

# Conversational Maxims on Modern Fairytale Movies: A Gender-Based Comparison

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*Abstract* — Acceding to the splendid scope of pragmatics, research aimed at introducing one of the very influential maxims of H. Paul Grice namely Conversational Implicature. The main point of the study is to test the applicability of Grice's supposed principles which are Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner to the transcribed dialogues of some fairy tale movies. The value of this study creates a large impact to the communication aspects of daily living as it allows being familiar in decoding intended meaning from the flouts and violations that is certain nowadays.

This study aimed to classify the conversational maxims of selected modern Fairy Tale movies namely Frozen and Into the Woods as to followed and flouted from its transcribed dialogues. It also sought to analyze the implicature or the intended meaning of the flouted maxims and determine the significant differences in the maxims flouted by male and female characters. This employed the descriptive method of research that made use of content analysis and its results underwent qualitative interpretation. The transcription of the selected modern Fairy tale movie dialogues was used to gather data and come up with the analysis results. It was determined that these modern fairy tale movies have a lot of flouts done as a perfect study to focus on. Thus, people involved in communication cycle must be well-equipped in following the Conversational Maxims or Cooperative Principle of H.P. Grice to be in tract of conversations that creates linguistic understanding to the user of the language.

*Keywords* — *Conversational Maxims, Modern Fairy Tale and Gender-based Comparison*

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## I. Introduction

As the advent of contemporary pragmatics research continues, Conversational Maxims take an account for how competent language users can derive the communicative intention of person or speaker from the linguistic form of an utterance, and the context in which it occurs. These days, in academic understanding in teaching literature to the students, teachers and even students are finding difficulties on how to decode the supposed meanings beyond lines thrown by the characters. For the near fact that most of the dialogues have an implied meaning, students are being confused about the true message of the conversations exchanged by the characters. Being known to its context, Cooperative Principle, a collective name for Herbart Paul Grice's Conversational Maxim makes a notable impact gearing for linguistic and semantic accuracy heading for worldwide communication. The purport of this pursuit enables an effective and

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cooperative conversation be a means of describing and analyzing the way people convey meanings in real life interactions. According to Grice (2000), in a conversation, logically a speaker and a hearer should have cooperation by using four maxims, i.e., maxim of quality, quantity, relevance and manner in order that one can understand what other means. If the utterances do not contain one of the maxims, they will not be understood by the hearer so therefore it was termed as cooperative principles.

The awareness to conversational maxims is pivotal to the field of Literature as it is one of the keys to accurately comprehend the meaning and intention of the persona behind the dialogic property of some sort of stories. This will foster the speech acts that will signal the supposed semantics thrown in daily conversations. Speakers frequently mean much more than their words say (Thomas 2002). That is, the hearer interprets a meaning that is not clearly stated in the utterance of the speaker. When communicating, it is constantly encountering utterances that are confusing when standing alone out of context, when they are put into context however, it can interpret the words and phrases in a way that makes us understand the intentional meaning of the utterance.

According to Robinson (2002), Herbert Paul Grice's Cooperative Principle assumes that speakers must have a common goal or purpose to their conversations for them to understand what the other interlocutor means and implies. This entails that the implication of conversational maxims of Grice is to make a cognizance among speakers of certain conversations for them to create a splendid ideology in apprehending one's message. The principle serves as a channel to make a pedagogical masterpiece in the literature for them to easily convey what the characters in particular literary piece connote.

The analysis of this study is an attempt to investigate and compare the underlying difference in the maxims flouted by male and female characters in some selected modern fairy tale movies from the theoretical perspective of the Cooperative Principle (CP). It is intended to find out how far away the conversations in this piece of literature move from our daily communication and whether the Cooperative Principle is enough to analyze the implicature of the flouted maxims. This is a help to foster understanding among literature practitioners giving in depth derivation through the application of stylistics and other discipline such as pragmatics.

Analyzing the dialogue within certain literature in a form of media is an up-to-the-minute way of digesting understanding to the viewers or readers. Yielding interpretation through a gender-based comparison scaffolds the premise of classifying conversational maxims in some selected fairy tale movies as to followed or flouted and the differences to maxims flouted by male and female characters. And deduct or elicit the implicature intended by the concerned individuals behind the flouts done.

## **RELATED LITERATURE**

According to Cruse (2000), this principle is elaborated by means of a set of maxims, which indicate what it means to cooperate in a conversational way. These are maxims of quality, quantity,

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relevance, and relation. These maxims can be adhered to or violated, flouted (deliberately not observed) to generate an implicature. Flouting a maxim is therefore a pragmatic strategy of generating conversational implicature, especially with consideration for certain inferential processes.

Generating implicatures (in the tradition of the “science of the unsaid,” as Levinson (2000) calls inferential pragmatics theories, such as Gricean pragmatics), therefore, operates differently in different communities with consideration for the four maxims that inform people’s cooperative behavior in general as guiding principles in inference drawing.

From among those influential theories is Grice’s theory of Conversational Implicature where in Grice attempts to show systematically how a person gets from what is said to what is meant, or from the expressed meaning to the implied meaning (Thomas, 2004).

Horn and Ward (2005) introduced the implicature as the distinction between “the said and the meant- the implicated and the unsaid”. Furthermore, they go on to say that implicature means the additional meaning or saying little and meaning more.

In addition to what is mentioned above, Black (2005) underscored the theories of Pragmatics and from among these theories he introduces Grice’s theory of Conversational Implicature or Cooperative Principle. According to Grice (2000) in Black (2005), this principle works in four maxims: Quality, Quantity, Relation and Manner, each of which has some conditions which by an utterance can be measured.

Like the above opinions was Carston (2002) who theorized the idea that Grice’s theory has become influential yet has its spots of weakness. He summarized this theory by stating that Grice has tried to make clear-cuts between what is said and what is implicated.

Basically, the process whereby an implicature is generated is referred to flouting a maxim, (Black, 2006). According to Grice, this happens blatantly and intentionally but with no intention to deceive or mislead the other party involved in the conversation. In the next part of this research-paper, each type of the maxims will be introduced, defined, and then illustrated with at least two examples.

As stated to Grice’s theory, it could assume that he wants to provide the other speaker with something else rather than the required information. For one reason or another, this could suggest that Grice’s theory of the Conversational Implicature in the new field of linguistics which is Pragmatics seems to be a universal theory which may be applicable to all the world languages (Aldualis, 2012).

Grice’s conversational maxims jointly express a cooperative principle (Grice, 2000), “Make your conversational contribution such as required at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk of exchange in which you are engaged.”

According to Hamadi and Muhammed, (2009), the inference mechanism works as follows: He said that there is no reason to suppose that he is not observing the maxims, or at least the Cooperative Principle; he could not be doing this unless he thought that he knows that everyone can see that the supposition that he thinks that  $q$  is required; he has done nothing to stop one from thinking that he intends one to think, or is at least willing to allow one to think, that and so he has implicated that  $q$ .

Exactly, as Marmor (2007) elucidated that any linguistic communication is not easily understood, this understanding is to be achieved by various elements of language and context which lead to a clear apprehending of what someone is saying or asserting. Certain distinctions must be made, namely, the literal meaning of the utterance, the semantic content, and further the communicative content the speaker follows in any exchange, including conversational implicatures.

In the form of violating the maxim of quality, the utterances spoken by the main characters almost use ironic statements, metaphor statements and rhetorical questions. Moreover, in the form of violating maxim of quantity; the utterances spoken by the main characters almost use understatement, overstatement, and tautologies (Helmi, 2010).

The cooperative principle describes how people interact with one another. People who obey the cooperative principle in their language use will make sure that what they say in a conversation furthers the purpose of that conversation (Helmi, 2010).

The success of a conversation depends upon the various speakers' approach to the interaction. The way in which people try to make conversations work is called cooperative principle. Grice in Grundy (2000) asserted that "speaker intends to be cooperative is for speaker to give as much as information as is expected". He also formalized his observation that, when somebody talks, he tries to be cooperative by elevating this notion into what called "The Cooperative Principle". The Cooperative Principle is enunciated as the following way: make your conversational contribution such as is required, as the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged (Finegan, 2004).

Concerning with his Cooperative Principle, Grice divided Cooperative Principle into four basic conversational maxims: maxim of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of relevance and maxim of manner (Grundy, 2000). These maxims are used to classify the kind of flouts committed by the characters themselves. Each of the maxims has their own classifications which determine the violations committed and the intended implicature.

Flouting is deliberate and apparent violation of maxims. Grundy (2000) emphasized that flouting maxim is a particularly salient way of getting an addressee to draw an inference and hence recover an implicature, thus there is a trade-off between abiding by maxims.

Brown and Yule (2003) underscored that flouting of maxim is result of the speaker conveying in addition to the literal meaning which is conversational implicature. The intention of the speaker to add another meaning to the implied meaning made the conversations flouted and creates implicature towards the responder.

The study of discourse has been done by some of universities students from many perspectives. Hanifa (2001) investigated flouting of the felicity conditions of conversational maxims in Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops the Conquer*. She finds that the flouting of the felicity conditions covers the flouting of the preparatory rule, the sincerity rule and the essential rule on the act of stating or giving information, the act of requesting or ordering, questioning, advising and promising. She also finds that the flouting of two rules of conversations has function to develop ridiculous plot, provide the readers of drama with the amusing situation, keep the readers to read it, and criticize the existing habit.

Rahma (2005) affirmed that flouting and hedging maxims found on pojok column in Kompas newspaper. She finds that the maxims are flouted when they are overtly broken by speakers in the utterances onpojok column in Kompas newspaper such as producing the utterances in the form of rhetorical strategies, namely, tautology, metaphor, overstatement, understatement, rhetorical question, and irony. In addition, the maxims are hedged when the utterances produced are not totally accurate, invalid whether the information is right or wrong thus there is no responsibility for the truth of the utterances.

As an over-all gist of the above statements and citations, conversational maxims are the maxims used to be patterned and be guided in the process of communications. This will lead the participants not to violate the effective conversations that will affect the understanding of the people that can lead to confusing implicature. People's utterances always tend to be flouted as they didn't follow the maxims as for the purpose of ironical and metaphorical statement. Thus, it is important that the person involved in such conversations is aware of how he or she utters those with respect to the maxim and can be easily appreciated.

## **OBJECTIVES**

This research attempted to find out the Gender-based Comparison of Conversational Maxims among Modern Fairy Tale Movies.

Specifically, the study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. Classify the conversational maxims in the movies as to:
  - 1.1 Followed
  - 1.2 Flouted

- 1.2.1 Manner
  - 1.2.2 Relevance
  - 1.2.3 Quality
  - 1.2.4 Quantity
2. Analyze the implicature of the flouted maxims.
  3. Determine the difference in the maxims flouted by male and female characters.  
Develop an instructional material for conversational maxims.

## II. Methodology

The study included the content analysis of the Modern Fairy tale film script and/or dialogues of the purposively selected Fairy tale movies *Into the Woods* and *Frozen*. The analysis is for classifying the different conversational maxims as to followed or flouted and identifying who among female and male characters commonly commit violations. The study utilized the qualitative approach of research in gathering the necessary data.

The descriptive method of research was used in this study. It was employed to gather information about the conversational maxims flouted and their implicatures through the cooperative principle of H.P. Grice. The effectiveness of the movie script in rendering accuracy of the conversational maxims in selected fairy tale movies, through contextual analysis of the movie dialogues' transcriptions was also done.

Data were gathered through content analysis of the transcription of the dialogues shown in the selected modern fairy tale movies.

The chosen modern fairy tale movies, *Into the Woods* and *Frozen* were first downloaded from the internet. These modern flares were purposively selected because they meet several research objectives. First, the movies are a representation of male to female distinction in terms of their language used. Second, they portray complex stories in which culture and way of communication of the characters were distinctively shown based on the genre or theme of the story. Lastly, these films have some complicated sentence structures including informal expressions that commonly create violations to the cooperative principle of communication.

The researcher used the principle of cooperation of H.P. Grice or the Conversational Maxims as the basis in determining the violations committed from the transcription made to the three fairy-tale movies selected to gather the information needed. To investigate the gender-based comparison of male and female characters in committing flouted maxims, the researcher analyzed their lines or dialogues in the selected two (2) modern fairy tale films.

The chosen modern fairy tale movies were first downloaded from the internet and then examined carefully. The researcher also downloaded the original transcript of the said fairy tale movies. The researcher first analyzed the dialogues into its classifications if it is followed or flouted. After determining, all flouted conversations were analyzed again according to the four maxims of H.P. Grice. The researcher then determined the implicature of each flouted conversation. The researcher decided to analyze the films' dialogues and was examined in terms of the differences of the maxims flouted by male and female characters and the implicature flouted using the qualitative way of analyzing through cooperative principle or conversational maxims of H.P. Grice. He used the gender-based analysis in the study by determining the characters who committed violations in each conversation. Afterwards, the researcher classified all the flouting characters into their gender if they are male or female. Next, the frequency of their flouts was counted and totaled and identify the gender who commits most of flouts.

When all the procedures in analyzing the lines of the films were done and the needed information for the study was settled, the researcher derived implications on effective communication. This served as the output of the gender-based analysis of the maxims flouted by male and female characters in the selected modern fairy tale movies.

### III. Results and Discussion

**Table 1: Frequency and Percentage of Classification of Conversational Maxims**

MODERN FAIRYTALE MOVIES	FOLLOWED Maxims	FLOUTED Maxims (Percentage distribution of flouted maxims)				
		Total	Relevance	Quality	Quantity	Manner
1. Frozen (frequency)	14	180	66	36	33	45
%	7.22	92.78	36.67	20.00	18.34	25.00
2. Into The Woods (frequency)	157	183	92	34	31	26
%	46.18	53.82	50.273	18.58	16.94	14.21

**Table 2. Difference in the Maxims Flouted by Male and Female Characters in the modern Fairy Tale Movies selected.**

FROZEN				
Flouted Maxims	Frequency and Percentages	Total Flouted Maxims	MALE	FEMALE
Relevance %	14 7.22	180	87	93
Quantity %	33 18.33			
Quality %	36 20.00			
Manner %	45 25.00	92.78 (from the total number of conversations)	48.33	51.67
INTO THE WOODS				
Flouted Maxims	Percentages	Total Flouted Maxims	MALE	FEMALE
Relevance %	92 50.27	183	88	95
Quantity %	31 16.94			
Quality %	34 18.58			
Manner %	26 14.21	53.82 (from the total number of conversations)	48.09	51.91

## DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 presents the classification of Conversational Maxims of Modern Fairy Tale movies as to followed or flouted.

Based on the table below, we can see the frequency and percentage of classification of selected two Modern Fairy Tale Movies, *Frozen* and *Into the Woods* as to followed or flouted together with the distribution of percentages from the flouted maxims. In the movie *Frozen*, 14 conversations are being followed accordingly to the four maxims created by H. P. Grice which comprise the 7.22% of 194 conversations in the movie. Meanwhile, 180 exchanges of dialogues out of 194 conversations are being flouted in the movie *Frozen* which creates a percentage of 92.78. It means that there are more flouted conversations than those that are followed. The right part of the table shows the distribution of percentages of flouted maxims in the movie *Frozen* among its four maxims. Out of 180 flouted conversations, there are 66 occurrences for Maxim of Relevance that comprises the 36.67% of total flouted conversations. For the Maxim of Quantity, there are 33 occurrences of flouted dialogues with a percentage of 18.33%. Thirty-six (36) flouted maxims are being committed in the Maxim of Quality with a percentage of 20%. Lastly in the Maxim of Manner, 45 number of occurrences are being flouted which earns an average of 25%. To interpret, among all flouted conversations, maxim of relevance earns the highest number of occurrences succeeded by maxim of manner then maxim of quality and maxim of quantity being the lowest.



On the other hand, in the movie *Into the Woods*, 157 conversations are being followed (46.18%) and 183 conversations are being flouted (53.82%) which comprises the 340 total number of conversations in the said movie. Same with the first, there are a greater number of flouted conversations analyzed rather than the followed one. But in this case, there is a little difference between the flouted to the followed exchanges. The 183 flouted conversations are distributed to the four maxims such as Maxim of Relevance, 92 occurrences (50.27%); Maxim of Quantity, 31 occurrences (16.94%); Maxim of Quality, 34 occurrences (18.58%) and Maxim of Manner, 26 occurrences (14.21%). To sum up, there are more flouts under the maxim of relevance the same with the first, succeeded by the maxim of quality then maxim of quantity and maxim of manner being the lowest earned occurrence. It is observable that maxim of relevance dominated the whole movie since it has a big percentage among the other maxims.

With these, it is very observable that both modern fairy tale movies have a majority number of flouted maxims greater than the followed one. Even though there are a little difference between flouted and followed one, it is statistically proved that flouted maxims are mostly and enjoyably preferred by the writers of the said modern fairy tale movies to use in dialogues.

Table 2 presents the significant difference of maxims flouted between the male and female characters of the two selected modern Fairy Tale Movies namely, *Frozen* and *Into the Woods* with its frequency and percentages.

As seen in the table, there are percentages of flouted maxims present with their corresponding frequency to overview the expected number of flouted maxims did by male and female characters in the movie. In the movie *Frozen*, there are 194 conversations whereas 180 dialogues (92.78%) of it are all flouted. It was consisted by a number of 66 (36.67%) maxim of relevance, 33 (18.33%) maxim of quantity, 36 (20.00%) maxim of quality and 45 (25.00%) maxims of manner. In the total 180 exchanges of flouted dialogues, there are 87 (48.33%) of conversations flouted by the Male characters while 93 (51.67%) of conversations are flouted by the Female characters.

On the other hand, in the movie *Into the Woods*, there are 340 conversations whereas 183 dialogues (53.82%) of it are all flouted. It was consisted by a few 92 (50.27%) maxim of relevance, 31 (16.94%) maxim of quantity, 34 (18.58%) maxim of quality and 26 (14.21%) maxims of manner. In the total 183 exchanges of flouted dialogues, there are 88 (48.09%) of conversations flouted by the Male characters while 95 (51.91%) of conversations are flouted by the Female characters.

Therefore, it can be deducted to the table presented, Female characters usually did flout their conversations than Male characters did. It was unanimously figured out in both movies analyzed those Female characters usually tried to violate the Cooperative Principle of H.P. Grice or what we called Conversational Maxims. Thus, Male characters are designed by the movie scriptwriter to follow all four maxims that female characters didn't have.

#### IV. Conclusion

Upon the analysis, the researcher, therefore, concluded that most of the conversations in the two selected modern Fairy Tale Movies are all flouted by the characters of the said movies. The implicatures among these flouts are all hard to decode when people are not aware about the Cooperative Principle of H.P. Grice and how to determine its conversational maxims. Also, the researcher concluded that most of the flouts done in the said movies were all committed by female characters unanimously than the male characters did.

#### V. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, it is recommended that the related or similar studies can be conducted but with an increased number of movies to be analyzed, analyze further the existing modern Fairy Tale Movies for the educational impact to the students in tackling Literature, and employ Conversational Maxim or collaboratively known as the Cooperative Principle of Herbart Paul Grice in analyzing literature in class. Moreover, it is recommended to give focus on inclusion of Conversational Maxims in the curriculum for better understanding and broad appreciation to Literature and related studies can use this existing study as a reference for further study.

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