



A Gricean Analysis of Maxim Flouting in Inside Out (2015) and Inside Out 2 (2024) Movie

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Abstract. This study examines the flouting of Gricean maxims in the animated films *Inside Out* (2015) and *Inside Out 2* (2024). Using Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975) as the theoretical framework, this research identifies the types of flouting maxims and analyzes how they contribute to character interactions. A descriptive qualitative method was used to analyze 52 utterances from the movies. The findings show that all four types of maxims were flouted: manner (19 instances), relation (15), quality (9), and quantity (8). The data of this study are the utterances from the movies *Inside Out* (2015) and *Inside Out 2* (2024). These floutings were used by characters to express sarcasm, avoid direct responses, or convey emotions indirectly. For example, characters like Anxiety and Riley often flouted the maxims to reflect inner conflict or nervousness, while others used flouting to create humor or shift the topic. The study concludes that flouting maxims in these films serves not only as a pragmatics device but also strengthens emotional expression and character development. This pragmatic strategy enriches the dialogue and makes character interactions more realistic. By understanding these instances of maxim flouting, viewers and learners can develop better interpretive skills and communication awareness.

Keywords: *Cooperative Principle, Flouting Maxim, Inside Out, Pragmatics.*

INTRODUCTION

Conversation is an important part of human contact since it allows us to convey information while also forming social relationships and expressing emotions. Levinson (1983) defines conversation as spontaneous linguistic encounters between individuals that take place outside of formal settings. However, effective conversation necessitates not just the transmission of information but also the right interpretation of implied meanings. According to Grice (1975), in order to create mutual understanding, speakers and listeners must cooperate by adhering to conversational maxims such as quantity, quality, relation, and manner. However, these maxims are not always followed speakers may deliberately flout them to convey hidden meanings, show sarcasm, or avoid directness, particularly in emotionally charged situations (Nur Imani & Pradipta, 2024).

This study developed from the need to understand how such flouting of conversational maxims effect communication. In both everyday life and fictional narratives, speakers may deliberately break certain conversational norms, not to mislead, but to enhance the meaning or impact of a statement. Characters in animated movies like *Inside Out* (2015) and *Inside Out 2* (2024) frequently break rules to dramatise internal conflict, express complex emotions, or create tension between characters. However, without a strong theoretical foundation, such phenomena may go ignored or misconstrued.

This research applies Grice's Cooperative Principle to identify and analyze flouting maxims in *Inside Out* and *Inside Out 2*. The study follows a qualitative descriptive approach, focusing on how the characters' deliberate flouting of maxims contributes to their interpersonal dynamics. By using this approach, the research intends not only to classify the types of flouting but also to explore the pragmatic functions behind them. The analysis will be conducted through observation of the characters' utterances, supported by contextual interpretation and frequency data, to determine the communicative purposes of each flouting instance.

Although several studies have been conducted on maxim flouting in many cinema genres, including action (*Avengers: Endgame*), fantasy (*Fantastic Beasts*), and romantic comedy (*No Hard Feelings*), the majority of them have merely identified the forms of flouting or the reasoning behind them. Some of these research also used other frameworks, such as Leech's Politeness Principle or Halliday and Hasan's Contextual Theory. However, no one has studied how breaking rules affects the interactions between characters in *Inside Out* and *Inside Out 2*, which are a unique blend of animation, emotional, and adventure genres. This represents a gap that this study aims to fill.

Thus, the aims of this research are: (1) to identify the types of flouting maxims found in the dialogues of *Inside Out* and *Inside Out 2*; and (2) to analyze how those floutings contribute to the characters' interactions in the movie. The projected findings will contribute to a better understanding of pragmatic methods in animated movies, highlight how implicit meanings improve storytelling, and provide useful insights into the role of language in forming character interactions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of conversational maxims, notably the phenomena of maxim flouting introduced by Grice (1975), has sparked widespread scholarly interest, particularly in the subject of pragmatics. Grice's Cooperative Principle, with its four maxims Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner has been widely used to study how speakers manage implied meaning in communication. According to several studies, maxim flouting serves pragmatic objectives such as emphasising emotion, communicating sarcasm, avoiding conflict, and promoting character development in fictional narratives. However, while the fundamental theories are consistent, the application and focus of analysis differ significantly across contexts, genres, and data sources.

Yustika et al. (2022) examined *The Hundred-Foot Journey*, a film that bridges Indian and French cultures, to explore how flouting maxims reflect intercultural literacy. They

found the maxim of quality most frequently flouted, often through metaphor and irony, suggesting that in crosscultural contexts, maxim flouting can highlight social values rather than communication breakdown. This study contributes pedagogically by offering implications for English language teaching, though it stops short of exploring character interaction dynamics.

Khofifah and Marantika (2024) studied *Cinderella* and identified all four categories of flouted maxims, with quantity being the most common. Their research was based not just on Grice's theory, but also on Halliday and Hasan's (1985) context of circumstance, which provided a better understanding of how character roles and social class influenced indirect speech. However, the emphasis remained on the motivations for flouting, rather than an in-depth examination of how these utterances affected the character connections themselves.

Sunggu and Afriana (2020) used a more interaction oriented approach with *Wonder Woman*. They found that the maxim of relation was most frequently flouts, particularly during emotionally charged episodes, serving to indirectly reveal hidden objectives. This study emphasised how flouting is frequently linked to character psychology, but it did not investigate the role of flouting to conversation flow and narrative cohesiveness in a systematic manner.

Other researchers concentrated on certain maxims. Lestari and Firdaus (2021), for example, focused their investigation on the maxim of quantity in *Detective Pikachu*, emphasising how excessively informational responses might nevertheless maintain coherence when backed by shared implicature. This discovery is significant, but it is context dependent, with limited relevance to multidimensional character driven narratives like *Inside Out*.

Several studies, Misiantari et al. (2022) analyzed *Tall Girl* and identified quantity as the most frequently flouted maxim. Several research examined a more holistic approach. Misiantari et al. (2022) investigated Tall Girl and discovered that quantity was the most frequently flouted maxim. Leech's politeness principle strengthened their findings, showing that characters employed flouting not merely to communicate emotion but also to traverse social boundaries. Similarly, Astini et al. (2023) analyzed *Raya and The Last Dragon* and discovered that collaborative goals (such as elaborating or indicating implicitly) dominated the grounds for flouting. While both studies recognised the narrative purpose of flouting, neither investigated the impact on character interaction.

Pratiwi and Maharani (2024) used genre analysis to examine *No Hard Feelings* and discovered that flouting was used strategically for humour, persuasion, and manipulation. Their use of genre awareness gave a sophisticated grasp of how pragmatics intersects with narrative style, even though emotional diversity in the conversation was not a main priority.

In contrast, the current study looks at *Inside Out* (2015) and *Inside Out 2* (2024), two animated movies on emotions portrayed as characters. These movies have rich and varied emotional connections, making them ideal for examining how people defy

conversational norms not just for humour or nuance, but as an essential component of emotional expression and interpersonal negotiation. While earlier research has thoroughly classified flouting kinds, few studies have specifically related those patterns to the evolution of character dynamics. Furthermore, no study has examined the role of maxim flouting in these two films, indicating a clear research gap.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach, suitable for analyzing verbal expressions and implied meanings in natural communication settings. The aim was to explore the types of flouting maxims and examine how they contribute to character interactions in the animated movies *Inside Out* (2015) and *Inside Out 2* (2024). The analysis was grounded in Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, focusing on four conversational maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner. This design allowed for an in depth interpretation of how characters intentionally flouted these maxims and what pragmatic functions such flouting served in shaping their interpersonal dynamics. The primary data set included chosen dialogues from *Inside Out* and *Inside Out 2*, in which maxim flouting was clearly recognised and contextually meaningful. These utterances were examined to identify both the nature and practical impact of the flouting.

In collection data, this study used: 1). Watching the movie *Inside Out* (2015) and *Inside Out 2* (2024) thoroughly to understand the context of the dialogues. 2). Reading the subtitles or transcript of the movie to identify the exact utterances. 3). Identifying the characters' utterances that contain instances of maxim flouting based on Grice's Cooperative Principle. 4). Providing codes to the identified utterances according to the coding system. The researcher acted as the main instrument in data collection and interpretation, as emphasized by Creswell (2013) in qualitative research. Supporting tools included a laptop, the films accessed via Disney+, and structured coding formats. A coding system was developed to classify each flouting for example, FQLIO1J1 indicates a flouting of the maxim of Quality by Joy in the first utterance of *Inside Out* (2015).

The technique of this study used to analyzed the data in this research, as follow: 1). Identifying and classifying each flouting maxim, The data will identify and classify the utterances of the characters in *Inside Out* and *Inside Out 2* Movie that contain flouting of the maxims. 2). Counting the data, The data will count the total of number of utterances each type of flouting maxim found un the movie. this step aims to determine the frequency of each category. 3). Finding dominant type, After counting the frequency of each type, this data will identify which type of flouting maxims appears most frequently in *Inside Out* and *Inside Out 2*. 4). The researcher make conclusions based on the analysis, which includes: a) types of flouting maxim frequently used. b) contribution of flouting maxim to character interaction in *Inside Out* (2015) and *Inside Out 2* (2024) Movie.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis, the researcher found 52 data of utterances from the animated movies *Inside Out* (2015) and *Inside Out 2* (2024) Using Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975), four types of flouted maxims were identified: quantity, quality, relation, and

manner. Flouting the Maxim of Manner was the most common, with 19 utterances. This was followed by the Maxim of Relation (16 data), Maxim of Quality (9 data), and Maxim of Quantity (8 data). The table below shows the frequency of each type.

Table 4.1 Frequency of Flouting Maxim

No.	Types of Flouting Maxim	Frequency
1.	Maxim Flouting Quantity	8
2.	Maxim Flouting Quality	9
3.	Maxim Flouting Relation	16
4.	Maxim Flouting Manner	19
Total Data		52

These data show that ambiguity and ambiguous expressions (flouting manner) are the most common communication tactics utilised by the characters, showing emotional complexity and uncertainty during encounters.

A. Discussion of Flouting Maxim

1. Flouting Maxim of Quantity

When speakers provide more information than is required, they are flouting the maxim of quantity. This was particularly demonstrated by Anxiety, who frequently exaggerate or over explain.

Data 1

Anxiety: "Okay. How can I help?"

Joy: "Uh..."

Anxiety: "I can take notes, get coffee, manage you calender, walk your dog, carry your things, watch you sleep."

When Anxiety had just set foot in the Headquarters, Joy had not had a chance to say her name and say a word. however, Anxiety had already offered her all sorts of over the top, irrelevant things, and she had already provided a lot of information that Riley did not need. The utterance categorized is flouting maxim quantity, This oversharing behavior reflects Anxiety's personality and exaggerates his eagerness to be useful.

2. Flouting Maxim of Quality

Characters frequently use sarcasm or make statements that are incorrect.

Data 1

Disgust: "Why don't we just live in this smelly car? We've already been in it forever."

Joy: “Which, actually, was really lucky, because that gave us plenty of time to think about what our new house is going to look like! Let’s review the top five daydreams.”

Disgust’s utterance can be seen as flouting quality because she says something that’s clearly not true “live in this smelly car”. Of course, no one would seriously want that. The way she says it, with sarcasm, shows that she’s actually expressing her frustration and discomfort about being stuck in the car for too long. Instead of saying directly that she is annoyed, she chooses to exaggerate the situation in a way that the listener (Joy or the others) would understand her true feelings without her needing to say it outright.

Data 2

Ennui: “*Bravo Joy, she’s totally fitting in now.*”

Joy: “Oh, thanks so much Wee Wee.”

Ennui’s line, “Bravo Joy, she’s totally fitting in now,” is a clear case of flouting quality. On the surface, it sounds like he is praising Joy because Riley seems to be blending in. But in reality, Riley has just been scolded by the coach and punished with extra skating practice hardly a sign of fitting in. The sarcastic tone shows Ennui does not actually believe what he’s saying. Instead, he’s mocking the situation and indirectly blaming Joy. Because he says something obviously untrue and expects the listener to catch the sarcasm, he’s not being truthful in the literal sense, which is why this flouts the Maxim of Quality. Joy picks up on it and responds in kind with her own sarcastic “Oh, thanks so much Wee Wee.”

3. Flouting Maxim of Relation

This type of flouting the speaker made the conversation unmatched with the topic and change the topic abruptly.

Data 1

Worker: “For expanding the place. You know, for the others”

Joy: “What others?”

Worker: “*They’re not here yet? Ayayay. Hey Margie, you got that console?*”

Night at headquarters, all emotional Riley inside headquarters woke up to the sound of the ‘puberty’ alarm going off. After Joy threw it away, the mind workers came to renovate headquarter. Everyone panicked, because of panic Joy wanted to find out about what happened, who will they have coming, and who are they? But the head of the mind workers did not answer Joy’s question and instead called his members. The utterance “They’re not here yet? Ayayay. Hey Margie, you got that console?” is categorized as a flouting maxim relation. Joy clearly asked to find out who was coming to Headquarters. Instead of giving a relevant answer, the worker changed the topic by calling Margie and avoiding the question. This indicates a flouting maxim relation.

Data 2

Bree: “When do we get our schedules?”

Grace: “*I heard our room has a view*”

On the way to Hockey Camp, Grace, Bree, and Riley are talking about activities and preparations for the new place. Bree asks about the schedule, but Grace changes the topic to their room without answering her previous question. The utterances “I heard our room has a view ” is categorized as a flouting maxim relations, because in the conversation Grace suddenly unmatched the topic without answering Bree’s question.

Data 3

Meg: “I heard they have parrots living in-”

Riley: “I gotta go.”

Riley is on a video call with her old best friend, Meg, from Minnesota. Meg tells her that their hockey team won, they have a cool new member, and she seems really excited. Riley hears all this in a mentally fragile state, because she feels alienated in a new environment. While Meg was still talking, Riley suddenly cut her off by saying “I gotta go” and immediately closed the laptop. Riley's words were not relevantly answering or responding to Meg's topic of conversation. Meg doesn't ask urgent questions, and Riley avoids emotionally painful conversations without explaining why. She changed the topic abruptly.

4. Flouting Maxim of Manner

The most common type of flouting is manner, which exhibits using ambiguity language or answer.

Data 1

Sadness: “Oh, he doesn’t love us anymore. That’s sad. I should drive, right? Joy? What are you doing?”

Joy: “Uh, just uh, gimme one second...”

Sadness gave a fairly clear statement. She also shows awareness that the situation is precarious and asks Joy directly. However, Joy's answer is vague, rambling, and ambiguous, showing that she is not speaking directly and uses repetition of the words “uh” and “just,” which muddies the meaning.

Data 2

Fear: “How are you driving? Ennui lifts her phone with an image of the console on it.”

Ennui: “Console app.”

A new emotion named Ennui was seen to be able to operate the console remotely. When asked, she replies with a very short answer. This answer flouts manner as it is too short and uninformative. Instead of explaining in a clear and easy to understand way, for example “I use this application from my cellphone” he gives an ambiguous and flat answer.

Data 3

Dani: “Oh, cool. Where in Michigan are you from?” Riley: “Uh...”

Riley: “I’m from... all over.”

The utterance “I’m from... all over” is considered flouting the Maxim of Manner. When Dani asks Riley a specific question about her hometown, Riley responds with an ambiguous and unclear answer. The phrase “all over” avoids specificity and causes confusion, indicating that Riley intentionally withholds a clear response, thus flouting the maxim that encourages clarity and avoidance of ambiguity in communication.

Data 4

Sadness: “We lost Goofball Island. That means she can lose Friendship, and Hockey, and Honesty, and Family! You can fix this, right Joy?”

Joy: “I... I don’t know.”

When Sadness and Joy were at the Long-Term Memory Cliff Edge. Joy and Sadness were standing on the cliff edge in Riley's long-term memory region. They had just witnessed Goofball Island, one of the core memory islands, collapse. Sadness began to panic because she was worried about losing another important part of Riley's personality. She then asked Joy if this situation could still be fixed. However, Joy gave an answer in a flouting manner which was ambiguous and did not provide definite information to answer with certainty whether something could be fixed or not.

B. Discussion of Contribution to Characters Interaction

The flouting of maxims is not only a linguistic phenomenon, but also a narrative device for revealing emotional states and interpersonal dynamics. Joy frequently deviates from the Relation and Manner maxims, particularly when confronted with uncertainty, avoiding difficult emotional realities. Anxiety defies Quantity and Manner, increasing urgency and stress in the group. Sadness tends to disregard Manner, emphasising hesitation and emotional depth, whereas Riley, who is influenced by all emotions, frequently disregards Relationship, distancing herself from others when under stress. Compared to previous studies, which focused primarily on identifying types or motivations for flouting, this study analyses how such flouting affects character interaction, emphasising its narrative and emotional function. The findings lend support to the idea that characters intentionally break rules not to disrupt communication, but to increase emotional realism and deepen the audience's understanding of inner conflict.

CONCLUSION

This study looked at the types and contributions of flouting maxims found in the dialogues of Inside Out (2015) and Inside Out 2 (2024), using Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975) as an analytical framework. A total of 52 utterances were analysed and classified into four categories of flouting: Maxim of Quantity (8 data), Maxim of Quality (9 data), Maxim of Relation (16 data), and Maxim of Manner (19 data), with the latter being the most dominant. The findings indicate that breaking conversational norms is a narrative strategy rather than a communication failure. Characters deliberately break rules to express emotions indirectly, avoid confrontation, display sarcasm, or reflect internal psychological states. For example, Anxiety and Joy frequently flouting the Maxim of Manner to express emotional distress, whereas Riley and Ennui flouting the Maxim of Quality to express inner conflict or sarcasm.

SUGGESTION

Theoretically, this study adds to the field of pragmatics by highlighting how flouting maxims function not only as a linguistic phenomenon, but also as a tool for character and narrative development in film discourse. It demonstrates the usefulness of Grice's Cooperative Principle in analysing non-natural, scripted language in media texts.

Practically, this study can help educators, students, and general audiences gain a better understanding of how language functions beyond literal meaning. Identifying maxim flouting allows viewers to improve their interpretation skills, appreciate character complexity, and avoid miscommunication in everyday interactions.

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