



Gricean Maxims Flouting in *Bila Esok Ibu Tiada* Film: The Pragmatic Analysis of Cinematic Discourse

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Purpose

This study aimed to examine the types of maxims flouted and the ways pragmatic implicatures were found in Indonesian film's characters entitled "*Bila Esok Ibu Tiada*".

Method

A qualitative descriptive approach was used in this study, with Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle serving as the main way to analyze the data. Data were gathered by watching the film multiple times and writing down the dialogues, which led to 23 exchanges as examples of maxim flouting and its pragmatic implications in the film.

Result/Findings

Findings revealed that all four Gricean maxims are violated, with the Maxim of Relation (Relevance) flouting with 34.7%, Manner at 30.4%, Quantity at 26.0%, and Quality at 8.6%. Five central pragmatic functions for flouting were evasion and avoidance, face-saving and politeness, emotional expression, interpersonal conflict, and humor. In the case of maxim of relation (relevance) flouting, characters are often avoiding difficult subjects, while maxim of manner flouting exhibits emotional strength, especially during times of grief or disputes.

Conclusion

Hence, Gricean maxim flouting functions as a valuable pragmatic mechanism to demonstrate intricate emotional and relational meaning, helping us understand more about how language works in cinematic discourse and in learning languages.

Keywords

Gricean maxims, pragmatics, cinematic discourse, "Bila Esok Ibu Tiada" film

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Abstrak

Tujuan

Studi ini bertujuan untuk meneliti jenis-jenis pelanggaran maksim dan cara-cara implikasi pragmatis muncul melalui pemeran film Indonesia berjudul "Bila Esok Ibu Tiada".

Metode

Pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif digunakan dalam penelitian ini, dengan Prinsip Kerja Sama Grice (1975) sebagai cara utama untuk menganalisis data. Data dikumpulkan dengan menonton film beberapa kali dan mencatat dialog-dialognya, yang menghasilkan 23 dialog sebagai contoh pelanggaran maksim dan implikasi dalam pembicaraan/dialog.

Hasil/Temuan

Temuan menunjukkan bahwa keempat maksim Grice dilanggar, dengan pelanggaran Maksim Relevansi sebesar 34,7%, Maksim Cara sebesar 30,4%, Maksim Kuantitas sebesar 26,0%, dan Maksim Kualitas sebesar 8,6%. Lima fungsi pragmatis utama untuk pelanggaran tersebut adalah penghindaran dan pengelakan, menjaga muka dan kesopanan, ekspresi emosi, konflik interpersonal, dan humor. Dalam kasus pengabaian maksim relevansi, karakter sering menghindari subjek yang sulit, sementara pengabaian Maksim Cara menunjukkan kekuatan emosional, terutama pada saat berduka atau perselisihan.

Kesimpulan

Oleh karena itu, pengabaian maksim Gricean berfungsi sebagai mekanisme pragmatik yang berharga untuk menunjukkan makna emosional dan relasional yang rumit, membantu kita memahami lebih banyak tentang bagaimana bahasa bekerja dalam wacana sinematik dan dalam pembelajaran bahasa.

Kata kunci

Maksim Gricean; pragmatik; wacana sinematik, film "Bila Esok Ibu Tiada".

المخلص

الهدف

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى فحص أنواع انتهاك قواعد اللغة، والدلالات البراغماتية المترتبة على ذلك، في شخصيات الفيلم الإنونيسي "بيللا إسوك إيبو تيادا".

الطريقة

استخدمت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي النوعي، مع اعتماد مبدأ التعاون لغرايس (1975) كأداة رئيسية لتحليل البيانات. جُمعت البيانات من خلال مشاهدة الفيلم عدة مرات وتدوين الحوارات، مما أسفر عن 23 حوارًا كأمثلة على انتهاك قواعد اللغة.

النتائج

كشفت النتائج عن انتهاك جميع قواعد غرايس الأربع، حيث بلغت نسبة انتهاك قاعدة الصلة 34.7%، وقاعدة الأسلوب 30.4%، وقاعدة الكمية 26.0%، وقاعدة الجودة 8.6%. وشملت الوظائف البراغماتية الخمس الرئيسية لهذا الانتهاك: التهرب والتجنب، وحفظ ماء الوجه والمجاملة، والتعبير العاطفي، والصراع بين الأشخاص، والفكاهة. في حالة تجاهل قاعدة الصلة، غالبًا ما تتجنب الشخصيات المواضيع الشائكة، بينما يُظهر تجاهل قاعدة الأسلوب قوة عاطفية، خاصة في أوقات الحزن أو الخلافات.

الخلاصة

لذا، يُعدّ تجاهل قواعد غرايس آليةً براغماتيةً قيّمةً لإظهار المعاني العاطفية والعلاقاتية المعقدة، مما يُساعدنا على فهم كيفية عمل اللغة في الخطاب السينمائي وفي تعلّم اللغات.

الكلمات الرئيسية

قواعد غرايس؛ البراغماتية؛ الخطاب السينمائي؛ فيلم "بيللا إسوك إيبو تيادا"

INTRODUCTION

In communication, meaning is not solely derived from the literal interpretation of words but is strongly influenced by context, including social, cultural, and psychological factors. According to Van Dijk (2008), context plays a crucial role in helping individuals adapt their language to the communication environment, while Jiangli (2021) emphasizes its central position in pragmatics as it shapes how utterances are interpreted. Another key concept in pragmatics is presupposition, which refers to the assumptions or background knowledge that speakers and listeners are assumed to have, thus enabling a statement to be understood correctly (Birner, 2019). Therefore, understanding language requires not only analyzing what is said but also considering the surrounding context and the relationships between speakers.

Within pragmatics, Grice's Cooperative Principle provides a fundamental framework for effective communication. Proposed by Grice (1975), this principle comprises four maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relation (Relevance), and Manner. These maxims lead participants to deliver sufficient, authentic, appropriate, and clear information. However, in real communication, speakers do not always follow these principles. Instead, they may deliberately violate them, a phenomenon known as flouting maxims. This strategy is not a failure of communication but a way to convey implied meanings or implications, such as sarcasm, politeness, or emotional expression (Arifin & Suprayitno, 2017).

Flouting maxims is significant because it reflects how speakers communicate indirectly. For instance, a speaker may give irrelevant responses to avoid sensitive topics or use ambiguity to hide true feelings. These strategies enrich communication by allowing deeper meanings to emerge beyond literal expressions. Such phenomena are found in natural conversations and are effectively represented in films, where dialogue often mirrors real-life interactions. As noted by Ryan (2020), films serve as a valuable medium for pragmatic analysis because they present language use alongside emotional expression, intonation, and social context. Similarly, Xu and Wijitsopon (2023) argue that film dialogues reflect authentic linguistic patterns, making them suitable data sources for studying language in use.

This study focuses on the Indonesian film *"Bila Esok Ibu Tiada"*, which portrays emotional dynamics within a family after the father's death. The characters frequently express feelings such as grief, affection, and conflict indirectly, relying on pragmatic strategies rather than explicit statements. The central character, Mother, serves as the emotional foundation of the family. Her declining health forces her children Ranika, Rangga, Rania, and Hening to confront unresolved issues, pent-up emotions, and unexpressed feelings. Each child reacts differently: Ranika, the eldest, works in an office and is responsible for her younger siblings; Rangga, the only son, dreams of becoming a successful musician but struggles with insecurities; Rania, the middle child, is sensitive and works as an actress; while Hening, the youngest, is still grappling with her teenage years (Idiani, 2025). The narrative follows their journey from denial and conflict to acceptance and reconciliation, guided by Mother's wisdom and indirect communication. Various forms of flouting maxim such as irony, topic shifts, and ambiguity, are clear in their interactions. These strategies enable characters to convey implicit meanings, including sarcasm, emotional discomfort, and hidden pain, while maintaining politeness or avoiding confrontation. As a result, the film provides rich data for analyzing how language is exercised to form interpersonal contacts and emotional tension.

Although many studies have explored flouting maxims in films and media, most research has focused on Western contexts. For example, studies on talk shows and films such as *"La La Land"* and *"Sherlock Holmes"* reveal that flouting maxim frequently occurs, particularly in the maxims of quantity and relation (relevance) often to create humor, provide elaboration, or avoid direct responses (Marlisa & Hidayat, 2020; Wahyuni et al., 2019; Ramadhan & Elfiondri, 2024). Similarly, Akmal and Yana (2020) found that flouting maxim of quantity is the most dominant, as speakers incline to provide limited or ex-

cessive information to maintain emotional nuance or avoid confrontation. However, studies focusing on flouting maxims on Indonesian cinematic discourse remain limited (Mahpudin, 2020; Saefudin et al. 2025), as most Indonesian researchers focused much on analyzing popular films from abroad, especially the Hollywood productions (Ishaq & Putra, 2023; Nela & Putri, 2024; Tunliu et al. 2025). If any, the discourse on Indonesian films are often focused on other aspects of analysis such as stereotypes (Mayesti, 2023), intrinsic and extrinsic sociocultural values (Suparno, 2015) or biographical Islamic heroes (Nurmansyah, 2023).

Based on this gap, the present study aims to analyze the types and ways Gricean maxims flouted in *"Bila Esok Ibu Tiada"*. The research addresses two main questions: 1) what the Gricean maxims are flouted in *"Bila Esok Ibu Tiada"* film and 2) how do the pragmatic implicatures behind the flouting of Gricean maxims in *"Bila Esok Ibu Tiada"* film. By answering this question, this study aims to provide a deeper consideration of how indirect communication strategies operate in film dialogue.

This study lays the foundation for both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it contributes to the field of pragmatics by demonstrating how the Cooperative Principle functions in cinematic discourse, particularly in conveying implicit meanings such as irony and ambiguity. Practically, this study can help students, educators, and researchers better understand how language is employed to show emotions and implied meanings in communication. Classroom activities focused on examining flouting maxim in film and TV dialogue have shown strong results in improving students' skills in understanding and producing implicatures (Ishihara & Cohen, 2021). Additionally, it offers insights for future research on maxim flouting in Indonesian films, highlighting the weight of a cultural milieu in pragmatic analysis.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method within the framework of pragmatics to analyze the types and ways meaning is carried over in language practice as pragmatic implicatures in film dialogues. The study is substantiated in Grice's Cooperative Principle proposed by Grice (1975), particularly concentrating on the flouting of conversational maxims (quantity, quality, relation, and manner) to reveal implied meanings or implicatures. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the data consist of verbal utterances and the analysis emphasizes interpretation rather than quantification (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The object of this study is the Indonesian film *Bila Esok Ibu Tiada*, which acts as the primary data source. The film was selected because of its rich emotional interactions and natural conversational dialogues that reflect family dynamics and implicit communication. The corpus comprises selected 23 dialogues containing instances of maxim flouting from a 2-hour length film. These utterances are analyzed within their conversational contexts to understand the intended meanings behind them.

The researcher functions as the main instrument in this study, supported by data sheets used to classify and organize the findings. The instruments include the film script and self-transcribed subtitles by the researchers to ensure the accuracy of the transcription. Secondary data from books and academic journals on pragmatics and maxim flouting are also used to support the theoretical framework and interpretation.

Data were collected through observation techniques. The researcher watched the film repeatedly to gain a comprehensive understanding of the storyline and context. All relevant dialogues were transcribed, and utterances containing potential flouting of maxims were identified and noted. Each selected dialogue was then categorized based on the type of maxim flouted. Data analysis goes along the interactive prototypical suggested by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which comprises three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. First, relevant utterances were selected and simplified. Second, the data were organized into tables and descriptive narratives. Finally, each utter-

ance was analyzed to decide the type of maxim flouted, the conversational context, the implied meaning, and the pragmatic reasons behind the flouting, such as expressing politeness, irony, or emotional nuance. This process allows for a systematic understanding of how maxim flouting works as a communicative stratagem in cinematic discourse.

RESULT/FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This study examines 23 dialogues from “*Bila Esok Ibu Tiada*” film using Grice’s Cooperative Principle (1975). Although this principle includes four maxims: quantity, quality, relation (relevance), and manner, speakers may flout them, resulting in conversational implicatures, where meaning is understood beyond the literal utterance (Levinson, 1983). The most frequently flouting maxim is the Maxim of Relation (Relevance). In many cases, characters do not provide relevant responses, and this serves to reveal their inner feelings, such as sadness, guilt, and unresolved conflicts. This supports the argument put forward by Yus (2011), who explains that flouting Maxim of Relation (Relevance) often produces strong implicatures in interpersonal communication because it encourages the listener to understand deeper meanings. This pattern is reinforced by recent pragmatic studies; for example, in interview contexts, flouting maxim of the relation (relevance) principle have been very common, often through abrupt topic changes that subtly communicate unspoken intentions (Azmi et al., 2024).

Types of maxim flouting found in “*Bila Esok Ibu Tiada*” film

The analysis reveals that flouting occurs across all four maxims throughout the film, though with varying frequencies and communicative functions. Each instance of maxim flouting was identified based on observable deviations from the expected cooperative norms, followed by an interpretive analysis of the implicature generated. The flouting of maxims in this film serves diverse pragmatic purposes, including the expression of emotions, the conveyance of indirect criticism, the softening of sensitive topics, and the reinforcement of interpersonal relationships between characters. These findings reflect the naturalistic native characters speaking in Indonesian in a local cinematic discourse.

Furthermore, the distribution of maxim flouting across the 23 dialogues indicates certain maxims are flouted more frequently than others, suggesting that communicative strategies are more dominant within the narrative context of the film. The Maxim of Relation (Relevance), for instance, was found to be flouted most frequently, as characters often respond with seemingly unrelated utterances that nevertheless carry significant implied meaning when interpreted within the broader situational and emotional context of the scene. On the contrary, the Maxim of Manner was flouted less frequently but produced notably complex implicatures, particularly in scenes involving conflict or emotional concealment.

Based on the analysis, 23 dialogues were identified as flouting Gricean maxims. The distribution of each type is presented Table 1.

Table 1. The data that used flouting maxim in the film

Types of Gricean Flouting	Occurrence	Proportion
Maxim of Quantity	6	26.0%
Maxim of Quality	2	8.6%
Maxim of Relation (Relevance)	8	34.7%
Maxim of Manner	7	30.4%
	23	99.7%

Pragmatic implicatures found in the type of flouting maxims in the film

The research question concerns the pragmatic implicatures generated by the flouting of Gricean maxims in the film. Drawing on Grice's (1975) framework, implicatures are meaning units that go beyond what is literally said, requiring the listener to apply contextual and inferential reasoning. Five main pragmatic implicature were identified in the dataset.

Evasion and Avoidance

The most recurrent pragmatic function of maxim flouting in the film is evasion. Characters frequently avoid answering questions, particularly emotionally charged ones, by shifting topics or providing minimal responses.

Time 01:24--01:30

H: "*Mbak Rania ya?*"

R3: "*Kok aku dibawa-bawa? Mau minum, gak? Obrolannya sudah mulai seru ini.*"

Translation:

H: "Is it you, Rania?"

R3: "Why you dragging me on this? Drink anyone? It is getting interesting."

Instead of directly answering the question, R3 shifts the topic by offering a drink and commenting on the conversation. The implicature suggests that R3 feels uncomfortable or self-conscious about being directly mentioned, so she avoids answering.

Time 09:44--09:47

T2 : "*Mau ke rumah Ibu jam berapa?*"

R2 : "*Lihat nanti. Aku sedang dapat ide. Tanggung.*"

Translation:

T2: "What time should we go to Mother's house?"

R2: "Later. I am working on something."

R2 does not provide a clear answer about the time. The implicature is that he prioritizes his work over family commitments and avoids giving a direct response.

Time 21:08--21:15

R2 : "*Mbak, lagi ulang tahun Ibu. Tahan dulu napa handphonennya. Budak korporat.*"

R1 : "*Kamu punya masalah apa si, ditolak lagi sama label?*"

Translation:

R2: "Mbak, it is Mother's birthday. Put your phone away. You sure a corporate slave"

R1: "What's is wrong with you? Another label rejected you?"

Instead of responding to R2's request, Ranika gives a sarcastic and personal comment about his work. The implicature shows emotional tension and conflict between the siblings.

Time 26:03--26:09

R2: "*Kamu happy?*"

T2: "*Sudah malam ni mas. Tidur yuk.*"

Translation:

R2: "Are you happy?"

T2: "It's already late. Let's sleep."

T2 does not directly answer R2's question about her happiness. The implicature suggests that Thea may feel uncomfortable expressing her true feelings or is trying to protect

Rangga from a difficult truth.

Time 26:15--26:20

R2 : "*Kamu kecewa sama aku?*"

T2 : "*Ni kamu kemakan omongan Mbak Nika ni. Omongan mbak Nika gak usah kamu masukin ke hati. Dia cuma lagi emosi. Kamu kaya gak kenal kakak kamu sendiri lho.*"

Translation:

R2: "Are you disappointed in me?"

T2: "See. Now, she is in your head. You know how she is when she gets emotional. It is your sister we are talking about."

Instead of giving a direct yes or no answer, T2 shifts the conversation to Mbak Nika's emotional condition. The implicature suggests that T2 is avoiding expressing her true feelings and is also trying to protect R2's feelings.

Time 01:37:24--01: 37:37

R2:" Untuk *apa kesini, Mbak?* "

R1:" Tidak *tahu.* "

Translation:

R2:" What did you come here for, Sis?"

R1:" I don't know."

R1's response is very short and provides almost no information. The implicature suggests deep sadness and emotional numbness after her mother's death. The most dominant pragmatic function flouting of maxim in this film is avoidance. Of the 23 instances, at least 8 cases show characters deliberately avoiding uncomfortable questions or topics. This finding reinforces the theory that in family communication, in Indonesian culture which values harmony, direct avoidance is often prioritized over open confrontation (Wijana, 2021). For example, at 01:24–01:30, when Hening asks, "Is that Rania?", Rania replies, "Why are you dragging me into this? Want a drink? The conversation's getting interesting now." The shift in topic to drinks and the comment about the conversation create the implication that Rania feels uncomfortable to be mentioned. She avoids confirming her identity because it might involve something embarrassing (a romantic relationship). The most poignant moment occurs at 01:37:24–01:37:37, when Ranika simply replies, "I don't know," to the question of why she came. This minimalist response, in the context of the grief following her mother's death, implies a profound emotional void she herself is unable to articulate the reason for her presence. Thus, the function of avoidance in this film is not merely a strategy to evade questions, but a reflection of an emotional burden so heavy that the characters are unable or dare not confront the truth directly.

Face-Saving and Politeness

Several instances of maxim flouting protecting the face of either the speaker or the addressee. Rather than confronting uncomfortable truths or situations, these characters use under informative or irrelevant responses to preserve harmony.

Time 11:31

T1: "*...Gak bisa lama-lama soalnya Mas sebentar lagi sampai rumah.*"

Translation:

T1: "...I can't stay long my husband will be home soon."

T1 provides a minimal reason for her departure without elaborating. The implicature suggests that she is observing social norms of politeness by avoiding overstaying her wel-

come.

Time 21:24

I : *"Makan dulu. Diskusinya nanti lagi."*

Translation:

I: "dig in. Let's talk later, okay.?"

I's response does not directly address the ongoing conflict but instead shifts the conversation to eating. The implicature suggests that she wants to stop the conflict from escalating and uses topic change as a way to manage the situation.

Time 26:15--26:20

R2 : *"Kamu kecewa sama aku?"*

T2 : *"Ni kamu kemakan omongan Mbak Nika ni. Omongan mbak Nika gak usah kamu masukin ke hati. Dia cuma lagi emosi. Kamu kaya gak kenal kakak kamu sendiri lho."*

Translation:

R2: "Are you disappointed in me?"

T2: "See. Now, she is in your head. You know how she is when she gets emotional. It is your sister we are talking about."

T2's deflection, where she redirects focus to Mbak Nika rather than addressing R2's question, can be understood as a positive politeness strategy: she protects R2's emotional well-being by softening the impact of a hurtful truth. In line with Brown and Levinson's theory (1987), several flouting maxims in this film protecting the face (self-image) of both the speaker and the addressee. At 11:31, Tante Esti offers the minimal reason, "I can't stay long because my husband will be home soon" without further elaboration. This lack of detail actually maintains politeness; she does not want to appear as though she has rushed to leave the birthday party, yet she also does not want to lie or give a long-winded excuse.

The most interesting part is at 26:15–26:20, when Thea faces Rangga's direct question: "Are you disappointed in me?" Rather than answering "yes" or "no" which could potentially hurt him, Thea shifts the focus to Mbak Nika: "You're just taking Mbak Nika's words at face value. She's just emotional right now." This diversionary strategy, within the framework of Brown and Levinson's theory, can be understood as a positive politeness strategy Thea protects Rangga's emotional well-being by softening the impact of a truth that might be painful. She does not need to acknowledge her disappointment because doing so would only exacerbate Rangga's pain, as he already feels unappreciated. Thus, flouting maxims in this film serves not only as a means of avoidance but also as a sophisticated politeness mechanism to maintain interpersonal relationships amidst a fragile family dynamic heavy with emotional baggage.

Emotional Expression and Intensity

Flouting Maxim of Manner in particular functions as a vehicle for intense emotional expression. The disorderliness of the manner is itself meaningful; it tells the listener that the speaker's emotional state has overwhelmed their capacity for calm, structured speech.

Time 55:39

T1: *"Diam! Kalian semuanya diam. Berhenti bicara dan mulai mendengarkan."*

Translation:

T1: "Quiet. All of you. Stop talking and start listening."

T1 delivers her utterance in a very emotional and abrupt way. The implicature shows urgency and also reflects her authority within the family.

Time 01:02:18

I: *"Maafkan ibu ya, anakku. Maafkan ibu."*

Translation:

I: "Forgive me, my dear. Forgive me."

The repetition of the apology shows that the speaker is not being brief. The implicature shows deep regret and strong emotional feelings as a mother.

Time 01:21:06--01: 21:08

H: "*Mau pakai atau tidak, kamu itu mabuk-mabukan waktu Ibu sakit, Mbak.*"

Translation:

H: "Whether you using it or not, you were getting drunk when Mom was sick, Sis."

H expresses her accusation in a very emotional and somewhat disorganized way. The implicature suggests that H feels deep anger and wants to blame Mbak Nika for what she sees as neglect.

Time 01:39:10

R1: "*Aku gak tau sekarang mau ngapain. Aku kaya kehilangan arah.*"

Translation:

R1: "I don't know what to do now. I feel like I've lost my compass."

R1 expresses her feelings in a vague and metaphorical way by saying "lost my way." The implicature reflects confusion and emotional distress after losing her mother.

The flouting maxim of manner consistently express the intensity of emotions that cannot be conveyed through direct and structured speech. At 01:02:18, the mother's repeated apology "Please forgive me, my dear. Please forgive me" flouting the manner maxim because it is not concise; yet, it is precisely from this flouting that the implicature of deep remorse and a mother's boundless love emerges.

Between 01:21:06 and 01:21:08, Hening made an emotional and somewhat disorganized accusation: "Whether you admit it or not, you were out drinking when Mom was sick, Mbak." In a single outburst of anger, Hening mixed up various issues: suspicions of drug use, Mbak Rania's absence while Mom was ill, and long-suppressed disappointment. This disorganization implies an accumulation of anger and frustration that has exploded because it was never expressed before. The most poignant moment is at 01:39:10, when Ranika expresses her feelings in a vague and metaphorical way: "I don't know what to do now. I feel like I've lost my way." This "lost my way" metaphor violates the maxim of manner because it is imprecise and vague, yet, it is precisely this vagueness that conveys the implication of deep confusion and emotional distress following the loss of her mother. Thus, the flouting of the maxim of manner in this film is not a weakness in communication, but evidence that when emotions reach their peak, irregularity in speech becomes the most authentic way to convey what cannot be expressed with neat, structured words. As stated by Sperber, Wilson, and Wilson (1986), the manner of conveying something is part of its meaning, and in this film, the characters' manner of speaking reflects their deepest and most vulnerable emotional states.

Interpersonal Conflict and Tension

Several flouting instances occur in contexts of interpersonal conflict, where characters use irrelevant or sarcastic responses to signal hostility or frustration without direct confrontation.

Time 21:08--21:15

R2 : "*Mbak, lagi ulang tahun Ibu. Tahan dulu napa handphonennya. Budak korporat.*"

R1 : "*Kamu punya masalah apa si, ditolak lagi sama label?*"

Translation:

R2: "Mbak, it is Mother's birthday. Put your phone away. You sure a corporate slave"

R1: "What's is wrong with you? Another label rejected you?"

R1's sarcastic remark to R2 generates implicature of resentment and sibling rivalry.

This indirect expression of conflict allows the character to convey negative emotions without fully committing to open hostility.

Time 23:13--23:21

R3 : *"Iya deh. Cuma kamu doang yang jelas, semua gak jelas."*

Translation:

R3: "I get it. You are the decent one."

R3's statement that only R3 is "clear" while everyone else is not is clearly exaggerated and sarcastic. The implicature reflects R3's frustration and resentment toward the situation in the family. Between 21:08-21:15, when Rangga asked Ranika to put her phone away because it was their mother's birthday, Ranika responded with the sarcastic remark, "What's your problem? Did the label reject you again?" This breach of maxim of relation (relevance) implies animosity and rivalry between siblings.

A similar pattern is seen between 11:13 p.m. and 11:21 p.m., when Rania responds to her sister's remarks with sarcasm: "Yeah, right. You're the only one who's clear; everyone else is unclear." Rania's statement, which is clearly exaggerated and factually untrue, claiming that only Ranika is "clear" while the others are not flouting the maxim of quality because it contains a deliberate falsehood. However, it is precisely from this flouting that an implicature emerges regarding Rania's frustration and resentment toward the family situation, particularly toward Ranika's attitude, which often belittles the artistic professions pursued by Rania and Rangga. Rania's sarcasm serves as a weapon to depict the injustice she feels: that Ranika always considers herself the most right and the most deserving, while the contributions of other family members are never appreciated. What is interesting about these two examples is that the conflict is never expressed directly. No character says, "I hate the way you treat me" or "You don't appreciate my work." Instead, they use innuendo and sarcasm, forms of flouting maxims to convey hostility and frustration without having to engage in an open confrontation that could worsen the relationship. This strategy reflects the reality of family communication, where conflicts are often not resolved head-on but are expressed through subtle sarcasm, topic shifts, or irrelevant responses. Thus, flouting maxims in the context of interpersonal conflict in this film serves as an emotional safety valve: characters can vent their disappointment and anger without having to completely destroy the family structure. This is a form of indirect yet effective conflict communication, where what is left unsaid is often more meaningful than what is explicitly spoken.

Humor and Social Bonding

A smaller subset of flouting instances serves a positive social function: the creation of humor and the strengthening of interpersonal bonds.

Time 01:01

A: *"Tapi, semuanya dimulai...ini kata mereka ya. Ini bidadariku yang satu ini."*

Translation:

A: "But it all started with...they said..well, this one, my angel."

The unclear reference to "they" and the playful wording create ambiguity. The implicature suggests that Ayah is trying to introduce someone in a playful and affectionate way rather than in a direct manner.

Time 02:48

I: *"Tidak boleh segelas berdua sejak pandemi."*

Translation:

I: "Since the pandemic, we're not allowed to share a glass."

She used a humorous reference to pandemic hygiene rules to explain why they should not share a glass. The implicature is to lighten the mood and make the situation more re-

laxed. The flouting of the quality maxim at 02:48 and the flouting of the maxim manner at 01:01 (in which the father introduces someone in an unclear and playful manner) serve to create humor and warmth within the family. These findings suggest that even though the film has a sad theme, flouting of maxims can still serve a positive function in strengthening social bonds at certain moments.

When Mother says, “You’re not allowed to share a glass since the pandemic,” as a reason for not sharing a drinking glass with Father, the utterance clearly flouts the Maxim of Quality because the statement is not factually true there has never been an actual rule prohibiting people from sharing a glass since the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this flouting is intentional and serves to create a humorous effect. The implicature conveyed is that Mother wants to lighten the atmosphere and make the situation more relaxed amid a serious conversation about dating and their children's maturity. The humor generated through this exaggeration strengthens the bond between Mother and Father as a married couple who can still joke with each other despite discussing a sensitive topic.

These two examples demonstrate that maxim flouting does not always carry negative connotations such as avoidance, conflict, or sadness. On the contrary, although occurring in a relatively small number of instances, maxim flouting can function as a means of creating warm and joyful moments of togetherness. In the context of “*Bila Esok Ibu Tiada*”, which is dominated by themes of loss and grief, the presence of humor through maxim flouting is particularly significant because it provides emotional contrast. It illustrates that, despite the suffering and challenges faced by the family, they still experience moments of happiness and affection that reinforce their familial bonds. Therefore, maxim flouting functions not only as a strategy for coping with conflict and sorrow but also as a relational device that strengthens family solidarity and intimacy amid the storms of life.

Unspoken Emotions and Interpersonal Relations: Maxim Flouting and Pragmatic Implicatures in Film

Table 2 provides a consolidated overview of all 23 data points, categorizing each by time, maxim flouted, and the primary pragmatic implicature generated.

As Table 2 illustrates, the Maxim of Relation (Relevance) is the most often flouted (8 occurrences, 34.7%), followed by the Maxim of Manner (7 occurrences, 30.4%), the Maxim of Quantity (6 occurrences, 26.0%), and the Maxim of Quality (2 occurrences, 8.6%). This distribution suggests that the film's characters most commonly generate implicatures through topic avoidance and conversational redirection, reflecting the emotional complexity of the narrative's themes of family, loss, and unspoken grief.

The findings of this study affirm the centrality of Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle as a basis for understanding the pragmatic dimensions of cinematic dialogue. In line with recent pedagogical research, the ability to observe and interpret such flouting of maxims is increasingly recognized as a key component of EFL learners' pragmatic and intercultural communication competence (Putri, 2024). The 23 instances of maxim flouting analysed in “*Bila Esok Ibu Tiada*” film demonstrate that conversational implicature is not merely a linguistic curiosity but a powerful narrative device through which character, emotion, and relational dynamics are communicated.

The high frequency of relation (relevance) maxim flouting is particularly noteworthy. In many cases, characters do not give relevant responses, and this becomes a way to show their inner feelings, such as grief, guilt, and unresolved conflict. This supports the idea of Yus (2011), who explains that flouting maxim of relation (relevance) often creates strong implicatures in interpersonal communication because they inspire the listener to understand deeper meanings.

The flouting of the maxim of manner seems in emotional scenes. The use of unclear, repetitive, or disorganized expressions such as Ibu's apology, Tante Esti's command, and Ranika's emotional statement shows feelings that cannot be fully expressed through direct words. As stated by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson (1986), the way something is said is

also part of its meaning. In this film, the way characters speak reflects their emotional condition.

Table 2. Summary of Gricean Maxim Flouting in “*Bila Esok Ibu Tiada*” film

No	Timestamp	Maxim Flouted	Pragmatic Implicature
1	01:01	Manner	Playful/indirect introduction; implies affection
2	01:24–01:30	Relation (relevance)	Avoidance of confirming identity; evasion strategy
3	01:34	Manner	Playful and indirect introduction
4	02:01–02:07	Quantity	Shyness or reluctance to elaborate on information source
5	02:13–02:24	Manner	Topic is embarrassing; avoidance through distraction
6	02:30–02:35	Relation (relevance)	Confusion; seeks clarification indirectly
7	02:48	Quality	Humorous exaggeration to lighten the mood
8	08:15	Quantity	Frustration and ambition about career limitations
9	09:44–09:47	Relation (relevance)	Work prioritized over family commitments
10	11:31	Quantity	Politeness; desire to leave without causing offence
11	12:36	Relation (relevance)	Personal romantic interest revealed through topic shift
12	15:02–15:03	Quantity	Defensiveness; avoidance of blame
13	21:08–21:15	Relation (relevance)	Emotional tension; sarcastic deflection
14	21:24	Relation (relevance)	Conflict-reduction; defusing tension through distraction
15	23:13–23:21	Quality	Frustration expressed via sarcasm and exaggeration
16	26:03–26:09	Relation (relevance)	Avoidance of emotional disclosure; topic redirection
17	26:15–26:20	Relation (relevance)	Face-saving; emotional consideration for partner
18	55:39	Manner	Authority and urgency conveyed through abruptness
19	01:02:18	Manner	Deep regret and sorrow through repetitive apology
20	01:21:06– 01:21:08	Manner	Anger and frustration; emotionally charged accusation
21	01:37:24– 01:37:37	Quantity	Confusion and emotional emptiness; minimal disclosure
22	01:39:10	Manner	Emotional confusion and loss of direction
23	01:40:32	Relation (relevance)	Indirect clarification-seeking; emotional reticence

The lower number of flouting of the maxim of quality may relate to the serious tone of the film. The limited use of it in this film shows that humor is only used in certain moments to reduce tension. Overall, the findings show that film dialogue, like real-life conversation, follows pragmatic principles that go beyond literal meaning. The flouting of Gricean maxims in this film is deliberate and meaningful. It reflects how people communicate when dealing with strong emotions, complex relationships, and family issues.

The research findings indicate that the Maxim of Relation (Relevance) is the most common type of flouting, with eight cases (34.7% of the total data). This is interesting because it aligns with the findings of Ramadhan and Elfiondri (2024) in the film “*Sherlock Holmes*”, who also found that the flouting of the maxim of relation (relevance) was the most dominant (18 out of 30 utterances). However, unlike the *Sherlock Holmes* film, which uses maxim of relation (relevance) flouting to avoid protracted discussions, in “*Bila Esok Ibu Tiada*” maxim of relation (relevance) serves to avoid sensitive topics.

When the findings of this study are compared with previous studies on flouting of Grice’s maxims, striking similarities and differences emerge, confirming that while this phenomenon is universal, its manifestation is highly context-dependent. All previous

studies reviewed, including those conducted by Marlisa and Hidayat (2020) on the talk show “Good Morning America,” Wahyuni, Arifin, and Lubis (2019) on “La La Land,” Ramadhan and Elfiondri (2024) on “Sherlock Holmes,” and Akmal and Yana (2020) on “Kingdom of Heaven,” agree that flouting of the four maxims Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner occur across various discourse genres. This shared finding reinforces Grice’s (1975) original assertion that the deliberate flouting of conversational norms constitute a universal pragmatic strategy, not a sign of communication failure.

There is a striking similarity between this study and the work by Ramadhan and Elfiondri (2024) on the film “Sherlock Holmes.” In both studies, the Maxim of Relation (Relevance) was found to be the most frequently violated, with Ramadhan and Elfiondri reporting 18 cases (60%) of such flouting. This similarity suggests that, regardless of whether the genre is detective fiction or family drama, shifting the topic or providing irrelevant answers serves as a common and effective strategy for generating conversational implicatures. In both films, characters avoid giving direct answers: Sherlock Holmes to conceal his investigative reasoning, and family members in “*Bila Esok Ibu Tiada*” to hide painful emotions or avoid sensitive topics.

However, the differences among these various studies provide valuable insights and are more significant. Although this study found that the Principle of Relation (Relevance) was the most dominant (34.7%), studies on the Western films “La La Land” (Wahyuni, Arifin, & Lubis, 2019) and “Kingdom of Heaven” (Akmal & Yana, 2020) both reported that the Quantity Maxim was flouting most frequently. This difference varies pragmatic emphasis across cultural contexts and genres. Characters in Western dramas often violate the Quantity Principle by providing excessive or insufficient information to conceal true motives, add depth to interactions, or maintain an indirect stance. In contrast, characters in “*Bila Esok Ibu Tiada*” primarily violate the Maxim of Relation (Relevance) principle to alleviate emotional tension, avoid confrontation, and divert the conversation from topics that cause psychological distress, such as death, disappointment, and family conflict.

Furthermore, the pragmatic functions or motivations behind norm flouting in these programs vary significantly across different studies. Marlisa and Hidayat (2020) found that norm flouting in the talk show “Good Morning America” primarily fosters pleasant communication, reinforce explanations, or create humor, reflecting the entertainment-oriented nature of the genre. In contrast, this study identifies five main pragmatic functions, with evasion and avoidance being the most dominant, followed by emotional expression and intensity through breaches of etiquette. These findings align with Wijana’s (2021) observation that Indonesian communication culture places strong emphasis on social harmony, saving face, and avoiding direct conflict in discussions regarding sensitive topics such as death or family disappointments. Therefore, the high frequency of Maxim of Relation (Relevance) flouting in this film is not coincidental but is rooted in the culture.

Flouting maxim of manner norms serve as another point of comparison. In this study, flouting maxim of manner norms ranked second in frequency of occurrence (30.4%), appearing in emotionally charged scenes whereby characters express sadness, anger, or urgency through irregular, repetitive, or vague language. Akmal and Yana (2020) also identified 7 instances of maxim manner in “Kingdom of Heaven,” though in that film, such flouting serves a broader narrative purpose. In Indonesian family dramas, breaches of etiquette norms are more closely linked to the expression of repressed emotions such as regret (the mother’s repeated apologies), frustration (Hening’s emotionally disorganized accusations), and helplessness (Ranika’s metaphorical statements about losing her way). This suggests that in a high-context culture like Indonesia, the way something is spoken including its irregularity carries significant emotional weight that complements or even supersedes the literal meaning of the words.

Finally, the low frequency of flouting of quality principles in this study (only 2 cases, 8.6%) is consistent with the film’s serious and emotionally somber tone. Unlike talk shows or comedies that use sarcasm and hyperbole for humorous effect, “*Bila Esok Ibu*

Tiada” uses quality flouting sparingly, mainly in moments when characters attempt to ease tension through gentle humor, such as the mother’s witty reference to pandemic hygiene rules. This contrasts with the findings of Wayon and Suastini (2025) in the film “Uptown Girls,” where quality flouting occurs more frequently and often function as sarcasm or overt criticism.

Referring to the findings of this study, one of the main strengths of this study is hence its examination of flouting of the principles in an Indonesian family drama film, a context that has received relatively little attention in previous pragmatic research. This film was also chosen because it contains numerous instances of flouting. These findings also enrich the application of Grice’s Cooperative Principles in cinematic discourse, in the Indonesian context. Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. First, the analysis focuses on only one film, thereby limiting the generalizability of the findings. Second, the interpretation of implicatures relies on qualitative analysis involving an element of researcher subjectivity.

The findings of this study indicate that flouting of Grice’s maxims in “*Bila Esok Ibu Tiada*” functions as meaningful pragmatic strategies, rather than as flouting of communication itself. The dominance of the Maxim of Relation (Relevance) suggests that characters often rely on indirect speech, topic shifts, and avoidance to convey emotions that are difficult to express openly. This pattern reflects the film’s emotional intensity as well as the influence of Indonesian sociocultural values that prioritize harmony, saving face, and avoiding conflict. A comparison with previous studies further reveals that while flouting of Grice’s maxims is a universal pragmatic phenomenon, their frequency and communicative purposes vary according to genre, narrative context, and cultural background. The five pragmatic functions identified suggest that the flouting of the maxims in this film are not communication failures, but deliberate and meaningful strategies for navigating complex family relationships, expressing emotions that are difficult to put into words, and ultimately conveying messages of love, regret, and sorrow that cannot be explicitly stated. Thus, this study confirms that conversational implicatures function not only as linguistic mechanisms for conveying implicit meaning but also as important narrative for depicting emotions, interpersonal relationships, and cultural norms within cinematic discourse

CONCLUSION

This study examines the flouting of Grice’s maxims in the Indonesian film “*Bila Esok Ibu Tiada*”, to identify the maxims flouted by the characters and analyzing the pragmatic implicatures behind these flouting. Based on an analysis of 23 dialogue excerpts, conclusions can be drawn as direct answers to the research questions.

Regarding the first research question, the findings indicate that all four of Grice’s maxims Relation (Relevance), Manner, Quantity, and Quality are violated in the film. Among these, the Maxim of Relation (Relevance) is the most frequently violated, representing 34.7% of the data. This is followed by the Maxim of Manner (30.4%), the Maxim of Quantity (26.0%), and the Maxim of Quality (8.6%). For the second research question, the dominance of maxim of relation (relevance) flouting indicates that characters often provide the pragmatic implicature to avoid or divert conversations, in emotionally sensitive contexts. Similarly, flouting the Principle of Manner reflects the pragmatic implicature of irregular, repetitive, or ambiguous language to convey intense emotions. Conversely, flouting of the Principle of Quantity occurs when characters pragmatically provide insufficient information, often as a strategy of avoidance or self-defence. The principle of quality is the least frequently violated and primarily appears in the pragmatic implicature of humor and sarcasm.

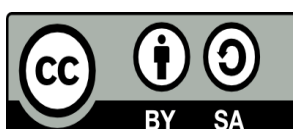
Future research is encouraged to examine a variety of Indonesian films, television series, or digital media to acquire broader insights into pragmatic behavior across genres and contexts. Researchers may also combine pragmatic analysis with sociocultural perspectives, discourse analysis, or audience reception to develop a more comprehensive un-

derstanding of the implicit meanings in cinematic communication. Such research will further enrich the body of research on pragmatics in Indonesian media discourse.

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