

## Flouted Maxims in The Ellen Show: Kris and Kylie Jenner Interview (2023)

Rivaldo<sup>1</sup>, Rekha Ramadhani Hidayat<sup>2</sup>, Sarah Syenta Mutiara Jingga<sup>3</sup>, Dwi Rahayu<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>English Literature Department, Faculty of Letters,  
Universitas Pamulang

Jl. Suryakencana No.1, Pamulang Bar., Kec. Pamulang, Kota Tangerang Selatan, Banten 15417

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to identify a linguistic feature based on The Ellen Show with Kris and Kylie Jenner. The study employs a descriptive qualitative method, focusing on a transcript of his utterances and conversations. Grice's (1975) theory is applied to identify instances where conversational maxims are flouted during the interview. Grice's theory outlines four maxims that contribute to effective communication: quantity (supplying accurate information in the proper amount), quality (supplying accurate information), relevance (maintaining the subject), and manners (being brief and organized). The findings reveal six of the maxims of quantity, three of the maxims of quality, three of relevance, and eight of manner. The analysis shows that the most prevalent type is the flouting of the maxim of manner. It indicates that the maxim of manners is the one that gets violated the most frequently, which suggests that the conversation often lacks clarity and is characterized by overlapping speech and indirectness. This prevalence highlights that the interaction between Kris and Kylie Jenner on The Ellen Show tends to be less straightforward and more complex, with participants frequently speaking in ways that could be clearer and more orderly.

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#### Corresponding Author:

**Dwi Rahayu**

Universitas Pamulang

Jl. Suryakencana No.1, Pamulang Bar., Kec. Pamulang, Kota Tangerang Selatan, Banten 15417

Email: [dosen02343@unpam.ac.id](mailto:dosen02343@unpam.ac.id)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Both spoken and written language play essential roles in our daily lives, allowing us to convey ideas and information to others. Spoken language refers to conversations, speeches, debates, or utterances in which both the speaker and the listener provide a simple answer. The individuals who participate in the conversation, the locator and the interlocutor, should also be active participants in conducting a good conversation. If one is inactive, the conversation will not function properly. Therefore, the speaker and the hearer must cooperate to ensure the communication process runs smoothly and successfully. This requires mutual understanding of the conversation topic. The success of a conversation largely depends on specific rules followed by the participants. These rules are known as maxims. The maxim in pragmatics is a term used in social interactions, especially in conversations, to identify rules, principles, or guidelines that guide social interactions (Khusna et al., 2021).

An explanation for how individuals can cooperate in conversation is found in the discipline of pragmatics in linguistics. It's known as the cooperation principle. H. Paul Grice, a philosopher, first proposed this theory of conversation in 1975. According to him, the cooperation principle is predicated on the idea that people would generally make an effort to be simple, truthful, relevant, and instructive in a discourse. It implies that each

participant is expected to provide the necessary contributions to the conversations. Applying these rules of maxims allows for smooth communication, minimizes misunderstandings, and ensures the interlocutor receives the message well. Therefore, understanding and using maxims are crucial in various communication contexts, everyday situations, and formal interactions such as television interviews. In conversations, maxims act as unwritten guidelines that help each participant understand and respond appropriately. Conversations can become disorganized and challenging to follow without these guidelines.

People sometimes engage with others in ways that do not follow the maxims. For whatever reason, individuals break the rule of maxims and do not follow the rules in order to express their opinions. In this situation, the speakers flout and violate the maxims to achieve their goals. When the four sub-maxims are not intentionally followed or fulfilled by the speakers, it violates the maxim. People break a rule when they know that the person listening will not see the truth and will only get the basic idea of what they are saying.

For instance, if a speaker provides less or less information, the interlocutor may become confused or bored. Similarly, if the information given is irrelevant or dishonest, the conversation can lose direction, and the trust between participants can be disrupted. Therefore, these maxims ensure that communication remains directed, efficient, and mutually respectful. According to Zebua et al. (2017), they purposefully create a false impression; this tactic of violating the principle is covertly and subtly misleading. The listener mistakenly assumes the speaker is participating while they are intentionally offering insufficient information and saying something dishonest, irrelevant, or unclear.

At the same time, flouting refers to the act of violating the rules of the cooperative principle or Grice's maxims. Ramadhanisya & Hartati (2021) stated that a speaker who refuses to cooperate during a conversation is known as flouting the maxim. Speakers sometimes break the cooperative principle, and they want their listeners to know about it. This indicates that they want their listeners to know that they don't consciously abide by the law. Flouting can be used to convey emphasis, irony, or humour, among other things. For instance, by flouting the maxim of quantity, a speaker might provide more or less information than necessary to imply something indirectly.

Similarly, violating the principle of relevance could entail adding seemingly unrelated facts to convey a concealed message or carefully redirecting the topic. They choose not to cooperate, so those who are listening have to figure out what they mean. This makes the relationship more exciting and lets them communicate more deeply. Thus, flouting is more than just a violation of conversational standards; it's a clever linguistic strategy that adds depth and complexity to human discourse.

However, this research aims to apply this theory by analysing a celebrity interview from The Ellen Show featuring Kris and Kylie Jenner as guests. Considering Grice's maxim theory, this research will explore how maxim violations occur in the interview. The analysis will focus on the four types of maxims identified by Grice: quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. By examining how interview participants use or violate these maxims, this research will uncover their communicative strategies and their effects in achieving specific goals in the conversation. By linking Grice's maxim theory with a practical analysis of a specific celebrity interview, this research aims to better understand how conversation norms are applied in popular media. This research will enrich our knowledge of linguistic theories and provide insights into how contextual factors and specific communicative goals influence communication.

## **2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This section includes two parts: relevant studies and the theory of maxims. The relevant studies contain several related studies of maxims. Furthermore, the maxims theory by Grice contains a fundamental theory used to construct and compile this article.

### **2.1 Relevant Studies**

This article synthesizes insights from various articles on Grice's Maxim Cooperation Principle, exploring its applications and implications in contemporary linguistic and communicative contexts. Various studies investigate cooperation in communication that is both unconsciously and consciously violated. It has potential in cross-cultural comparison, political discourse, and gender due to the conversational activity. Thi et al. (2020) and Prasatyo & Kurniyawati (2021) use the same object, namely the talk show on YouTube and Grice's theory, to investigate the conversation. However, there are gaps in what Thi et al. (2020) stand for in the gender conversation investigation in an American Talk show, including observing and comparing the conversation with flouted maxims using Grice's and Lakoff's theory. Prasetyo and Kuniyawati (2021) delve into the conversation about the coronavirus on a talk show. Coronavirus is a health phenomenon that affects society. Moreover, Listiana Izar et al. (2023) wrote in their article the results of communicative speech analysis with the object of a video podcast that discusses the social phenomenon of 'Having College is Not Important'. They transcribed the Indonesian language, which was then translated into English, to find the maxim that was violated in the podcast.

On the other hand, some articles combine Grice's cooperative theory with political discourse and analyse the utterances of influential political figures in several countries, as in the journal article from Hadi & Isa (2023), who observed a podcast interview with Malaysian political figure Syed Shaddiq. Furthermore, the article from Farikha

& Nuzulia (2020) analysed Donald Trump's interview as a representative of America. Both articles explain the analysis of the speech of political figures who are believed to be able to influence the wider community.

In conclusion, this study synthesises insights from various articles on Grice's Maxim Cooperation Principle, demonstrating its extensive applications and implications in contemporary linguistic and communicative contexts. The principle is explored through diverse studies examining unconscious and conscious communication violations, revealing its relevance in cross-cultural comparisons, political discourse, and gender studies. Analyses by Thi et al. (2020) and Prasetyo and Kuniyawati (2021) focus on YouTube talk shows, examining gender conversations and Coronavirus discussions, respectively. Listiana Izar et al. (2023) further expand this exploration by analysing a podcast on the social phenomenon of education. Additionally, Hadi and Isa (2023) and Farikha and Nuzulia (2020) apply Grice's theory to political discourse, studying influential speeches by figures such as Syed Shaddiq and Donald Trump. These studies highlight the versatile application of Grice's cooperative principle in understanding and interpreting modern communication across various media platforms.

Additionally, the predominant use of qualitative methods with limited quantitative analysis points to a need for more comprehensive mixed-methods research to offer a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Addressing these gaps would provide nuanced insights into the role of cultural and contextual factors in conversational dynamics, enhancing the generalizability of findings across diverse settings.

## 2.2 Theory of Maxims

Language is an essential part of communication. Humans use language to convey their thoughts, ideas, emotions, or feelings (Sirbu, 2015). On the one hand, communication is also needed to communicate necessary information. In its delivery, sometimes, speakers provide excessive information that does not follow what is being discussed. This can lead to ineffective, disorganised, and unresponsive chatter or implicature. Therefore, Grice's (1975) theory builds rules to create a more communicative, less wordy, and efficient conversation, called the principle of cooperation. The term 'cooperation' reflects the purpose of conversation and first appeared alongside the explanation of implicature in Grice's article "Logic and Communication" (1975).

In conversations, speakers usually need to realise that they violate maxims by providing excessive information, too brief, or out of the context of the conversation due to factors of discomfort and dislike for the topic of conversation, especially in TV programs such as talk shows. Usually, guest stars violate the rules of maxims and provide unnecessary information due to the attitude that must be maintained, the fact that they are not suitable for the topic of conversation, and so on. Maxims can be interpreted in two ways: by observing them or not. The maxims' rules must also be followed in order for them to be observed.

Furthermore, Grice (1975) classified the non-observance of maxims into five types: flouting, violating, opting out, infringing, and suspending. Flouting a maxim occurs when a speaker fails to follow it without intent to mislead the audience while breaching a maxim occurs when the speaker wants to do so. Opting out of a maxim indicates unwillingness to comply with its requirements. Infringing a maxim occurs when a speaker has poor verbal competence, cognitive disability, or cannot communicate clearly or concisely due to informational impairment. Suspending a maxim occurs when cultural or unique events, such as using taboo words, prevent direct communication.

Additionally, Grice's principle of cooperation focuses on effectiveness in communication. Meanwhile, the term maxim used in this principle refers to the fundamental rules of the principle of cooperation, which include the maxim of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner (Grice, 1975). The maxim of quantity produces clear and informative conversations that give speakers enough information. The maxim of quality organises the conversation following the facts so that the speakers must provide appropriate evidence; the maxim of relevance requires speakers to provide information that matches what is being discussed, and the maxim of manner usually requires a straightforward response.

In conclusion, language plays a vital role in human communication, facilitating the conveying of thoughts, emotions, and information. Grice's principle of cooperation, established to ensure effective and efficient communication, is essential in maintaining clarity and relevance in conversations. By adhering to the maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner, speakers can avoid providing excessive or irrelevant information, thus enhancing the effectiveness of their interactions. However, in contexts such as TV talk shows, these maxims are often violated due to various factors, including discomfort with the topic or the need to maintain a confident attitude. Understanding and applying these maxims can significantly improve conversational coherence and responsiveness. Ultimately, Grice's theory underscores the importance of cooperation in achieving meaningful and organized communication.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

The researchers employed qualitative research methods. According to Williams & Cutler (2020), qualitative methods include interviews, qualitative questionnaires, case studies, action research, observation, content analysis, and systematic reviews. The data for this study consisted of written transcripts from the dialogue between one host and three guests in a downloaded video. After obtaining the video transcript, the researchers converted

it into written form, analysed and categorised the instances where conversational maxims were flouted, and explained the reasons for these violations based on the guests and hosts' utterances. The data was then examined through three stages. First, the researchers identified the maxims that were flouted. Second, they explained why the hosts and guests violated these maxims. Third, they presented their findings and conclusions in response to the research questions. This study also aims to help people grasp the meaning behind other people's statements and steer clear of misunderstandings to have effective communication. While conversational partners may sometimes flout maxims, the researchers hope to facilitate smoother and more effective communication by recognizing the types of flouting and their underlying reasons.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

##### 4.1 Result of Study

This part provides and analyses the results of the Ellen Show's flout of the maxims that invite Kris and Kylie as guests. According to Grice's classification, four types of conversational maxims are flouting (1975). The maxims that apply to quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. The list of maxims that are flouted is summarized in the table below.

Table 1. Flouting Maxims

	Types of Maxims					
	Maxim of Quantity		Maxim of Quality	Maxim of Manner		Maxim of Relevance
	Less	More		Overlapping	Distraction	
		4	2	3	7	1
	6		3	8		3
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>					

Based on the data above, the first result (table 1) shows that the frequency maxim of manners is the highest among the other maxims. Based on the data, the maxim of manners appeared eight times. The second highest maxim is the maxim of quantity, which appeared six times, followed by the maxim of quality, which appeared three times, and the maxim of relevance, which appeared three times in the video. According to that result, the interaction or conversation on the videos tends to be less straightforward and more complex, with participants frequently speaking in ways that could be clearer and more orderly.

##### 4.2 Discussion

Below is the discussion of the result of how the guest speaker flouts maxims. Below are the abbreviations used in the discussion and analysis:

KR: Kris Jenner

KY: Kylie

EL: Ellen

ST: Stormi

##### 4.2.1 Maxim of Quantity

Datum 1

EL: How much money do you have on you right now?

KY: Honestly, **I don't really**-- I just have my credit card.

Flouted: At minute 2.24, his answer was less informative than expected, and he avoided specifics. It was because Ellen asked a question about the specifics of the cash under Kylie, but Kylie answered in a non-specific way, instead giving an answer that was less than the specifics of Ellen's question. which made Ellen ask another question regarding the answer given by Kylie, and it took a long time to discuss.

Datum 2

EL: The most you carry around is \$100?

KR: **Maybe a couple hundred.** Yeah, listen, back in the day, I used to carry \$1000 all the time. That was my thing. If I had money, if I didn't have money, \$1000 in 20s. And every time I'd look for money, half it was gone because I had six kids.

Flouted: At minute 3.25, when Ellen asks about how much money Kris brings the answer provides more about her money than the specifics of Ellen's question. which makes the discussion not seem important and should not be discussed because it does not have complete information which makes that next conversation out of topic.

Based on the data above, the writers can conclude that the maxim quantity is divided into two, namely less and more information. The difference between these two situations shows how deviations from the maxim of quantity, either providing too little or too much information, can disrupt the flow of communication. A lack of information can force the interlocutor to seek further clarification, while too much information can make the conversation irrelevant and lose of focus. Both can cause problems in communication, either by creating confusion or by distracting attention from the main topic being discussed.

#### 4.2.2 Maxim of Quality

Datum 1

EL: What do you carry around, Kris?

KR: **Like, \$100.**

EL: That is not true.

Flouted: At minute 3.06, looking at Ellen's response, Kris probably only mentioned it spontaneously and didn't present the evidence directly, which makes Ellen's response seem like she doesn't believe Kris' statement. the range given by kris is too unreasonable which makes it have no definite evidence or cannot be proven directly which makes Ellen ask a question to make sure because of her disbelief.

Datum 2

KR: It just **evaporated.**

KR: So I just gave up, and now, I have-- **there's less to steal.**

EL: So just-- exactly. Well, they don't need **to steal from you anymore.**

Flouted: At minute 3.32, Kris stated why he reduced the amount of cash he was bringing, but he answered humorously, which did not provide any factual factors as to why the cash he was bringing decreased. which means that the continuation of the discussion can lead to less accurate information because it is answered with humour.

It can be conclude, violating the maxim of quality can disrupt communication by obscuring the truth or creating distrust. In effective communication, it is important to provide accurate and reliable information, because inaccurate or factual information can damage trust and lead discussions in unproductive directions. These two examples show that dishonesty or excessive use of humour in giving answers can make conversations less effective and may create confusion or uncertainty.

#### 4.2.3 Maxim of Manner

Datum 1

KY: If you-- if all of us come on your season--

KR: **She has a puncher right next to her.**

Flouted: At minute 0.41, when Kylie answered Ellen's question, Kris also spoke to the audience, which made the situation worse because there was overlapping, which flouted the maxim of manners. The overlap that occurs makes us confused about who is talking and doesn't focus on the discussion and makes it ambiguous and this makes an overlap when someone talks and the other one is also talking.

Datum 2

EL: Yeah. No, she tells me stories. She goes, what's the one? And I said, Kendall. She goes yeah, that's her name.

KY: Yeah, that's it. Yeah.

EL: **All right, we have to take a break. More after this.**

Flouted: At minute 6.15, Ellen asked a question that made Kris and Kylie excited to answer, but while she was answering the question, Ellen interrupted and said break where which flouted the maxim of manner. In the continuation, the topic that was cut was not discussed again because it was cut off by a break in conversation it's called distraction

In conclusion, flouted of the maxim of manner can cause communication to be ineffective, either because of confusion caused by overlap or because of distractions that divert attention from the main topic. In good communication, it is important to maintain clarity and order in the conversation, so that all messages can be conveyed and understood clearly without distractions or ambiguities. These two examples show how ambiguities



and distractions in conversation can disrupt the flow of communication and make the information conveyed incomplete or difficult to understand.

#### 4.2.4 Maxim of Relevance

Datum 1

EL: Are you going to **jump rope** with that hair? What's happening?

KY: Honestly, I'm like, **I don't even know how to sit with this**.

Flouted: At minute 1.11, Ellen's question about jumping rope with long hair is playful, but Kylie's answer is not suitable because it instead states her confusion in a sitting position, which is not relevant to the topic of discussion and makes the next discussion topic discontinuous with the previous topic.

Datum 2

KY: No, not in his pocket. He doesn't walk around with

EL: It's probably **a briefcase or something**

Flouted: At minute 2.50, the previous discussion discussed the amount of cash, but it is something that has to be guessed at, which is not directly related to the ongoing discussion about how much cash he carries. which makes the discussion forget and instead guess what is used to carry the cash.

In conclusion, violating the maxim of relevance can disrupt communication by distracting attention from the main topic and making the conversation unfocused. Based on the data above, it can conclude that if in a conversation the interlocutor answers something that is not related to what is being discussed, it will make the conversation irrelevant and in accordance with the topic of discussion and become undirected.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

This research investigates the linguistic feature of flouted maxims in a celebrity interview from The Ellen Show, specifically focusing on an episode featuring Kris and Kylie Jenner. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the study delves into the transcript of the interview to meticulously identify instances where the conversational maxims outlined by Grice's theory are violated. These maxims—namely, the maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner—are considered fundamental for effective communication in various conversational contexts.

The findings of this research reveal that the maxim of manner is most frequently flouted, indicating a prevalent tendency towards less straightforward and more complex interactions. These interactions are often characterized by overlapping speech, indirectness, and other forms of conversational complexity. Such characteristics suggest that the participants engage in a communication style that is less direct, potentially to achieve certain pragmatic effects such as humor, emphasis, or managing social relationships. In terms of research methodology, the study involves a comprehensive qualitative analysis of the written transcript derived from the dialogue in the video. The data is systematically categorized based on the types of maxims flouted. Furthermore, the reasons behind these violations are explored in depth in relation to the participants' specific utterances and the overall conversational context. The study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of what constitutes successful communication by recognizing the different types of flouting and examining their underlying reasons and implications.

The results demonstrate that the maxim of manner is the most commonly flouted, with eight instances identified. This is followed by the maxim of quantity with six instances, the maxim of quality with three instances, and the maxim of relevance also with three instances. The discussion section of the research provides detailed examples of how both the guests and the host flouted these maxims, offering valuable insights into the communicative strategies employed during the interview and the implications these strategies have for the flow and coherence of the conversation. The research concludes by highlighting the frequency of violating rules, especially the rule of manners while doing that in the setting of a celebrity talk show interview. It implies that while violating maxims might have a variety of communicative effects, such as adding humour or emphasis, it can also result in less organized and transparent communication. This research advances the discipline of linguistics by putting Grice's maxim theory to use in a framework of real-world media. It offers a nuanced analysis of the complexities inherent in human discourse, especially within the framework of popular culture settings. Through this examination, the study enhances our understanding of how conversational norms can be both adhered to and strategically violated to achieve specific communicative goals.

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