



## FLOUTING MAXIM PRODUCED BY LAY ZHANG IN *I HEART RADIO INTERVIEW: A PRAGMATICS ANALYSIS*

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to find out what types of flouting maxims were dominantly committed by Ellie and Lay Zhang in the Interview. This research used a qualitative research method and then presented in a descriptive analysis. The pragmatic analysis of the data in this research is supported by Grice's Cooperative Principle. The data of research were the utterances of the flouting maxims by Ellie as a host and Lay as an artist that gathered by observing the Interview. The flouting maxims in the interview were studied using cooperative principle by Grice's theory, namely maxim of quality, maxim of quantity, maxim of relevance, and maxim of manner. The research showed that they committed all four types of flouting maxim, with 26 utterances containing maxim violations. The researchers found seven utterances (27%) showed a flouting maxim of quantity, five utterances (19%) showed a flouting maxim of quality, eight utterances (31%) showed a flouting maxim of relevance, and six utterances (23%) showed a flouting maxim of manner. Based on the result of the data, the most dominant flouting maxim were the maxim of relevance. This interview was providing valuable insights into the dynamics of communication in the digital era.

**Keywords:** cooperative principles; flouting maxim; pragmatics

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui jenis pelanggaran maksim apa yang dominan dilakukan oleh Ellie dan Lay Zhang dalam Wawancara. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif dan kemudian disajikan secara deskriptif analisis. Analisis pragmatis data dalam penelitian ini didukung oleh Prinsip Kerjasama Grice. Data penelitian ini adalah ungkapan-ungkapan pelanggaran maksim yang dilakukan oleh Ellie sebagai pembawa acara dan Lay sebagai artis yang dikumpulkan melalui observasi wawancara. Pelanggaran maksim dalam wawancara dipelajari dengan menggunakan prinsip kerjasama berdasarkan teori Grice, yaitu maksim kualitas, maksim kuantitas, maksim relevansi, dan maksim cara. Penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mereka melakukan keempat jenis pelanggaran maksim, dengan 26 ujaran mengandung pelanggaran maksim. Para peneliti menemukan tujuh ucapan (27%) menunjukkan pelanggaran terhadap maksim kuantitas, lima ucapan (19%) menunjukkan pelanggaran terhadap maksim kualitas, delapan ucapan (31%) menunjukkan pelanggaran terhadap maksim relevansi, dan enam ucapan (23%) menunjukkan sebuah pelanggaran maksim cara. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, pelanggaran maksim yang paling dominan adalah maksim relevansi. Wawancara ini memberikan wawasan berharga mengenai dinamika komunikasi di era digital.

**Kata Kunci:** prinsip kerjasama; pelanggaran maksim; pragmatis

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## **INTRODUCTION**

People need to communicate with others to show themselves exist and maintain good interaction. The structure of a typical conversation, where it begins with greetings, transitions into the main topic of discussion, and ends with closings or farewells (Sultan, 2020). Language plays a crucial part in communication. Language is used to exchange information and is a powerful tool for communicating ideas that provide context. According to Ekah and Akpan (2018), language is important for sharing written and spoken communication. Language is an arbitrary system of vocal symbols used for human communication to support the information that has been conveyed. Then, there are explicit and implicit meanings depending on the purpose of the language itself. A discipline of linguistics focuses on speaker meaning and is related to speaker meaning. It is Pragmatics. Pragmatics is research of contextual means. Yule (1996) said Pragmatics involves analyzing what people are trying to say in a specific situation and how that situation affects what is being shown. It explains how the speaker appropriately arranges what they want to say and who they communicate depending on the situation. It deals with how language is used in social interaction and how people create and understand meanings through language. At every turn of utterance, speakers and listeners must work together to deliver and receive clearly understood messages, demonstrating that both parties are committed to doing so (Hamidah et al., 2023).

However, making proper and successful communicate is challenging, it is miles tiring. There are still misunderstandings that occur, caused by several factors such as unclear communication, different cultural backgrounds, language barriers, misinterpretation of tone or body language, assumptions, and preconceived notions in the communication process. Misunderstanding happens while the listener does no longer get the speaker's meanings (Cutting, 2008). Some people have a tendency to flout the maxims in their communication. Flouting maxim means when speakers intentionally make utterances that go against what one might expect based on the literal meaning of their words (Birner, 2013).

The flouting maxim in the digital era, particularly in global contexts and constellations, can be observed in various forms of communication, including podcasts, social media, daily conversation, movie scripts, and another online platform. Some studies have examined the principle of cooperation focusing on violating and flouting maxims. For example, *The Types of Maxim Violation Found in Luca Movie* (Widiasih et al. 2022). The analysis of maxim violation in the context of the movie "Luca" provides a compelling exploration of how characters in the film break conversational norms. The research effectively applies Grice's theory of Cooperative Principles to categorize the types of violations observed in the dialogue, shedding light on the complexities of communication in cinematic storytelling. The findings of the research reveal that characters predominantly violate the maxim of quality by providing untruthful information or lies during conversations. Additionally, violations of the maxims of quantity, relevance, and manner are also identified, showcasing the intricate dynamics of communication in the movie. The research offers valuable insights into the nuances of communication in the "Luca" movie and contributes to a broader understanding of how dialogue influences storytelling in the cinematic context. The analysis provides a thoughtful examination of the film's dialogue, character

interactions, and narrative themes, inviting viewers to engage critically with the intricacies of cinematic communication.

Another research was Gricean Maxim Violations in a Javanese Song Entitled *Slénco* (Nahak, et al. 2021) explores the creative use of Gricean Maxim violations in the lyrics of a Javanese song. The research delves into how the lyricists strategically break the rules of conversation to convey deeper meanings and create art in communication. By analyzing various types of maxim violations such as quantity, quality, relation, and manners, the researchers provide insights into how these violations contribute to the portrayal of communication challenges faced by individuals with dyslexia. The findings of the research suggest that the violation of cooperative principles in communication is not always negative. Instead, it can be used to create humor, art in communication, and make teaching methods more engaging. The research encourages further exploration of maxim violations in other song lyrics to enhance the understanding of linguistic studies. Moreover, the research emphasizes the importance of discussing the Gricean Cooperative Principle of Maxims in educational settings to deepen students' understanding of communication strategies and creative language use. By examining how maxim violations can serve specific purposes in communication, the research contributes valuable insights to the field of linguistics and pragmatics.

In this research, the researchers chose to find and analyze maxims floating in a famous American freemium broadcast, podcast and radio streaming platform named I Heart Radio that hosted by Ellie particularly in an episode where a Chinese actor, singer, and producer named Lay Zhang as a guest star. The researchers analyze maxims floating in this interview since the guest star is a non-native English speaker. Nevertheless, he understands English, but he learned English as a second language. Analyzing maxims floating in interviews involving non-native English speakers, particularly those who learned English as a second language, can be a complex but insightful process. The interaction between cultural backgrounds and language proficiency can significantly impact communication dynamics which affect their way of talking and responding and favoring their arguments during the interview. This cultural background difference only affects some of their conversations. Flouting maxims in the digital era can have significant implications for effective communication, particularly in global contexts where cultural differences and language barriers may complicate the process. Understanding and addressing these challenges can help improve communication and foster more productive and respectful online interactions. Sometimes speakers may consciously or unconsciously break the rules to achieve certain goals, such as hiding the truth of an information, providing untrue information, or entertaining. Therefore, the researcher wants to analyze it to find out the maxims that are violated by the interviewees to gaining new insight on flouting maxim.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In the pragmatic subject, a theory explains how human beings can talk cooperatively and create suitable communication with at least two people involved. It is called the Cooperative Principle. The cooperation concept was initially introduced in 1975 by philosopher H. Paul Grice. According to him, the cooperative principle is the concept that the participants in a discourse

attempt to work together to achieve a shared understanding (Grice, 1989). The premise underlying the cooperative principles idea is how individuals form dialogue. Grice describes the Cooperative Principle, a four fundamental rule for efficient conversational use. It arranges in speech what has to be set for fluid conversation. This idea serves as a guidance for those who want to communicate effectively. In a famous cooperative principle, four maxims perceive a way to be collaborative (Hassani, 2019). They are maxims of quality, quantity, relevance, and manner and define how effective conversation happen in everyday social contexts. The maxim of quality means when the conversation should be accurate, true and not provide false information not supported by evidence. The maxim of quantity means that convey as much information as needed in the conversation, not too much or less. The maxim of relevance means that the conversation should be appropriate to the context of the conversation and related to what is being discussed, and the maxim of manner means that convey meaning clearly, concisely and precisely to avoid ambiguity. The cooperative principle helps people make verbal exchanges to achieve effective conversational communication in a given social situation.

### **Flouting Maxim**

According to Sembiring & Ghozali (2017) Flouting occurs when speakers knowingly disregard or deviate from Grice's maxims in their communication, often to convey nuanced meaning or achieve a particular communicative effect. Grice's maxims provide guidelines for effective communication, but they can also be deliberately flouted under certain conditions. They are the flouting maxim of quantity, the flouting maxim of quantity, the flouting maxim of relevance, and the flouting maxim of manner (Khosravizadeh & Sadehvandi, 2012). Flouting maxims is not always negative, as it can be used to criticize someone or something indirectly or to produce a negative pragmatic effect. In some cases, flouting maxims may be used to build humor or interact more effectively with the listener. Understanding the concept of flouting maxims is important for gaining insights into the complexities of human communication, including humor, implicit meaning, and the impact of cultural and contextual factors on interpretation.

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

The researchers used a descriptive qualitative design as the methodology. According to Nassaji (2015), the descriptive qualitative method focuses on describing and understanding a research subject or object by closely examining actual data collected from sources such as interviews, observations, or documents. This approach involves describing and explaining the research subject or object. It's often used to gain a deeper understanding of phenomena and explore complex aspects of communication, such as maxims flouting in interviews. This method allows researchers to provide detailed descriptions, explanations, and interpretations of the data collected, leading to a comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

This research examined Ellie and Lay's utterances in the interview. The researchers chose an episode in which Lay Zhang as a guest star. It allows for a detailed exploration of communication dynamics, especially considering the potential cultural and linguistic influences involved when the

host and guest star have different backgrounds. The researchers as the main instrument for data collection, analysis, classification, and interpretation.

The instrument in this research was the notebook, pen, computer, video, and transcript text of the utterances between Ellie and Lay Zhang in the interview. Researchers would collect the actual interview data, including transcripts or recordings, to have a comprehensive understanding of the conversation between the host and the guest star then systematically identify instances where Grice's maxims were flouted during the interview. This could involve categorizing flouting based on the maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner. Researchers would define specific types of maxims flouting observed in the data. After defining these types, researchers would analyze each type in depth. They would explain why and how each type of maxims flouting occurred, considering factors such as cultural differences, communication goals, and language proficiency. Finally, researchers would draw conclusions about the impact of these types of maxims flouting on the overall communication in the interview. They might discuss implications for cross-cultural communication, interview strategies, and understanding speaker intentions.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The total number of utterances from the conversation between Ellie and Lay Zhang is twenty six. Based on the category of flouting maxim according to Grice's theory of cooperative principle, twenty six statements flout the four maxims. The table shows the percentage of each maxim flouting varies.

Table 1. Flouting maxims distribution

No.	Types of Flouting Maxim	Percentage	Quantity
1	Flouting Maxim of Quantity	27	7
2	Flouting Maxim of Quality	19	5
3	Flouting Maxim of Relevance	31	8
4	Flouting Maxim of Manner	23	6
	Total	100	26

The results showed that they performed all four types of maxim flouting, twenty six utterances containing flouting of maxims. The researchers found seven utterances (27%) showed a flouting maxim of quantity, five utterances (19%) showed a flouting maxim of quality, eight utterances (31%) showed a flouting maxim of relevance, and six utterances (23%) showed a flouting maxim of manner. Based on the data, the dominant flouting maxim appears to be the maxim of relevance.

### Types of Maxim Flouting in the Interview

Below are the analysis of flouting maxim's example in the conversation between Ellie and Lay Zhang in I Heart Radio Interview.

#### A. *Flouting Maxim of Quantity*

The maxim of quantity suggests that speakers should provide enough information to contribute meaningfully to the conversation without being overly verbose or withholding necessary details. It is flouted when speakers provide an excessive or an insufficient amount of

information for the current purposes of the conversation (Thomas, 1995). Example of the conversation, Ellie asked Lay Zhang's feel about his album.

Conversation:

Ellie : “Were you very scared? Was there a lot of fear? Did you have a lot of nerves?”

Lay: “Yes very nervous about the this album, but you know I want to share my music in the U.S and using English maybe can close to each other yes right yes because in American market and I have to use American uh use the language English to be more close with uh with you.”

In this conversation, Lay Zhang flouts the maxim of quantity because Ellie asks multiple questions about Lay's feelings and experiences, using phrases like "Were you very scared? Was there a lot of fear? Did you have a lot of nerves?" These questions seek detailed and specific information about Lay's emotional state during a particular event. However, Lay's response is somewhat vague and does not directly address each of Ellie's questions with the expected level of detail. Instead, he shifts the focus of his response to discussing his nervousness about the album and his desire to share his music in the U.S. and connect with the American market using English. He gives too much information. Maxim of quantity provides guidance on the amount of information speakers should contribute to conversations. It is giving what is needed (Grundy, 2000). Here, Lay Zhang gave Ellie more information than what was needed. She was given a yes/no question, yet he provided more information by telling Ellie why he needed to do that, although he felt nervous.

#### *B. Flouting Maxim of Quality*

The maxim of quality, refers to the expectation that speakers should provide truthful and accurate information in their contributions to conversations. Grice (1975, 44) states speakers contribute to the honesty and accuracy of communication, fostering mutual understanding and trust in conversation. According to Cutting (2002, 37), flouts the maxim of quality may do so by intentionally providing false or misleading information, or by making claims without sufficient evidence or justification. Flouting this maxim can occur for various reasons, such as to create humor, irony, or dramatic effect in communication. However, it can also lead to misunderstandings or distrust if the audience perceives the speaker's contributions as dishonest or lacking credibility.

Conversation:

Ellie : “All right last question yeah okay um um what are your advice for artists out there that look up to you that want to do what you do?”

Lay : “I want to tell the people who like me and i want to tell the people, first listen my music and support my album .”

Ellie : “Yes and work hard.”

Lay : “Work hard work very hard very hard and try harder and uh.”

Ellie : “But also be happy inside.”

Lay : “Of course of course and uh follow your dream, you will be wasabi.”

Ellie : “You will be hot like wasabi.”

Lay : “Yeah.”

In this conversation, Lay and Ellie are discussing advice for aspiring artists. Lay emphasizes the importance of focusing on their music and supporting their album, while also working hard and trying their best. Ellie adds the suggestion of being happy internally and following one's dreams. The phrase "you will be wasabi" is likely a playful metaphorical expression, comparing the success or achievement of one's dreams to the sensation of consuming wasabi, a spicy Japanese condiment. It suggests that achieving one's dreams will bring a sense of "heat" or excitement, similar to the intense flavor of wasabi. It's a light-hearted way of expressing confidence in the potential success and fulfillment of pursuing one's aspirations.

### *C. Flouting Maxim of Relevance*

Maxims of Relevance speakers contribute to the coherence and effectiveness of communication, ensuring that their contributions align with the current context and purpose of the conversation. Finegan (2004) discusses the maxim of relevance emphasizes the importance of contributing information that is directly related to the topic at hand and contributes meaningfully to the ongoing conversation. Flouting the maxim of relevance occurs when speakers deliberately deviate from providing information that is directly related to the topic at hand or the current context of the conversation.

Conversation:

Lay : "But give me more time i can get better."

Ellie : "Dude, trust me. Even right now you're getting better because you're talking to me also i talk really fast and you're keeping up with me."

Lay : "....." (silently watching her)

Ellie : "Great."

In this exchange, Lay expresses a desire for more time to improve, indicating that he believes he can become better in English with more practice and experience. Ellie responds by reassuring Lay that he is already improving, using the fact that he is keeping up with her fast-paced conversation as evidence of his progress. Lay's silence could indicate that he is processing Ellie's words or that he is acknowledging her point without verbalizing a response. Lay unconsciously flouting the maxim of Relevance because English is not his first language. He is a non-native speaker, and that was his first US promotion. He needs to adjust the language. Overall, the exchange highlights the theme of improvement and encouragement, with Ellie offering support and Lay reflecting on his growth.

### *D. Flouting Maxim of Manner*

Maxim of Manner requires speakers' utterances to be clear, coherence, and effectiveness of communication, facilitating mutual understanding and successful interaction. Thus, each participant needs to be direct. Responses that adhere to this maxim should be clear, unambiguous, and free from unnecessary verbosity or wordiness. According to (Ginarsih, 2014) The flouting maxim under the category of Manner is exploited by giving ambiguity and obscure expressions, failure to be brief and orderly.

Conversation :

Ellie : "This is gonna be the most fun you've ever had in your life. Are you ready question one?"

Lay : "I'm not ready."  
Ellie : "Oh okay are you ready now ?"  
Lay : "No"  
Ellie : "Now?"  
Lay : "No"  
Ellie : "Okay we're gonna go on!"  
Lay : "Hahahahaha."

By playfully rejecting Ellie's exaggerated statement with a simple "I'm not ready," Lay introduces a humorous element into the conversation. This kind of light-hearted banter can be entertaining for both the participants and the audience, adding a layer of humor to the interaction. Additionally, Lay's response contrasts with Ellie's enthusiastic tone, creating comedic tension and further enhancing the humorous effect. Overall, Lay's playful rejection helps to create humor in the exchange. Lay's response contributes to the playful and humorous tone of the conversation, ultimately enhancing the interaction despite deviating slightly from typical conversational norms.

Based on the findings, several flouting of maxim occurred in an interview between Ellie and Lay Zhang in I Heart Radio Interview. In this current research, Lay flouted the maxim of Relevance by giving an answer that needed to be more relevant, not because she ignored Ellie's question but because Lay was excited about the situation until he answered the question from the host with a different and unconnected answer. He thinks that most of the listeners understand his answers. Another factor that can make the flouting maxim of Relevance happen is that the subject of this research is a non-native English speaker, which makes the percentage of flouting the maxim of Relevance happen higher during their communication. In the digital era, people engage in conversations across diverse cultural, linguistic, and geographical boundaries. This global interaction can sometimes lead to misunderstandings or misinterpretations due to differences in context and relevance. For instance, in online forums or chat groups with participants from various cultures, individuals may inadvertently include information that is irrelevant or off-topic from the perspective of others, violating the maxim of relevance.

From the discussion above, there are various reasons behind maxim flouting. The findings also show that sometimes a cooperative speaker can intentionally disobey a maxim if he/she provides enough indicators for the hearer to notice (Cutting 2002). Thus, there are always reasons behind the flouting of the maxims. The reasons are varied, depending on the situations happening during the conversation. Flouting a conversational maxim doesn't always have negative connotations (Oktiva et al., 2021). In fact, it can often contribute positively to the dynamics of a conversation, adding humor, emphasis, or other rhetorical effects. In the context of Lay's response to Ellie's hyperbolic statement, his light-hearted rejection can be seen as a form of flouting the maxim of manner. Instead of providing a straightforward answer or engaging in further elaboration, Lay's response adds humor and playfulness to the conversation, making it more engaging and memorable. So, while Lay's response deviates from the typical expectations of manner in conversation, it does so in a way that contributes positively to the overall interaction,



demonstrating that flouting conversational maxims can sometimes be a deliberate and effective communicative strategy.

Another example in this research is flouting the maxim of quality using metaphor or hyperbole can actually enhance communication in many contexts. Metaphors and hyperbole are rhetorical devices that add color, emphasis, and vividness to language, making communication more engaging and memorable. When someone uses metaphor or hyperbole, they may not be strictly adhering to the maxim of quality by providing precise and accurate information. However, the purpose of using these devices is often to convey deeper meanings, evoke emotions, or create imagery, rather than to convey literal truth. As a result, listeners or readers understand and appreciate the intended message beyond the literal interpretation. Example in term “Hot like a wasabi” while the statement doesn't adhere to providing literal truth (wasabi is not actually "hot" in the same way a person might be), it effectively communicates a vivid image and evokes a specific emotional response. As such, it demonstrates how flouting the maxim of quality using metaphorical language can enrich communication by adding depth, creativity, and emotional resonance.

In an interview, flouting the maxim of quantity can be important for several reasons. Flouting the maxim of quantity can allow the interviewee to provide more information than necessary, which can be helpful in certain situations. For example, if the interviewee is discussing a complex topic, they may need to provide more information to ensure the audience fully understands the concept. Flouting the maxim of quantity can also help clarify a point or provide additional context. For instance, if the interviewee is discussing a sensitive topic, they may need to provide more information to ensure their point is not misinterpreted or to provide a more complete picture of the situation. By providing more information than necessary, the interviewee can demonstrate their expertise or passion for the topic, which can make the interview more engaging and memorable. However, it is essential to balance the need for providing more information with the overall effectiveness of the communication. Flouting the maxim of quantity too often or in a way that is irrelevant to the topic can be confusing or distracting for the audience. It is crucial for the interviewee to be aware of the situation and the audience's expectations to use flouting the maxim of quantity effectively.

Flouting maxims can have both positive and negative effects, depending on the context and the intentions of the speaker or writer. It is essential to understand the specific situation and the reasons for flouting maxims to determine whether it is negative or not. Studying flouting maxims in the digital era is important for understanding conversational norms, identifying humor and creativity, improving communication, considering ethical implications, and advancing pragmatic studies.

## **CONCLUSION**

The flouting maxim of relevance is the highest since, in the interview, the guest star, Lay Zhang, often talked actively and tended to give some not relevant answers. In Lay Zhang's case, since she was a guest star from China and was invited to an American interview, he had to introduce himself and promote his new album. Therefore, he sometimes uses irrelevant answers,

but the audience still understands his meaning. the conversation involves a mix of flouting and adherence to Gricean Maxims, contributing to a dynamic and engaging interview. Lay Zhang's responses often involve modesty, and there is an interplay between formal and informal language, creating a conversational tone.

The study of flouting conversational maxims, as exemplified in the interview between Ellie and Lay Zhang from the I Heart Radio Interview, provides valuable insights into the dynamics of communication in the digital era. The findings highlight the occurrence of flouting maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner, with varying degrees of frequency and impact. While flouting maxims can sometimes enhance communication by adding humor, emphasis, or depth, it can also lead to misunderstandings or misinterpretations. Understanding the reasons behind flouting maxims is essential for effective communication, particularly in the digital age where interactions occur across diverse cultural and linguistic boundaries. In the global constellation of digital communication, navigating these flouting of maxims requires heightened awareness of cultural sensitivities, critical thinking skills to discern reliable information from misinformation, and adaptability to the diverse communication styles prevalent in digital interactions. Further research in this area can contribute to advancing our understanding of conversational norms, improving communication strategies, and fostering meaningful interactions in digital contexts.

The study contributes to theoretical frameworks in pragmatics and communication studies by providing empirical evidence of how conversational maxims are flouted in digital interactions. It enriches understanding of how communication norms evolve in the context of digital communication platforms and diverse cultural settings. Understanding how conversational maxims are flouted can inform communication practices, particularly in digital contexts. Communication professionals, such as journalists, public relations practitioners, and social media managers, can use this knowledge to craft more effective and engaging messages that resonate with diverse audiences. By considering the implications of flouting maxims, practitioners can enhance the clarity, relevance, and impact of their communication efforts.

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