way that draws attention to it, utilising diverse methods (e.g., flouting maxims). The hearer must pick relevant characteristics to understand the intended message. Thus, this article examines the speaker's maxim-ignoring strategies. This study examines Jordanian Arabic's novel language techniques and pragmatic functions (Yasin & Hussein, 2021). Non-observance (flouting) helps the listener grasp what is meant rather than what is stated. Flouting happens when a speaker violates the quantity, quality, manner,

or relation maxim in a discussion, according to Grice (1975). The speaker skips a maxim to make an implied point.

The article shows that the listener may deduce the conversational implicature. Communication succeeds because the hearer chooses relevant context aspects according to relevance theory (Cutting, 2015). This requires interlocutors' expertise and contextual signals like place and subject. For the hearer to understand, these traits are crucial; otherwise, misinterpretation is inevitable.

Speakers favour indirect communication over directness; hence, they rarely follow these maxims. They regularly disregard these standards. Thus, they break these maxims to suggest an inference. Providing pragmatic functions justifies flouting maxims (number, quality, relation, and method). Thus, flouting is crucial to communication (Al-Shboul, 2022).

Effective communication requires adequate discourse exchange contributions. The cooperative principle's communication system summarises this suitable contribution. The cooperative concept stated how discussion happens at the right time, such as providing information. Four maxims—quantity (informative), quality (truthful), relation (relevant), and method (clear)—form the cooperative principle. The quality maxim appears to be crucial to the cooperative principle. Because every statement should be truthful, regardless of the maximum necessary. According to Csepele, Vági, and Nagyfi (2017), "quality maxims have an overwhelming importance, in which the other maxims come into effect only if the parties are not lying to each other." This signifies the quality maxim as the cooperation principle maxim. However, interlocutors must follow all maxims for a smooth discussion and good communication.

Despite the fact that maxims can help communicate, breaking them might cause problems. Disobedience to maxims causes non-observance, whereas breaching maxims creates failure to observe (Agustina and Ariyanti, 2016). Speakers usually have maximum goals. For this reason, a speaker requires extra knowledge and interpretation skills. Grice established four maxims. They violate, infringe, opt out, and suspend (Thomas, 2013). Based on the four breaking maxims, Grice (Agustina and Ariyanti, 2016) says

flouting and violating are the most common failures in daily speech.

According to Cutting (2002), flouting occurs when a speaker ignores the dictum yet expects a listener to understand. To mislead a listener, violating means revealing only the surface meaning of a sentence. Saying anything false violates the maxim. Untruths include exaggeration, metaphor, irony, banter, and lying. Specifically, delivering misleading statements violates the quality maxim. The violations of quality maxims show how truth is hidden and words are twisted to communicate ideas. An utterance that violates the criterion of quality cannot be read literally, as its meaning is not to deceive the listener. A novel can deviate from quality standards just as much as a speech. Novels may represent social interaction, and their conversations can be utilised to analyse how flouting and violating might maximise quality in different situations.

This study sought to identify important characters' statements that violated quality maxims and to determine why they did so in *My Sister's Keeper*. This study was intended to inspire a linguistics-based, unique analysis, particularly on flouting and violating. This study should help future researchers (Noertjahjo, Arifin, & Ariani, 2017).

In pragmatics, communication is about sharing information. People frequently work together to communicate their meaning. All else being equal, discussions are cooperative attempts to find common ground and pause. Grice's work on the cooperation principle contributed to the creation of linguistics' "pragmatics" field. According to Fais (1994), "One of the defining features of conversation is that it is cooperative in nature."

Austin's (1975) early pragmatics theory focused on saying versus meaning. Later, Grice, Austin's major pupil, tried harder. Systematise how a listener goes from what is said to what is meant, from explicit to implicit meaning. British language philosopher Paul Grice developed the concept. "Make your conversation contribution as required at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange.

Grice explains the cooperative principle in his 1967 William James lectures at Harvard and Oxford, limiting its application to describe discussion

exchanges with the following qualities: "The participants have some common immediate aim; their contributions are dovetailed mutually dependent; there is some sort of understanding that other things being equal, the transaction should continue in an appropriate style unless both parties agree to terminate" (Grice, 1989).

According to Grice (1989), "Our talk exchanges... are characteristic, to some degree at least, cooperative efforts, and each participant recognises them... a shared goal or direction." This means the speaker and listener should collaborate. Paul Grice's idea aims to bridge the gap between conversational participants' words and meanings (Hossain, 2021).

Objectives of the study

- i. To analyse pragmatic devices used by characters in Stanley Houghton's *Dear Departed* to challenge maxims
- ii. To evaluate which of the maxims have been flouted by the characters

Research Questions

- iii. How do characters in Stanley Houghton's *Dear Departed* use pragmatic devices to challenge maxims?
- iv. What are the most and least violated maxims in Stanley Houghton's *Dear Departed*?

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The scope of this study has been purposefully kept small to keep it manageable and focused: The critique is limited to Stanley Houghton's one-act play, *The Dear Departed*. Not mentioned are other plays by the same playwright or different dramatists. H. P. Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle and its four conversational maxims—Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner—are the only guidelines used in this study. There is no use of other pragmatic frameworks like Relevance Theory or Speech Act Theory. Analysis is limited to the characters' spoken words. Although they may affect implicature in a live performance, stage instructions, performance components (intonation, gesture), and actor interpretation are not included.

The study, which is done in English, focusses on British cultural contexts from the early 20th century.

There is no discussion of how civility or pragmatics differ amongst cultures. Beyond simple classification, the study employs qualitative, descriptive analysis and makes no attempt at a quantitative or statistical evaluation of maxim violation frequency.

Significance of the study

This study shows how useful Gricean pragmatics can be for looking at theatrical texts. It shows how playwrights like Stanley Houghton employ non-cooperative dialogue to: Show why a character does what they do, build moral conflict, and Critique society. The results show how breaking conversational rules is a sign of deeper moral problems in the family. This method connects linguistic theory with literary criticism, giving us a more nuanced view of how language may be used to tell the truth and lie. This study also broadens the range of Gricean analysis beyond daily speech to scripted conversation, showing that it is still useful in literary discourse. The study adds to both pragmatic theory and theatrical interpretation by looking at how maxims are used in a planned way.

Literature Review

Putri (2015) describes the main character's maxim flouting, his techniques, and the setting of the talks in which he does it. This study was qualitative-quantitative. The data were utterances. The video and transcript of Thank You for Smoking provided data. Researchers and data sheets were utilised. The researcher collected data by watching the movie, downloading the transcript from the Internet, reading it, re-watching and re-reading the transcript, checking the transcript, classifying maxim flouting data, and entering the data into a data sheet. Triangulation ensured data reliability. This research yields three findings. First, the main character breaks all maxims. These are number, quality, relation, and manner maxims. Six ways the speaker breaks maxims are the second outcome. Giving too little or too much, exaggeration, irony, irrelevant information, and cryptic information are these techniques. The last result shows the data-derived discussion setting, scene, participant, end, act, key, instrumentalities, norm, and genre. Formal and informal communication occur. The main character usually holds formal

conversations in the morning or afternoon. Formal conversations occur when the main character meets someone new, speaks to his supervisor, or represents himself. The main character's informal discussion might happen in the evening or night since the themes are more varied. Place-based discourse occurs in numerous locations. Then, the main character interacts casually with his son, friends, and relatives. Since the research focuses on communication, it uses spoken instruments. Maxims, the primary character, breaks from the conversation's standards.

Febriani (2015) describes the types of maxim flouting of cooperative principles used by the main characters in The Simpsons TV series, their strategies, and American social issues reflected in maxim flouting. This descriptive qualitative study examined maxim flouting as a mirror of American societal concerns in The Simpsons. The data was collected by reviewing the transcripts, choosing and emphasising maxim flouting that highlighted American societal difficulties, and retyping them into a data sheet. Analysing qualitative data was referential to Grice's (1975) ideas. Discussing with thesis supervisors, checking with specialists, and triangulating data with linguistics colleagues helps verify data. After data analysis, three conclusions were drawn. First, four maxims are broken. Flouting of quantity, quality, method, and related maxims. Second, eleven maxim-breaking techniques exist. They include (1) too little information, (2) too much information, (3) exaggeration, (4) metaphor, (5) irony, (6) sarcasm, (7) banter, (8) topic change, (9) irrelevant answer, (10) confusing information, and (11) being unbrief. Third, The Simpsons addresses five American societal concerns. Capitalism, nepotism, labour rights, inappropriate jokes, and libel. Understanding cooperative concepts in The Simpsons' characters' conversations helps explain their social system and American societal difficulties. The cooperation principles determine which talks follow the maxim. Maxims that are violated are the key data utilised to determine American social concerns since they imply purpose. This shows that American societal concerns influence language use in The Simpsons.

Asri Dwi (2015) worried about the flouting maxim in EFL classes. It examined how teacher-student conversational implicatures, notably flouting maxims,

are generated during EFL teaching and learning. This study was qualitative. Transcription and analysis of EFL teacher-student interaction data are based on H.P. Grice's flouting of the maxim theory. Data investigation shows that all speakers observe maxims throughout discourse. Only 2% is non-observance optimum. Speakers violate number, quality, and manner maxims. Students violate the maxim due to verbal and actional incompetence.

Rahmah (2016) examines the Pursuit of Happiness characters' maxim flouting. This study will (1) identify maxim flouting kinds in *The Pursuit of Happiness* and (2) describe the characters' maxim flouting techniques. This study used qualitative research. The data became the *Pursuit of Happiness* script. This research collected data by taking notes. Data analysis involves (1) identifying the data the researcher assumed was maxim flouting, (2) coding the data into a data sheet, (3) re-checking the data findings' accuracy, (4) interpreting the data findings to answer the research question, and (5) drawing conclusions. Two key discoveries emerged from the data study. The researcher identifies four maxims violated in the film. They maximise the number, quality, relation, and manner of violations. The maximum amount of flouting comes first because characters intentionally supply more information than needed in a discourse. Second, the movie has eleven maxim-flouting strategies. Tautology, overstatement, understatement, metaphor, exaggeration, irony, banter, sarcasm, topic change, and lack of conciseness. The overstatement approach is the most common maxim violation strategy. Overstatement is often used to persuade others to adopt the speaker's idea.

Pradika and Rohmanti (2018) use Grice's cooperative principle to analyse *Coco*'s characters' maxim flouting. This study employed descriptive qualitative methods to analyse data. The same movie and screenplay were used for this study. Downloading *Coco*, viewing it, and collecting data from the script yielded the data. Narration, data analysis, and conclusion were used to analyse data. This investigation revealed which maxims the film violated. This investigation found the maxim violated 11 times in the movie's dialogue. The maximum amount was violated 5 times (45%). The relation maxim was violated 3 times (27%). 1 time (10%) the quality maxim was violated. The manner

maxim was violated twice (18%). Quantity maxim flouting dominates.

Fitri and Qodriani (2019) study flouting maxim in *Divergent* to determine its forms and functions. Descriptive qualitative research was utilised to analyse and debate divergent new phrases that violate maxims. The pragmatic method of this research incorporates Grice's maxim theory. This investigation found 21 floating maximum data points. They include 12 quantity, 2 quality, and 7 relevance flouting maxims. The researchers found that flouting the maxim of quantity involves explaining more about the topic, stressing something, and an unwillingness to cooperate; flouting the maxim of quality involves panicking, convincing the addressee, and hiding something; and flouting the maxim of relevance involves changing the topic and avoiding talking about something.

Nurjannah, Daud, and Fata (2020) depict *Avengers: Infinity War* characters' maxim flouting techniques. This study used qualitative methods. Film and transcript were used to collect data. They were then examined and classified by maxim-flouting kind using Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principles theory and Cutting (2002) & Grundy's (2000) updated theories. This research found that movie characters violated all four Gricean maxims—quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. Quantity flouting maxim was the most often, whereas method flouting maxim was the least. They also violated the maxims using overstatement, understatement, metaphor, irony, banter, sarcasm, irrelevant statement, ambiguous statement, tautology, and rhetorical inquiry. This movie has the greatest overstatement rate since the characters utilise it often. Marlisa & Hidayat (2020) examine the flouting maxim in *Good Morning America (GMA)* with Jackie Chan as a guest. This research aims to determine the hosts' and guests' flouted maxim(s) and their cause(s). Researchers used a movie to obtain qualitative data in this investigation. This study used the transcript text of hosts and Jackie Chan's maxim-breaking statements. The researchers employed Grice's Cooperative Principles—quality, quantity, relation, and manner—to uncover and analyse the video's flouting maxim. Jackie Chan and the two GMA hosts violated all four maxims. Quantity and manner maxims were the most flouted. The study also

identified maxim flouting rationales, which helped generate enjoyable communication and explain more. Lasiana and Mubarak (2020) examine pragmatics in Ruby Spark's flouting maxim domain. This study seeks to identify the sort of maxims the characters in the film break. This investigation utilises Grice's (1972) theory. This research uses qualitative descriptive methods. Data is collected by observation. The steps are viewing Ruby Spark while talking. Four sorts of flouting maxims appear in the film. Eight data for flouting quantity, one for quality, four for relevance, and three for way. The maximum amount is the most common flouting since they intended to provide more information.

Firda, Hidayat, Alek, and Nurhalimah (2021) analyse a discussion to find flouting of maxims. This study analysed data using Grice's cooperative principle of flouting maxim (Geis et al., 1976). The flouting maxims are quality, quantity, relation, and manner. This qualitative study used the video chat from the Sapa Indonesia Malam talk show as analysis material and extracted data. This research used transcripts of hosts and Jerinx as a guest star, disobeying maxims. The Discourse Analysis maxim was flouted to analyse the data. This research seeks to identify the most common flouting of maxims in video conversations and investigate their causes. The researchers identified the talk show's flouting of maxims and categorised them by guests' comments. After that, researchers examined specified kinds. The investigation identified related maximum violations. Nine speakers flouted 50% maxims of relation, and the four data had the most grounds for being in the discourse.

Hossain (2021) examines significant characters' statements in *My Sister's Keeper* to uncover the expression and aim of flouting and violating the quality. This analysis uses qualitative descriptive methods. *My Sister's Keeper* book was utilised for data. The data came from key characters' remarks that violated quality. Five tactics revealed characteristics of flouting and breaking the quality maxim in big character statements. The strategies are exaggeration, metaphor, irony, banter, and deception. Major characters in this story employed metaphor. Metaphor helped characters emphasise their argument and communicate their perspective. The examination of five techniques showed seven reasons for flouting and

breaching quality maximisation (Noertjahjo, Arifin, & Ariani, 2017). Every person needs to communicate to maintain good social and professional relationships. We interact and comprehend each other in our daily lives. Paul Grice's cooperation principle hypothesis explains daily communication. The Grecian idea of conversational implicature is reviewed in this article to highlight major results, recognised issues, and desirable additions or adjustments. This study discusses how to meet the cooperative principle in communication, based on Paul Grice's implicature theory, one of pragmatics' most fundamental contributions.

Gustary and Anggraini (2021) examine the "UP!" characters' violation of maxims. The movie's protagonists' flouting maxims and techniques are examined. Cutting's theory (2002) examines maxim-flouting techniques. The researcher also collected data qualitatively. The results highlighted two key findings. The movie has four flouting maxims: quantity, quality, relation, and manner. Flouting quality maxims was ranked top because characters purposefully state something incorrect. Second, the movie has eleven maxim-flouting tactics. Limited information, excessive information, exaggeration, metaphor, irony, banter, sarcasm, irrelevance, shifting the topic, and obscurity are the methods. The approach employed to violate maxims gave too much information. It happened because characters always provide more information than needed.

Tasyarasita and Wibowo (2022) examine how characters in "All The Bright Places" defy maxims in power and social distance situations. This research also aims to determine why maxims are violated. Qualitative research is used. Words, phrases, and statements that violate movie characters' maxims are the data source for this research. The data were analysed using Grice's cooperative principle theory, Cutting's maxim-flouting strategies, Leech's politeness illocutionary functions, and Brown and Levinson's social context theory. The research discovered that characters' statements defy four maxims: number, quality, style, and relevancy. The maxims were violated just three times for competitive, collaborative, and conflictive reasons. Flouting the quality maxim is the most popular motivation to disrespect the standard, along with competitiveness.

Al-Shboul (2022) examines how and why Jordanians violate Grice's (1975) cooperative principle conversational maxims (quality, quantity, relation, and style) in daily discussions. Much research has examined speakers' non-observance of conversational maxims in ordinary talks. This study aims to advance pragmatic theory by illuminating Jordanian speakers' new pragmatic strategies of flouting maxims and classifying them according to Grice's maxims to develop a framework that can help researchers classify data into pragmatic strategies and linguistic forms based on maxim flouting and how it works. This study also seeks to demonstrate how nonobservance aids in meaning comprehension and strengthens Jordanian speakers' connections. This survey also finds the most common maxims broken in ordinary talks. Jordanian speakers ignore maxims as a guideline for an illustration they give for good objectives to preserve and build social connectedness. This research also provides more detailed explanations of flouting's dimensions, using micro, meso, and macro ideas to show how Jordanian Arabic speakers and hearers use implicature to achieve social aims.

In Ernest Hemingway's short tale "A Clean, Well-lighted Place," Ikawati (2022) examines conversational maxims that are broken. Content analysis is used in this qualitative research. Study results show two key findings. First, 27 (54%) of the 50 data contain flouted conversational maxims. Eleven data points (40.74%) violate the criterion of relevance, whereas four data points (14.81%) flout the maxim of style. The optimum of quantity and quality has 7 (25.93%) and 5 (18.52%) floutings. Second, the speaker dodges such maxims to avoid being rude when discussing the short story's themes of darkness, loneliness, old age, and emptiness. The speaker attempts to hide by breaking the quality rule. The speaker avoids disputing unfavourable viewpoints by violating the quantity maxim. The speaker breaks the quality maxim to keep the discussion going and hides the manner of the maxim. Interlocutors occasionally violate conversational maxims, which does not indicate they don't want to continue, but it is another strategy to minimise breakdowns. According to the study, both interlocutors must believe that successful communication requires them to cooperate and

maintain communication by following conversational maxims or breaking them for certain reasons.

Lapadjawa, Samola, and Kamagi (2022) examine Game of Thrones Season 1 maxims violated. This study uses descriptive qualitative methods. This research uses maxim-flouting Game of Thrones character utterances. The info comes from Game of Thrones and its narrative. Watching the TV show, reading the script, and taking notes on maxim-breaking lines collect the data. The data reveal that TV series characters break all four maxims 19 times. The characters most often violate the relation maxim. Nine times, the characters break the maxim of maxim. The quality maxim ranks second six times. The next quality maxim is quantity, with three instances. The method maxim, which appears just once, is the least violated of all four.

Hamidah, Arifin, and Ariani (2022) analyse character maxim flouting and why in *The Help*. This research employed qualitative content analysis. Data came from *The Help* script. The data were character conversations and statements that broke maxims. The researcher uncovered 32 data sets that violated all four maxims: quantity, quality, relevance, and method. The characters broke the maxims for competitive, convivial, collaborative, and conflictive reasons. Quality maxims were most often violated and conflicted with caustic remarks. The characters were caustic because the interlocutors continued talking about the speaker's dislikes, such as marriage and low-paying jobs.

Anyelina and Firmawan (2022) say People need communication in their daily lives. People communicate to tell, inform, and ask anything. Conversation is one way individuals communicate. When two people speak their native language, conversation can begin. Movies show more than just talking. Moviegoers sometimes break the Cooperative Principle. They may overstate, understate, lie, or raise unimportant topics. This research aims to determine the sorts and prominent flouting maxims employed at Hotel Transylvania. This study is descriptive and qualitative. The researcher used Grice's theory to analyse Hotel Transylvania data. The researcher found 40 maxim violations utilising the theory. The findings demonstrate four categories of flouting maxims: amount (5 data), quality (12 data), relation

(18 data), and method (5 data). In Hotel Transylvania, relation-flouting maxims dominate (18 data).

Four maxims from H.P. Grice's 1975 cooperative principle theory are examined by Sagheer, Nadeem, and Nasir (2023). The goal is to uncover characters that break Grice's maxims in their discussions. Conversational maxims impact social interaction and might lead to misinterpretation. This course will improve comprehension of maxims in daily life and how to avoid violating them to avoid being evaluated for inaccurate interpretations. The study uses descriptive-qualitative methods. This study used movie screenplay data. Researchers evaluated four maxims from movie speech. The movie breaks 39 maxims, according to the findings. The quantity maxim was violated 10 times, or 25%. The quality maxim was violated 10 times, 25%. The method was broken 10 times, or 25%. The relevance maxim was violated seven times (23%). The quantity maxim is most violated.

Astini, Candra, and Marantika (2023) discover *Raya and the Last Dragon's* maxim deviations. The researcher examined *Raya and The Last Dragon's* flouting of maxims using Grice's 1975 theory. This study employed descriptive qualitative research. The study yielded 17 data points. The Flouting Maxim of Quantity 6 data (35%), Quality 3 data (17%), and only 24% of data showed the Flouting Maxim of Relevance and Manner. From those types, the Flouting Maxim of Quantity is the most employed.

Averina (2023) believes that good classroom verbal exchanges occur when both the instructor and students seek to cooperate and contribute to the conversation's goals. This idea is dubbed Grice's conversational maxims in pragmatics. In the classroom, both sides actively break these communication rules. Thus, this study used pragmatic analysis to examine the types of Grice's conversational maxims violated by *Freedom Writers'* main character and the movie's teacher's verbal interactions under the Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories System. The researcher analysed the movie transcript using document analysis. The four maxims were intentionally violated for several reasons, including warning students of the consequences of their actions, encouraging them, avoiding certain topics of discussion, emphasising important messages without

blatantly stating them to the class, and avoiding hurting students' feelings. Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC) showed direct and indirect discussions in the film. This study analyses classroom verbal interactions using Grice's Conversational Maxims and Flanders' Interaction Analysis to show educators and pre-service instructors the necessity of fostering suitable ones.

Saefudin et al. (2025) say the Indonesian film *Dilan 1990* is famous for its passionate language and captivating story. This research uses Grice's Cooperative Principle to analyse the film's flirty remarks, focusing on flouting his four maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relevance, and Manner. Relevance is most often violated (18 occasions, 32%), followed by Quantity (17 instances, 30%), Quality (15 instances, 26%), and Manner (7 instances, 12%). This shows that the protagonists value emotional expression and romance over verbal standards. The flirty remarks use language to build sexual tension and make the picture funny, adding to its attractiveness and cultural relevance. The complexities of teenage passion are illuminated by these findings on pragmatic flouting methods in love discourse and their effects on viewer engagement and narrative success.

Research Methodology

This study used qualitative descriptive methods. Qualitative research explains social processes, according to Hancock (2007). B. Hancock, E. Ockleford, and K. Windridge (2007). A descriptive study examines a circumstance, condition, or issue. The study is titled "Analysing Flouting Maxims in *The Dear Departed* by Stanley Houghton." It analyses Stanley Houghton's *Dear Departed* characters' pragmatic techniques to question maxims and evaluates which maxims they violate.

Research Design

This research follows these steps: The researcher looked online for Stanley Houghton's *The Dear Departed* PDF (<https://www.successcds.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Class-10-English-Literature-Reader-Unit-12-The-Dear-Departed.pdf>). Second, the researcher read *The Dear Departed* by Stanley Houghton and coded the lines between the

dialogues of the characters who broke the maxims: MRS. SLATER and MRS. JORDAN, their sisters; HENRY and BEN JORDAN, their husbands; VICTORIA SLATER, their daughter; and ABEL MERRYWEATHER, their father.

Text (Primary, secondary)

Data is research material. The data source is the subject. This study analyses pragmatic strategies used to examine Stanley Houghton's *The Dear Departed* data to question maxims and determine which maxims the characters violated. This research used PDF text (taken from <https://www.successcds.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Class-10-English-Literature-Reader-Unit-12-The-Dear-Departed.pdf>) and conversation text (in the appendix) between Mrs. Slater and Mrs. Jordan as sisters, Henry and Ben Jordan as their husbands, and Victoria Slater as the daughter of the departed by Stanley Houghton (PDF) to find out Maxim's flouting. Research was an observer. The researcher studied library books to find references on Grice's cooperative principles (1975) and its maxims in a pragmatic subject. Abel Merryweather, father of Mrs. Slater and Mrs. Jordan. The researcher employed "note-taking" to observe Stanley Houghton's talk in *The Beloved Departed* (Asif et al., 2019).

Theoretical Framework

This study used qualitative descriptive methods. Qualitative research explains social processes, according to Hancock (2007). B. Hancock, E. Ockleford, and K. Windridge (2007). A descriptive study examines a circumstance, condition, or issue. The study is titled "Analysing Flouting Maxims in *The Dear Departed* by Stanley Houghton." The most often flouted maxims in this research are examined.

Grice's Cooperative Principle and Conversational Maxims

Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, which postulates that dialogue participants typically follow common standards for effective communication, is the basis of conversational analysis in pragmatics. Grice used four conversational maxims to explain this:

1. **Maximum Quality:** According to Grice (1975, p. 46), speakers should be truthful and refrain from making claims they don't have sufficient information to support or that they perceive to be untrue. Characters in *The Dear Departed* regularly transgress this by making false statements about the departed and displaying excessive grief.
2. **Maximum Quantity:** Information in contributions should not be either more or less than what is necessary (Grice, 1975, p. 45). When characters purposefully omit important inheritance details, the drama exhibits violations.
3. **Maximum of Relation:** Presenters ought to add pertinent information (Grice, 1975, p. 46). This is frequently disregarded by Houghton's characters, who frequently change the subject suddenly when faced with difficult realities.
4. **Maxim of Manner:** Orderly communication should steer clear of ambiguity and obscurity (Grice, 1975, p. 46). This is regularly broken by the Slater family by using ambiguous language regarding Abel's purported passing.

These maxims establish "an unspoken contract of expected behaviour" (p. 63), which, as Thomas (2013) points out in *Meaning in Interaction*, has particular pragmatic repercussions when broken. Through mismatched communication, *The Dear Departed*'s deliberate flouting accomplishes two goals: it reveals character psychology and establishes the dark humorous tone of the play.

Data Analysis

1. **"We found he was dead." Mrs. Slater: "Your father sent them a telegram as soon as we found he was dead."**

In the excerpt, Mrs. Slater states, "Your father sent them a telegram as soon as we found he was dead." This statement goes against Grice's maxims of quantity and quality, which he first wrote about in 1975.

Grice says that the maxim of quality says that the speaker shouldn't state something they think is untrue, and the maxim of quantity says that the speaker should give as much information as required but not more than necessary (Grice, 1975). Mrs. Slater breaks both of these rules on purpose. She first says something she knows isn't true: that Abel

Merryweather is dead. This goes against the principle of quality since she gives misleading information on purpose to change the circumstances. Second, she breaks the rule of quantity by leaving out the important data that Grandpa is still living.

This flouting is planned: Mrs. Slater wants her husband, Henry, to figure out her hidden goal, which is that this lie is vital to get an edge over her sister, Elizabeth. Grice (1975) says that speakers break maxims to make implicatures, which are meanings that go beyond what is spoken. The implication here is that Mrs. Slater plans to tell the story of Grandpa's death to keep control of his things and deal with Elizabeth's arrival and response. The deception also supports the play's silly tone, which shows how hypocritical and greedy the characters are for pretending to be sad. So, Mrs. Slater's breaking of the rules serves not only her own immediate needs but also the play's larger satirical attack on social pretensions and family opportunism.

2. “Get your boots off... Elizabeth’s that prying...” Mrs. Slater: “Get your boots off... Elizabeth’s that prying, she notices the least speck of dirt.”

Mrs. Slater’s directive, “Get your boots off... Elizabeth's”, that prying—she notices the least speck of dirt—is a clear violation of the Maxim of Relation (Grice, 1975). The comment seems to be about hygiene and how people look in public, but in the larger context of *The Dear Departed*, it points to a far deeper plan.

At this point in the play, the characters are all together pretending to be sad for their "Grandpa," who they think is dead. Mrs. Slater suddenly goes from grief to being very careful about how things look. By telling Victoria to take off her boots, she takes the focus off the main topic—Grandpa's health or absence—and instead focuses on little concerns of propriety and social status. This rapid change is not just naïve advice on how to clean; it is a deliberate move away from relevance to suit other purposes.

Mrs. Slater breaks the Relation maxim by saying something that seems irrelevant, which creates an implicature. The suggested connotation is that looking clean and polite is more essential than actually being sad or grieving: She is getting ready for

Aunt Elizabeth's visit, but she is more worried about impressing or outdoing her socially.

The comment shows that there is a competitive purpose behind it, quietly letting Victoria know (and reminding herself) that putting up a collected, polished face is part of the larger game of social rivalry and inheritance manoeuvring.

Grice (1975) says that when someone talks about something that doesn't seem to be related, listeners assume there must be a hidden significance or rationale. In this situation, the hidden meaning shows how hypocritical the family is: they pretend to be sad while truly trying to look better than everyone else and get ready to inherit Grandpa's things. The worry about cleanliness is a way to control how things seem, not real pain.

3. “My heart’s fit to break...” Mrs. Slater: “My heart’s fit to break when I see the little trifles...”

Grice (1975) says that flouting a maxim happens when a speaker breaks one of the four conversational maxims (quantity, quality, relation, and style) on purpose, such that the listener knows they are breaking it and looks for an implicit meaning, or implicature. Mrs Slater's words, "My heart's fit to break when I see the little trifles," clearly go against both the maxim of quantity and the maxim of quality. According to Grice's maxim of quantity, a speaker should give as much information as is needed but no more (Grice, 1975). Mrs. Slater is showing more emotion than the circumstance calls for, which fills the discussion space with too much, overdone sadness. At the same time, she goes against the rule of quality, which says that speakers should not say something they think is untrue. Mrs. Slater says that seeing her dead father's things makes her heart "fit to break," yet it's evident from the context that her real worry isn't sadness but getting her hands on the things before her sister gets there.

Mrs. Slater is trying to make her loss seem worse so that the others would understand why she wants to move and take her father's things as a way to mourn instead of being greedy. This intentional untruth makes the listener (and the audience) think about what's going on under the surface, which creates a lot of dramatic irony that reveals her manipulative and selfish personality. So, breaking these rules brings out

the main themes of hypocrisy and consumerism in the play.

4. “You’d better wear these slippers of grandfather’s...” Mrs. Slater: “Here! You’d better wear these slippers of your grandfather’s now...”

In Gricean terminology, flouting a maxim is not only breaking it by mistake or on purpose, but doing so on purpose to make an implicature that the listener can figure out (Grice, 1975). In the quotation, Mrs. Slater says, “Here! You’d better wear these slippers of your grandfather’s now...” This statement goes against both the quality and manner maxims.

Grice (1975) says that the principle of quality says that people shouldn't say things that they think are incorrect or that they don't have enough proof for. Mrs. Slater doesn't say it directly, but she tells Henry that it's okay for him to wear the slippers since they are now his (in other words, Grandpa doesn't need them anymore). But this is not true since she took the slippers before Grandpa was officially certified dead, and even more importantly, he is not dead at all. So, Mrs. Slater goes against Quality by saying something she knows is false: that Henry can wear these slippers right now.

Also, she goes against the Manner principle, which says that people should be clear and organised and not be vague (Grice, 1975). The way she says it hides the real reason she wants Henry to wear the slippers: not because she cares about him, but because she doesn't want her sister Elizabeth to see them and think they belong to Grandpa and accuse Mrs. Slater of acting too hastily to take his things. Mrs. Slater thinks that Henry will understand her true motivation—hiding their opportunistic behaviour—by disguising it with a casual command (“You’d better wear these slippers...”). This creates an implication of collaboration and concealment.

So, this flouting hides Mrs. Slater's opportunism while also letting Henry know how urgent and secretive their deed is. Grice (1975) said that this kind of flouting makes the listener “read between the lines,” which means to figure out what the speaker really means. In this case, the breaking of the rules provides the basis for the play's larger satirical look at avarice and hypocrisy in the family, showing the difference

between courteous words on the surface and morally problematic private motivation.

5. “I always wanted ... that bureau ... after he died.” Mrs. Slater: “I’ve been thinking about that bureau of grandfather’s ... I always wanted to have it after he died.”

Mrs. Slater says in this portion of *The Dear Departed*, “I’ve been thinking about that bureau of grandfather’s...” After he died, I always wanted to have it. At first glance, this statement sounds like a casual look back at her prior wish for a family inheritance. But when you look at it via Grice's (1975) cooperative principle and conversational maxims, it's apparent that Mrs. Slater is breaking the rules of quality (be honest) and manner (be explicit, avoid ambiguity) on purpose to have a certain social impact.

Mrs. Slater first says that she “always wanted” the bureau after her grandpa died. This makes it sound like her desire is natural and not evil. But in this case—she is deliberately intending to move the bureau upstairs before her sister comes, and while Grandpa is thought to be dead—her explanation hides the selfish and cruel nature of what she did. So, she breaks the rule of quality by giving a false reason.

Second, the phrases “I’ve been thinking” and “always wanted” are imprecise and don't answer the question, which goes against the rule of Manner. She doesn't admit to stealing the bureau outright; instead, she hides her crime behind a sentimental longing she's had for a long time, which makes her behaviour seem less unethical.

Grice (1975) says that this kind of flouting creates implicature: the listener thinks that Mrs. Slater is not just remembering but also justifying and legitimising her sneaky plot. This, in a way, shows how hypocritical and greedy the family is, which is the main thesis of the play: that people are morally corrupt even when they seem courteous.

6. “He must have been wandering.” Mrs. Jordan: “He must have been wandering.”

Mrs. Jordan's statement, “He must have been wandering” in Stanley Houghton's play *The Dear Departed*, is a famous example of breaking Grice's dictum of relation (Grice, 1975). Grice says that the maxim of relation (or relevance says that what people

say in a discussion should be relevant to what is already being said. If someone breaks this rule, it doesn't mean they're just off-topic; it means they're giving an answer that seems irrelevant on purpose so that the listener can understand the implicature (Grice, 1975).

Mrs. Slater and Mrs. Jordan are talking about their father's peculiar comment, which suggested that he could have been suspicious or aware of anything before the claimed "death." Mrs. Jordan brushes off the elderly man's statements by saying, "He must have been wandering," which suggests that he was confused because he was old. She doesn't even consider that they may be true or important. At first glance, this reply seems dismissive and not really important to the circumstance at hand, which is the potential that the father knew something or was making a valid point. Mrs. Jordan's disregard for relevancy secretly shows that she wants to avoid looking more closely at what the father said, because doing so may ruin the sisters' opportunistic plan to get their father's things.

The implication is that the father's statements don't deserve any further consideration; instead, they should be ignored as the muddled ramblings of an old man. This method efficiently lessens any moral or emotional issues that can come up from presenting the father's things as up for grabs, which protects the sisters' interests. Grice (1975) said that when people act this way, it frequently makes others think about what they really want to say or do, in this case, Mrs. Jordan's wish to suppress unpleasant connotations and preserve her financial interests.

7. Inventing a dead "relation", Mrs. Slater: "No one you know, father. A relation of Ben's." Ben: "Er-Fred-Alb-Isaac." They attribute death to a fictitious "brother."

In the recounted conversation from *The Dear Departed*, Mrs. Slater and Ben purposely break the rule of quality, which Grice (1975) described as the idea that you shouldn't say something you think is incorrect or for which you don't have enough proof. When Grandpa Abel suddenly comes back to life and asks why the grief and commotion about him, Mrs. Slater makes up the story that the "dead" person is "a relation of Ben's." Ben stammers forth random names: "Er-Fred-Alb-Isaac." This joint falsehood is clear

and unlikely, as Ben can't even come up with a consistent name. Grice's theory of implicature says that when people blatantly break the rules of quality, it means that they anticipate the person listening (in this case, Abel) to figure out the truth behind the lie—that they are hiding something.

But the speakers here are using the flouting to deal with a social issue right away: they want to keep Abel from finding out about the horrible show they put on in front of him in case he dies and give them time to change their behaviour. Ben's made-up names are so silly that they make the characters' moral flaws and immorality stand out in a funny way. Grice (1975) said that when someone breaks a maxim instead of just following it, the speaker wants the listener to notice the breaking and understand what it means. Here, the audience (including Grandpa) sees how silly their act is, which shows how the play makes fun of how families hide their greed and selfishness behind fake politeness.

8. "He was too honourable to have 'gone' without paying his premium." Mrs. Jordan: "He was too honourable to have 'gone' without paying his premium."

Mrs. Jordan's comment, "He was too honourable to have gone' without paying his premium," is a perfect example of a quality maxim articulated, and it has a lot of practical meaning. According to Grice's Maxim of Quality, speakers shouldn't state something they think is wrong or for which they don't have enough proof (Grice, 1975). In this scenario, the literal meaning of what was said is obviously wrong: death ("going") can't be linked to an insurance payment. In the usual sense, no one pays for death. Instead, premiums are paid ahead of time, not after someone dies. The assertion is ridiculous and impossible to happen.

Mrs. Jordan is going against the rule of quality on purpose by making something that is impossible seem like it is true. She doesn't want to be honest; instead, she employs exaggeration to make fun of her and her sister's mercenary attitude towards their father's death. The phrase "too honourable to have...without paying" is not meant to be taken literally; it is designed for the audience (and the characters) to understand her underlying message: that they are not honest

mourners, but people who are calculating and happy about the insurance payment.

Mrs. Jordan makes a kind of sarcastic confession by ignoring Quality in this way. The implication of the statement is that the family is not interested in the natural sadness or recollection of the dead person, but in the money they would make from his death. Grice's theory says that a clear lie like this one makes the listener think about what the speaker really means, which is that they are motivated by money, instead of taking the statement at face value (Grice, 1975).

This over-the-top comment sums up the play's parody of middle-class hypocrisy. Mrs. Jordan's fake admiration of her father's "honour" is a cover for how happy she is that he is ready for money. The flout shows how cynical and self-aware she is; she knows they are taking advantage of her. It also shows how family members may mislead each other: she expects the others to get what she means without questioning how silly it is.

Mrs. Jordan's statement is a planned violation of the quality principle; it's an intentional lie that implies that the family values money over real anguish. She makes fun of her own collaborators and shows what really drove them to act the way they did through exaggeration. She does this to make the play's main point stronger and to get readers to look between the lines, which is exactly what Grice's theory of implicature says to do.

9. Mocking the doctor's attendance on the dead Mrs. Slater: "Pringle attended him when he was alive and Pringle shall attend him when he's dead."

Mrs. Slater goes against Grice's Maxim of Quality when she says, "Pringle attended him when he was alive, and Pringle shall attend him when he's dead." This means that speakers should not declare anything they think is incorrect or don't have enough proof for (Grice, 1975). Mrs. Slater says that the doctor, Pringle, who took care of the grandpa when he was alive, should likewise "attend" him now that he is said to be dead. At first glance, this phrase is false; dead people don't need medical attention, and a doctor wouldn't "attend" a corpse in the ordinary sense. Mrs. Slater knows that this doesn't make sense, which shows that she is deliberately breaking the rule.

Grice (1975) says that when someone breaks a maxim, instead of just breaking it, they want the audience to understand something beyond the literal meaning. The implication is both ironic and defensive: Mrs. Slater uses the sarcastic comment to prevent having to contact another doctor and to avoid having to answer to anybody else in the room who could be questioning how they are treating Grandfather's illness. She makes fun of the rules that govern death while also showing how little the family cares about traditional mourning practices. This shows how the play makes fun of bourgeois hypocrisy: the family cares more about property and appearances than showing real respect for the dead. So, Mrs. Slater's response serves as both an excuse and a sarcastic comment. This shows how breaking a rule can lead to rich implications that disclose hidden motivations and criticism of society (Grice, 1975).

10. Denying theft of the bureau and clock, Mrs. Slater (after Abel confronts): "Be quiet, Elizabeth." Elizabeth: "Nothing short of robbery."

In this scene from Stanley Houghton's *The Dear Departed*, Mrs. Slater suddenly begs Elizabeth to "be quiet" after Elizabeth says that removing her grandfather's clock and bureau is "nothing short of robbery." Grice's (1975) theory of conversational implicature says that flouting a maxim happens when a speaker breaks one of the rules for cooperative communication on purpose, hoping that the listener will figure out what they mean by the seeming infringement.

Mrs. Slater goes against the Manner principle, which says that you should avoid being vague and unclear and instead be clear and orderly (Grice, 1975). Instead of responding directly to Elizabeth's severe complaint, Mrs. Slater quickly tells her to keep quiet with an order. This statement is neither clear nor organised; it aims to end the topic rather than clarify or settle it. The flouting creates an implicature: that Mrs. Slater is guilty of the "robbery" that Elizabeth says she is and wants to keep it from being known to the public.

This event has a big influence on the story and the theme. It shows how hypocritical and morally dishonest Mrs. Slater is by showing how far she will go to preserve her selfish theft of her grandfather's things. The audience may see that Mrs. Slater is acting out of

fear and self-interest since she breaks the Manner maxim. The sudden silence also shows how the play criticises bourgeois respectability, where politeness and family "propriety" hide avarice and lies. So, the flout serves two purposes: it keeps the character from being exposed right away, and it shows the character's deeper reasons, showing how conversational implicature may show important societal truths that aren't always spoken (Grice, 1975).

11. "Victoria, if that's your aunt and uncle, don't open the door till I come down."

Mrs. Slater's words, "Victoria, if that's your aunt and uncle, don't open the door until I come down," are a clear example of breaking the rule of Relation, which H. P. Grice defined in *Logic and Conversation* (1975). The principle of Relation says that those who are talking should only share knowledge that is directly related to the discourse at hand. The main thing going on here is meant to be mourning: the death of Abel Merryweather, the elderly father of Mrs. Slater and Mrs. Jordan. In this situation, you would anticipate Mrs. Slater to be busy with her sadness, making funeral plans, or getting emotional assistance. But when she tells her daughter to wait before letting Elizabeth and Ben in, she is purposely changing the subject from sadness to something else: manipulating time and perception for her own gain. Mrs. Slater breaks the rule of relation, which leads the spectator to think that she has a secret goal: she needs time to move things around in her house (especially the clock and bureau) so that they look like they always belonged to her. On the surface, the remark is a neutral home rule, but the implication, which both the audience and maybe other characters can understand, is one of purposeful deceit. This act of breaking the rules makes the satirical criticism of family greed in *The Dear Departed* much stronger. Grice (1975) said that those who do this "do it with the intention of prompting the hearer to look for a conversational implicature." In this scenario, the implication shows that Mrs. Slater is dishonest and takes advantage of situations. Instead of grieving for her father, she is more worried about getting anything of value before her sister can fight for it. The consequence is dramatic irony: the protagonists act morally, but their actual reasons are made clear by

practical hints, such as the wrong use of relevance. This not only helps the play's social satire, but it also shows how Gricean theory works.

12. "Victoria, Victoria! D'ye hear? Come in, will you?"

Grice (1975) says that the maxim of style says that what you say in a discussion should be clear, organised, and devoid of unneeded confusion or abruptness. Mrs. Slater breaks this rule in this quote by using a sudden, harsh, and authoritative tone that goes against the rules of discourse and creates an emotionally charged atmosphere. "Victoria, Victoria!" she yelled over and over, followed by the command "D'ye hear?" "Come in, will you?" shows that the speaker is getting more impatient and worried and wants to take charge of the matter. This flouting is planned, not by mistake. The over-the-top sense of urgency suggests that Mrs. Slater isn't just calling Victoria for a normal reason; she's also worried about a delicate situation—probably because of her father's sudden (assumed) death and the rush to collect his goods before other family members arrive. Her rudeness isn't real aggressiveness; it's a way for her to show that she's feeling more emotional and, indirectly, that the activity at hand is important or secret. The implication that Victoria (and the audience) got was that time is important and that they should do what they are told without question. Mrs. Slater breaks the rule of manners, which shows psychological stress and her control over the home, which shows how dysfunctional the family is. It's not simply a mother contacting her daughter; it's a power play that looks like an emergency but is really a way to show worry and hidden intent.

13. Misleading Comment About Family Traits Henry: "I suppose it's in the family." Mrs. Slater (snaps): "What do you mean by that, Henry Slater?" Henry says, "I guess it's in the family," and Mrs. Slater snaps back, "What do you mean by that, Henry Slater?" According to Grice (1975), the principle of connection says that contributions to a discourse must be relevant to it. Henry's reply here goes against this rule. Henry doesn't openly talk about the problem of transferring the grandfather's clock and bureau.

Instead, he makes a general comment that hints at a family habit of avarice or opportunism. The implication is that Mrs. Slater's actions—claiming their father's things before his funeral—are not a one-time thing but a familial characteristic that may also be present in Mrs. Jordan or even in Henry himself.

Grice (1975) thought that speakers often break maxims on purpose to create conversational implicatures, hoping that listeners will read between the lines. Henry's flouting has two effects here: it criticises Mrs. Slater's opportunism and keeps him at a distance by pretending to be impartial. Mrs. Slater's angry answer ("What do you mean by that...?") shows that she is sensitive to being attacked and suggests that Henry's suggestion hit a nerve, threatening to reveal the family's hypocrisy. This flouting is a subtle moral reflection on how the family is acting, and Mrs. Slater's reply tries to stop the possible exposure of their avarice.

14. Mrs. Slater: "Chut! Be quiet! It's ours now."

Grice (1975) says that flouting happens when speakers break one of the Cooperative Principle's rules on purpose to get their point across. In other words, they say something that seems uncooperative or wrong, but they want the audience to figure out more from it. In the conversation: Mrs. Slater: "Chut!" Be quiet! "It's ours now."

She breaks the Maxim of Manner, which says that everything should be clear, organised, and not sudden or unclear. The statement "It's ours now," spoken in a strong, forceful tone, goes against these expectations; it is short and to the point instead of courteous or instructive. Mrs. Slater doesn't give any reasons or explanations for her demand; she only depends on the strength of her words and tone. This way of saying "flout" works as a directive, which is a type of speech act that tries to stop any objections right away and make sure everyone follows the rules.

Mrs. Slater's use of this harsh manner shows that she feels guilty about moving the clock. It says that she knows the act is improper or suspicious, but she uses her power and the strain of the moment to force everyone to be quiet. The suddenness makes it hard for people to ask further questions or disagree. Grice says that this behaviour, which is meant to be uncooperative, leads to a stronger implicature: the

audience thinks that there is something to hide, something that can't be ethically or socially justified. The effect on both the characters and the viewers is really strong. Family members are scared; the theft is made legal by power instead of reason, and the spectator sees how hypocritical and morally corrupt Mrs. Slater's actions are.

In this way, Mrs. Slater's disregard for Manner is not an accident but a deliberate act: it is a useful weapon for forced concealing. It makes her speech a weapon of strategy: it takes control of the situation, silences opposition, and leaves no space for clarification. This shows that Grice's notion of implicature goes beyond polite lying. Even rude, sudden demands can have a hidden communication logic that sends meaning by not explaining things in order to hide wrongdoing.

15. "...with your grandfather lying dead and cold upstairs..."

Mrs. Slater's statement in *The Dear Departed*, 'with your grandpa lying dead and cold upstairs,' is a great example of breaking both the quantity and quality maxims that H. P. Grice spoke about in his famous work *Logic and Conversation* (1975). Grice says that people usually follow conversational rules to communicate clearly, but when they break a rule, they do so on purpose to make an implicature that the listener has to figure out. In this scenario, Mrs. Slater goes against the rule of quality by saying something she knows isn't true: that the grandpa is dead. In reality, he is living upstairs. This intentional lie isn't designed to trick Victoria into believing something that isn't true; it's meant to control how she feels and acts. Mrs. Slater doesn't tell the truth about the circumstance (that the grandpa merely looked dead and is now alive), which goes against the rule of Quantity. This creates a deliberate lack of information. The result of this double flouting is significant. Mrs. Slater exploits the emotional weight of alleged death, especially the words "cold and dead," to set up a dramatic, sombre setting where she can control Victoria and explain why she and Henry did things that were not right (such as getting Grandpa's things too soon). Mrs. Slater also avoids confrontation, keeps her made-up story going, and seeks to get the moral high ground before her sister arrives by tricking Victoria into embracing this false

reality. Thus, the sentence not only highlights how conversational maxims may be purposefully flouted for manipulation but also underscores the themes of avarice, hypocrisy, and familial breakdown at the centre of Houghton's satire.

16. "Be off now, and change your dress ... It would never do for them to find you in colours."

The quote "Be off now, and change your dress..." Mrs. Slater tells her daughter Victoria early on in *The Dear Departed*, "It would never do for them to find you in colours." At first glance, this seems like a typical motherly piece of advice based on etiquette that stresses the significance of wearing black or muted colours after a relative's reported death. However, the underlying objective shows that the speaker is intentionally breaking Grice's Maxim of Manner, which says that speakers should not be unclear, ambiguous, or unnecessarily oblique in their discourse (Grice, 1975).

The directive may seem to be based on politeness, but its real purpose is to change how things seem. Mrs. Slater doesn't really care about proper mourning or being honest about her feelings; she just wants to make sure that the relatives who come to visit see a carefully crafted image of grief. This will make it seem like her family has a right to Grandpa Abel's things before they die. The flouting is in the way she uses euphemisms and indirect language; she doesn't say, "Put on mourning to make it look like we care," but she does talk about "colours" and what "would never do."

This makes the viewer think that Victoria must not be unhappy when she dresses up, but that it is all part of a rehearsed show. The courteous and vague language is a planned way to trick others, which goes against the rule of manner that says you should hide lies behind social norms. The flout eventually strengthens the play's scathing criticism of Victorian hypocrisy, when outer respectability hides moral deterioration and form is more important than feeling.

Conclusion

By following two key objectives, this study seeks to do a thorough pragmatic analysis of Stanley Houghton's *The Dear Departed*:

The primary objective of the study aims at how characters purposefully transgress Grice's cooperative ideals by using a variety of pragmatic devices, such as sarcasm, irony, evasion techniques, and strategic ambiguity. We examine how these language devices function as means of exposing the characters' fundamental motivations and interpersonal dynamics through in-depth textual analysis. The secondary goal methodically assesses the frequency and type of maxims that are broken, paying special attention to: The majority of Quality maxim violations involve false remarks and fake emotions, Infractions of the Relation maxim through topic diversion and irrelevant responses, strategic violations of the Manner maxim through ambiguous or cryptic language, and Quantity maxim transgressions including exaggeration or information suppression. In addition to highlighting Houghton's dramatic skill in using conversational violations to criticise Edwardian social hypocrisy, this dual-focused method established a hierarchy of maxim flouting that mirrors the characters' most important lies. The study specifically looks at why, in the play's examination of familial greed, Quality maxim violations appear to be the most common type of verbal manipulation.

Findings

Through calculated manipulation and deliberate disregard for conversational maxims, the characters in Stanley Houghton's *The Dear Departed* consistently transgress Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principles. By examining these violations, the study draws attention to the characters' dishonesty, emotional inconsistency, and preference for self-interest over open communication. Functions and Frequency of Flouted Maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner are the four Gricean maxims that are flouted to varied degrees. Quality is violated the most (10 times), followed by Manner (6), Relation (3), and Quantity (3).

Every infraction has a unique dramatic and thematic function:

Quality Maxim: Most frequently violated by sarcasm, fake grief, open deception, and deceptive remarks (such as seeming to be grieving in order to hide avarice).

Manner Maxim: Violated by being abrupt, speaking under pressure, and purposefully ambiguous in order to hide facts or control discussions.

Relation Maxim: Disregarded in order to escape responsibility through red herrings, topic evasion, and erroneous logical linkages.

Quantity Maxim: The least violated, although characters may inflate facts or omit important elements to influence viewers' opinions.

The play's criticism of familial deceit and the decline of societal authenticity is emphasised by these infractions. While violations of Manner and Relation expose the characters' chaotic, self-serving dynamics, the characters' widespread disregard for Quality—particularly through performative lies—reflects their moral bankruptcy. Quantity breaches are uncommon, indicating that the family's greed is obvious and calls for less omission than direct deception.

The characters don't just break these rules; they break them on purpose to make conversational implicatures (Grice, 1975). The flouting is built into the characters' minds and moral problems. For example, Mrs. Slater breaks the Maxim of Manner when she exclaims, "Chut!" and then says, "Shut up! It's ours now," speaking abruptly to stop any opposition and to express guilt, which serves as a covert admission of her crime.

Realistic Tools Used to Break Rules

Characters utilise several practical tactics that make it easier to break the rules and raise the dramatic tension:

Irony and sarcasm: Mrs. Slater's comment about Pringle going to Abel 'after he's dead' makes fun of medical professionalism, goes against quality, and shows that she is cynical.

Blame Evasion: Characters often break the rules of relation by changing the subject or blaming Abel's behaviour (for example, "He must have been wandering") to make their ethically dubious actions seem okay.

Euphemism and Vagueness: Phrases like "I always wanted the bureau after he died" hide greed behind politeness, which is against manners.

Emotional Overstatement: Saying things like "My heart's fit to break" when you're sad is an example of emotional overstatement that goes against Quantity and Quality.

Commands and Silencing: "Be quiet!" is an example of a command. "It's ours now", breaks Manner by enforcing moral silence and avoiding clarity.

Characters use these methods not only for dramatic impact but also as language tools to control, trick, and manipulate other people in the family.

Limitations the study

Even while it has some good points, this research has some major flaws:

Single Text Scope: The study only looks at *The Dear Departed*. Without more comparative studies, the results may not apply to other dramatic works.

Lack of Performance Context: The analysis is limited to textual data and doesn't take into account stage direction, tone, or body language, which might imply that it misses layers of meaning that are transmitted through performance.

Subjective categorisation: To find a maxim that is flouting, you need to use your judgement. Some statements break more than one maxim at once or change depending on the situation.

Cultural and Time Constraints: The social conventions of British society in the early 20th century, which affect how people are courteous and use sarcasm, are not talked about very much.

Importance of the study

This study shows how useful Gricean pragmatics can be for looking at theatrical texts. It shows how playwrights like Stanley Houghton employ non-cooperative dialogue to: Show why a character does what they do, build moral conflict, and Critique society.

The results show how breaking conversational rules is a sign of deeper moral problems in the family. This method connects linguistic theory with literary criticism, giving us a more nuanced view of how language may be used to tell the truth and lie.

This study also broadens the range of Gricean analysis beyond daily speech to scripted conversation, showing that it is still useful in literary discourse. The study adds to both pragmatic theory and theatrical interpretation by looking at how maxims are used in a planned way.

Practical Implications

1. How to Use in the Classroom: Teachers of literature and linguistics can use this study to assist their students in finding non-literal language, implicatures, and subtext.
2. Actor Training and Directing: People who work in theatre can employ maxim-flouting to figure out subtext and emotional reasons for actions.
3. Discourse Analysis: This method helps us look at how people lie, are courteous, and manipulate one another in both actual and fictitious conversations.
4. Cross-cultural communication helps people grasp how indirect communication is different in different cultures and how implicatures might be misread.
5. Applied Linguistics: This method may also be used to study media discourse, political speeches, and therapeutic conversations, where conversational maxims are often changed.

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