

Discourse Analysis of Lucy Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*: An Application of Grice's Theory

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Abstract

Discourse analysis is an important approach in interpreting denotations beyond the surface meaning of a sentence. Two methods are embodied in this research to examine the underlying meaning of certain literary texts. Since the novel *Anne of Green Gables* by Lucy Montgomery still poorly explored, this paper investigates the language of selected contexts of the novel according to the theories of cooperative principle and conversational implicature. To clarify, the research sheds light on the nature of discourse in the novel using Grice's four conversational maxims. The violation of maxims can be explained with regard to the theory of conversational implicature. The findings of this paper demonstrate the efficiency of the applied theories. The results signify that all the maxims have been flouted among the selected parts of the novel. The overall assumption of maxims flouting in this novel is due to the protagonist's constant detachment of her real world. Such continuous demeanor indicates the protagonist's wishes of escaping her rough cruel life as an orphan and finding a refuge through her imaginative excursions.

Keywords: Cooperative principle; Gricean maxims; Conversational implicature; Maxims flouted; Maxims violation.

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INTRODUCTION

Language is one of the significant tools of communication since it is a way for people to communicate and express themselves. Linguistics is the scientific study of human language where it studies the language form, composition, meaning and grammar and also encompasses many branches such as pragmatics, syntax, semantics, semiotics, and discourse analysis. Nevertheless, a successful communication requires efficacy in delivering the information that is easier to interpret for both the speaker and the hearer as people worldwide use language to exchange their ideas, thoughts, knowledge and feelings.

However, one of the significant fields of linguistics is discourse analysis. It studies how meaning is conveyed through language. There are different forms of discourse analysis that it can be processed under different methods and theories. It is a very important field for linguists who are interested in analyzing spoken or written speeches. Gee uses "the term 'Discourse,' with a capital 'D,' for ways of combining and integrating language, actions, interactions, ways of thinking, believing, valuing, and using various symbols, tools, and objects to enact a

particular sort of socially recognized identity" [1]. Bavelas *et al.*, define DA as "the systematic study of naturally occurring (not hypothetical) communication in the broadest sense, at the level of meaning (rather than as physical acts or features)" [2]. According to many linguists discourse analysis means language-in-use. It can be applied to conversations of different texts in specific contexts [1].

Pragmatics, on the other hand, is the study of the hidden meaning. It investigates how to recognize what is meant even if it is not stated or written clearly [3]. Many linguists use the term of pragmatics for "the study of [language-in-context], for how context gives meanings to words and words give significance to context" [1]. Pragmatics is one of the fields of linguistics that studies and clarifies the role of context in understanding an utterance and how this understanding contributes to denote the meaning. It encompasses many theories that govern communication, for example, speech act theory, conversational implicature and cooperative principle; which is the focus of this study. Consequently, the importance of pragmatics lies in concentrating on the hidden meaning; what a speaker intends to say, and a

hearer tends to understand in relation to the context of the utterance.

Nevertheless, as people use the language to communicate with each other, sometimes communication can include obscurity and eventually fails to achieve its original purpose. Thus, this research analyses selected conversations from *Anne of Green Gables*, employing the application of the two theories of Grice, cooperative principle and conversational implicature [4].

The study is conducted on the classic novel *Anne of Green Gables*, which is written in 1908 by the Canadian author Lucy Montgomery [5]. The story revolves around an orphan girl named Anne, which shows her life experiences, her interaction with other people and how she adapts with all these new changes and events in her life. One of the biggest changes Anne meets is living with the Cuthbert family. The family consists of the two siblings Marilla and Mathew Cuthbert. As they have decided to adopt a boy to help them with the farming work, they are met by a surprise as it has turned out that a girl is sent instead. The story further discusses how the family copes with such a mistake and learns to accept of adopting a girl, despite it is believed during those times that a girl is just a burden as she lacks the strength to do the farming work. The family contradicts the real purpose of adoption, but eventually they accept Anne as she becomes one of the important members of the Cuthbert family.

However, this study focuses on Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*, which sets the analysis among the three main characters of the novel and traces their conversations in order to analyze it according to the Gricean theories of cooperative principle and implicature. The study covers the following selected chapters:

- Chapter 3: Marilla Cuthbert Is Surprised
- Chapter 5: Anne's History
- Chapter 14: Anne's Confession.

Significance of the Study

Muslah conducts a study applying the Gricean maxims to selected short stories where it is built on the biases of pragmatics and its relation to the cooperative principle in analyzing the selected pieces of short stories [6]. Bajri investigates the importance of understanding vague language's role in analyzing any discourse and discusses the four maxims and its relationship with implicature which applies the Gricean theory to Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story* [7].

Another study, done by Jingjie which highlights the conversational implicature and cooperative principle, which aims to form an application on the novel *Sons and Lovers* by D. H. Lawrence [8]. Sembiring and Ghazali call into question the function of the Gricean maxims flouting in the movie *The Jungle Book*. Their work attempts to examine the four maxims and the

function of the violation by analyzing the scripted version of the movie [9].

A study conducted by Al-Saedi seeks to address the pragmatic theories; cooperative principle and Grice's maxims to examine the language of the science fiction novel, *The Giver* by Los Lowry [10].

Many researches have conducted studies applying the cooperative principle by Grice to different forms of literature [4], but the novel *Anne of Green Gables* remains to be a neglected area of research in terms of the four maxims and conversational implicature. This paper aims to shed light on the nature of discourse in the novel using Grice's four conversational maxims and explains maxims flouting depending on conversational implicature.

Furthermore, the study is important for scholars who study the language and discourse analysis. It allows linguists to investigate and examine literary text following the theories of pragmatics. Additionally, it is a good reference for students who are studying literature because it can clarify to them the intended meaning and the implication that is related.

Objectives of the Study

This paper proposes a new approach to analyze Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* with regard to the theories of cooperative principle; four maxims and conversational implicature.

- The study seeks to address the violation of the four maxims; quality, quantity, relation and manner in each of the selected parts of the novel.
- The study investigates the flouting of the four maxims in relation to conversational implicature.

Questions of the Study

- What are the violated maxims in Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*?
- What is the connection between the Gricean four maxims and implicature?
- How do we understand implicature in relation to the cooperative principle?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Muslah conducts a study that aims to validate the role of language in communication and the main properties of the expected outcome of a conversation that is conveyed by language. This work has embodied the Gricean theory of implicature along with the four conversational maxims to examine particular parts of short stories [6].

Bajri explains and clarifies the importance of using vague language in everyday conversation. Throughout this paper, she has explored the causes and reasons a vague language might be employed for. The

researcher has presented her analysis and discussed it by examining selected parts of Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story*. To achieve expected results, Bajri has adopted the Grice's theories of cooperative principle and implicature [7].

Al-Saedi intends to observe the language of Los Lowry's *The Giver* by maintaining close observations on the characters and their speeches. The analysis of this research is built upon the pragmatic theories; cooperative principle and Grice's maxims. He has examined and analyzed the language of the American science fictional novel, wherein he managed to state the overall purpose of maxims flouting among the characters in the novel [10].

Sembiring and Ghozali attempt to analyze a movie script by applying discourse analysis and using Grice's theory: cooperative principle with the four types of maxims as well. Their goals of their study are to describe and explain the flouting maxims and their function. They have declared the most and least flouted maxims among the four maxims and also are able to present the function of the flouting maxims and provide the justifications of being flouted [9].

Jingjie directs a study exploring the conversational implicature from the perspective of cooperative principle. The application takes place in this study relying on David Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*. The paper is mainly placed on the conversations by the main characters and tracing their interactions with each other to form observations with regard to the theory of cooperative principle [8].

Abbas, Suleiman, and Abdul-Manan conduct a study focusing on the conversational analysis, Goffman's theory of politeness, Gricean theory of implicature and Austen's theory of speech act. They have investigated selected conversations of Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*. Within the framework of these criteria, the scholars have carried out several notes concentrating on Anne's social interaction and verbal behavior to build the analysis of this study [11].

RESEARCH METHODS

Data Collection

The novel *Anne of Green Gables* is the targeted area of the study. It is written by Montgomery in 1908 who is a Canadian novelist, born in 1874. She has spent most of her life writing Anne's books series and is most well-known of her classic children novel; *Anne of Green Gables* [5]. Though it is mostly aimed at children, it is admired by all people because it has a special connection whereby audience can find themselves obliged to read it. The main characters of the novel are Anne Shirley, Marilla Cuthbert and Mathew Cuthbert. Anne Shirley, a thirteen-year-old orphan child, is the protagonist of the story. Despite her

circumstances, she is a highly dreamy character who shelters herself with her vivid imagination. The Cuthbert family consists of the two siblings; Marilla and Mathew Cuthbert. Marilla is a religious unmarried woman who is practical and strict, but cares deeply about Anne. Mathew is an old bachelor who is always troubled by women and extremely shy.

Nevertheless, the analysis will be based and built upon the novel *Anne of Green Gables* by Montgomery. The study presents an application to the selected conversations of the novel specifically from chapters three, five and fourteen.

Data Analysis

Communication requires people to cooperate with each other in order to achieve a successful conversation. The British philosopher Paul Grice comes up with the theory of cooperative principle to analyze and justify the violation that might occur. He explains it in terms of implicature. Implicature can be defined as the hidden extended meaning beyond the grammatical boundaries. Grice sets the connection between the four maxims and implicature through defining the violation and the cause of implicature. When there is a flouting of one of the maxims there will be an implicature that causes this violation. Therefore, implicature comes to explain the reason for such violation [4].

The chosen conversations are examined according to Grice's theory of cooperative principle; maxims flouting and the theory of implicature.

Cooperative Principle

When two people speak, they cooperate with each other to exchange meaning in order to bring denotation properly. The theory of cooperative principle and implicature has been proposed first by Paul Grice who is a British philosopher of language. Grice (1975) defines cooperative principle as the process in which interlocutors cooperate with each other to exchange meaning. In order to achieve the targeted purposes of conversations, Grice listed the following maxims:

- **Quality:** the maxim of quality requires an interlocutor to give a truthful contribution. The contribution must not be false or lacks evidence to be true.
- **Quantity:** this maxim requires an interlocutor to make his contribution as informative is required for the existing purpose of the exchange. The contribution must not be informative more than what is required.
- **Relation:** the maxim of relevance requires an interlocutor to make his contribution relevant to the proposed exchange.
- **Manner:** this maxim requires interlocutors to avoid ambiguity and obscurity and to be brief and orderly [4].

Implicature

It is first coined by Grice It can be defined as an utterance which conveys meaning beyond its proposition; the semantic content of an utterance [4]. It seeks to understand what is beyond the grammatical meaning. It can be referred to simply as the hidden meaning. There are many types of implicature, for example, conventional implicature and conversational implicature.

Conversational implicature is related to the Gricean maxims as when one of the maxims is flouted, the violation will create an implicature. Conversational implicature involves cooperative principle under the assumption that speakers want to cooperate, the hearer tends to draw conclusion from what is said. Consequently, conversational implicatures appear during a conversation, where the speaker deliberately flouts one of the maxims of a conversation. Such violation can form an implied meaning to the recipient [4].

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The study employs the two theories; cooperative principle which involves the Gricean maxims and the theory of conversational implicature. As cooperative principle is divided into four maxims; quality, quantity, relation and manner, this paper investigates the four maxims along with the violation of these maxims when results with implicature.

The selected conversations of these chapters are administrated by two main characters; Anne Shirley and Marilla Cuthbert.

Context (1): Marilla Cuthbert Is Surprised

The Cuthbert family have decided to adopt a boy to help them with farming, thus, they have sent a letter to the asylum asking for adoption.

Mathew Cuthbert has gone to the train station to bring the boy they have sent for home. Mathew is surprised to learn that the asylum has sent a girl instead of a boy, yet he decides to take her home. When Anne and Mathew Cuthbert arrive at the Cuthbert state, Marilla is astonished to learn that the orphanage has sent a girl instead of a boy. As the child dramatically burst into tears when realizing that she is not wanted, Marilla tries to comfort her by asking about her name. The child states that she prefers a different name than her real name for it sounds more musical and romantic. Marilla stresses her until ultimately she admits that her real name is Anne and she prefers it to be pronounced as Anne with an /e/:

‘What’s your name?’ The child hesitated for a moment. ‘Will you please call me Cordelia?’ she said eagerly. ‘CALL you Cordelia? Is that your name?’

‘No-o-o, it’s not exactly my name, but I would love to be called Cordelia. It’s such a perfectly elegant name.’

‘I don’t know what on earth you mean. If Cordelia isn’t your name, what is?’

‘Anne Shirley,’ ... ‘but, oh, please do call me Cordelia. It doesn’t matter much to you what you call me if I’m only going to be here a little while, can it? And Anne is such an unromantic name.’... ‘but I like Cordelia better now. But if you call me Anne please call me Anne spelled with an E’ (32-33).

Maxim/s flouted: Quality, quantity and manner.

Conversational Implicature

Anne violates the maxim of *quality* for not stating her real name which can be explained as she prefers to be called with another name that she likes. Therefore, Anne’s answer is not an act of lying to conceal the truth. Also, Marilla’s reply: “CALL you Cordelia? Is that your name?” Here, Marilla has suspicions and doubts and those doubts implicate her knowledge of the hidden message which is the fact that Anne prefers another name to be called by other name rather than her actual name. Anne avoids telling the truth because it reminds her of her miserable life in the orphanage.

Conversational Implicature

Likewise, the maxim of *quantity* is violated, too. Marilla simply asks Anne to tell her “What’s your name?”, but Anne elaborates and provides Marilla with a lengthy response. This response is informative more than what is required, while stating her name is the only information that is required. Anne later declares the implication of choosing another name to be called by, as she always uses her imagination as an escape from her dreadful cruel life. Thus, she calls herself Cordelia as she refers to her lost hopes and wishes of a great life. Cordelia reminds her of the beautiful imagination she beholds to escape from her real painful life.

Conversational Implicature

The maxim of *manner* is also violated due to the ambiguous and long reply which is delivered by Anne. Anne’s talkative habit prevents her from delivering an appropriate answer. She wants to remind herself of the beautiful imagination she beholds as it is about to come true if the Cuthbert family agrees to keep her in the house instead of sending her back to the orphanage and replacing her with a boy.

Context (2): Marilla Cuthbert Is Surprised

Anne eats dinner and the next morning she’ll be taken back to the orphanage to be replaced with a boy who can help with the farming work.

‘You’re not eating anything,’ said Marilla sharply ...

‘It’s very uncomfortable feeling indeed. When you try to eat a lump comes right up in your throat and you

can't swallow anything, not even if it was a chocolate caramel. I had one chocolate caramel once two years ago and it was simply delicious. I've often dreamed since then that I had a lot of chocolate caramels, but I always wake up just when I'm going to eat them. I do hope you won't be offended because I can't eat. Everything is extremely nice, but still I cannot eat' (35).

Maxim/s flouted: Quantity

Conversational implicature

In this context, only one maxim has been violated which is *quantity*. Anne offers a lengthy response and fails to stick to what is required. Anne flouts the maxim of quantity due to her acknowledgment of her position. Therefore, she decides to hold on to the slight light of hope she sees. She implicates that her staying at the Cuthbert family will end her suffering and tries to draw their attention to the painful and horrible life she has experienced in the orphanage. Besides the fact that she is just a thirteen year old child, she wants the Cuthbert family to pity her and sympathize with her. She desperately wants them to keep her even as a maid. Her answer is a cry for rescue and liberation from her old painful life. She never wants to go back to the orphanage to relive the agony she has witnessed.

Context (3): Anne's History

Anne announces that she is determined to enjoy the ride back to the orphanage as the Cuthbert family decides to send her back because they want a boy, not a girl. Marilla and Anne are on their way back to the orphanage. Anne is being talkative as usual asking plenty of questions, but Marilla decides to talk about something serious. She asks Anne about her history, but Anne misleads Marilla by telling her tales of her imagination which eventually leads to make Marilla angry. Anne ultimately manages to speak the truth about her history.

'... you might as well talk to some purpose by telling me what you know about yourself'. 'Oh, what I KNOW about myself isn't really worth telling,' said Anne eagerly. 'If you'll only let me tell you what I IMAGINE about myself you'll think it ever so much more interesting.'

'No, I don't want any of your imaginings. Just you stick to bald facts. Begin at the beginning. Where were you born and how old are you?' (50).

Maxim/s flouted: Quality

Conversational implicature

Anne has flouted this maxim because she wants to conceal her past and doesn't want to reminisce it because it is too painful and contradicts the decision she has taken upon herself; to enjoy the ride and live out her beautiful imagination before she is returned back to the asylum.

Context (4): Anne' History

"I guess it doesn't matter what a person's name is as long as he behaves himself," said Marilla, feeling herself called upon to inculcate a good and useful moral.

'Well, I don't know.' Anne looked thoughtful. 'I read in a book once that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, but I've never been able to believe it. I don't believe a rose WOULD be as nice if it was called a thistle or a skunk cabbage' (51).

Maxim/s flouted: Relation

Conversational implicature

Anne's constant imaginative excursions keep her away from the real world. As a result, she fails to deliver an appropriate answer. Such failure leads Anne to violate the maxim of *relation* for stating irrelevant answer. Anne flouts this maxim because she symbolizes herself with the rose. As she has pointed earlier that she likes to be called Cordelia instead of Anne. She imagines herself to be a different person with a better life. Due to her rough circumstances, she sometimes fails to stick to the facts. On the contrary, she paves her way with her vivid imagination and detaches herself from the real world as she imagines unreal things.

Context (5): Anne's False Confession

Anne is promised to go on a picnic. However, Marilla notices that her brooch is not anywhere to be found and thought that it must be stolen by Anne because she is the last one who has touched it. Marilla strictly carries an investigation and determines to elicit a confession from Anne. Marilla has threatened and forced Anne to confess that she is the one who has stolen her brooch or otherwise she (Anne) will never go to the picnic.

'Marilla, I'm ready to confess.' ... 'I took the amethyst brooch,' said Anne, as if repeating a lesson she had learned. 'I took it just as you said. I didn't mean to take it when I went in. But it did look so beautiful, Marilla, when I pinned it on my breast that I was overcome by an irresistible temptation. I imagined how perfectly thrilling it would be to take it to Idlewild and play I was the Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald ... So I took the brooch. I thought I could put it back before you came home. I went all the way around by the road to lengthen out the time. When I was going over the bridge across the Lake of Shining Waters I took the brooch off to have another look at it. Oh, how it did shine in the sunlight! And then, when I was leaning over the bridge, it just slipped through my fingers—so—and went down—down—down, all purplysparkling, and sank forevermore beneath the Lake of Shining Waters. And that's the best I can do at confessing, Marilla.' (125-6).

Maxim/s flouted: Quality and quantity

Conversational implicature

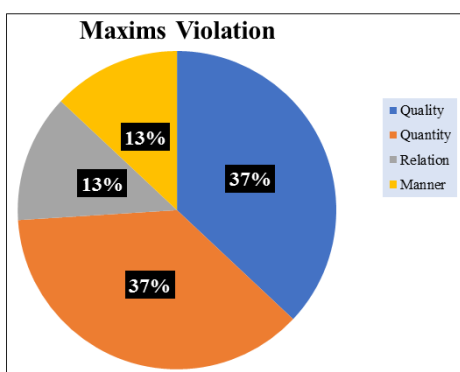
Anne has flouted the maxim of *quality* by lying; the implication here is to avoid being punished and not to disappoint her new family especially Marilla so that they will allow her to go to the picnic.

Conversational Implicature

The maxim of *quantity* is also violated for not sticking to the required information. Anne adds lots of unnecessary details to impress Marilla and to convince her with such incident. She adds too much information to support her ill-confession and to force Marilla to believe her by relying on detailed events as presenting the whole truth. The small details that indicate Anne’s attitude is trying to keep coherence and unity to make the lie authentic and to convince Marilla.

Table-1: The flouted maxims in chapters 3, 5, & 14 in *Anne of Green Gables*

Types of Flouting Maxims	Times of violation	Implicature	Characters	Context
Quality	3	False statement	Marilla & Anne	Chapters 3, 5 & 14
Quantity	3	Lengthy statements more than required		Chapters 3 & 14
Relation	1	Irrelevant statement	Marilla & Anne	Chapter 5
Manner	1	Ambiguous, obscure and long statement		Chapters 3 & 14



CONCLUSION

In conclusion, cooperative principle and conversational implicature are employed to investigate utterances and conversations in order to explain the reason why some conversations fail to deliver its original purpose. Subsequently, the analysis of the study concludes that all the four Gricean maxims have been violated. The violation has occurred in all of the selected parts of the three chapters (3, 5, & 14) of the novel *Anne of Green Gables*.

The aforementioned studies have concluded with similar results. Muslah (2015) has found that cooperative principle is employed in short stories to clarify any vagueness that may confuse the reader. Some selected parts of the short stories show that the flouting of maxims by some characters is a technique by certain character to avoid talking about certain topics [6].

In Bajri, the conclusion has corresponded with the hypothesis presented in the research. Bajri stresses the importance of employing vague language in our everyday life which proves its effectiveness throughout the selected conversations and for different purposes [7].

Sembiring and Ghozali have found that fifty-one conversations contain flouting maxims, as the maxim of quality scored the highest points whereas the

maxim of quantity is the least flouted maxim among the others. The implicature of the flouted maxims is to avoid discomfort and to give more explanations among the characters in the movie [9].

While the aforementioned study Al-Saedi, concludes that the maxim of quality is the most violated maxim among the other maxims as it is violated thirteen times. In this study, the maxims of quality and quantity are violated three times. Moreover, the maxims of relation and manner are violated only once. It is noted that they are the least violated maxims [10].

Finally, the findings of this paper can be a valid source for linguists and scholars to conduct further studies based on this analysis as it can help to explain and understand the grounds of any failure that occurs in a conversation in relation to the theories presented.

The analysis of this paper is limited on the selected parts of three chapters from the classic novel *Anne of Green Gables*. Therefore, it is limited to analyse the text based on the theories of cooperative principle and conversational implicature. Further studies can be carried out on the remaining chapters of the novel. Scholars of the field can also extend the study and base on other pragmatic theories.

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