

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data. The conversational implicatures found in the utterances produced by the films' characters will be identified.

#### **Analysis and Interpretation of Conversational Implicatures**

The analysis and the interpretation of the conversational implicatures in this study are presented in descriptive analysis format. Seventy-five samples of utterances are observed and analyzed according to the sequence of the story of each film selected in this study. Because the study focuses on the conversational implicatures that arise from the four conversational maxims described by Grice (as cited in Levinson, 1983, pp. 101-102), the analysis and interpretation of the conversational implicatures are based on Grice's Cooperative Principle and Conversational Maxims.

### Bridget Jones's Diary (Samples 1-17)

**Sample 1** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 1]

**Setting:** Bridget is greeting her relatives Geoffrey and Una at the annual turkey curry buffet hosted by Bridget's family.

**Situation:** Geoffrey and Una always want to know about Bridget's love life, as Bridget is in her thirties and still single.

Geoffrey: No? Come on, then. So ... How's your love life?

Bridget: Super. Thanks, Uncle G.

Geoffrey: Still no fellow, then, eh? I don't know.

Una: You career girls. Can't put it off forever. **Tick-tock, tick-tock.**

It is common knowledge that the sound *tick-tock* refers to the sound of the clock and it generally implies that time is running out. With the context given and the common knowledge mentioned above, Bridget assumes that Una is being cooperative and obeying the maxim of relation. Bridget then infers that Una is talking about time that is related to her love life. Thus, Una's utterance "Tick-tock, tick-tock" implies "Your time to get married is running out."

**Sample 2** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 2]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample] Pamela leads Bridget to greet Mark.

**Situation:** Pamela is trying to get Bridget and Mark talk to each other. Then, Una asks Pamela to sieve the gravy in the kitchen.

**Pamela:** Mark? You remember Bridget. She's used to run around your lawn ... with no clothes on, remember?

**Mark:** Uh, no, not as such.

**Una:** (To Pamela) **Come and look at your gravy, Pam. I think it's going to need sieving.**

**Pamela:** Of course it doesn't need sieving. Just stir it, Una. Yes, of course. I'll be right there. Sorry. Lumpy gravy calls.

By asking Pamela to sieve the gravy in the kitchen while Pamela is trying to get Mark and Bridget talk to each other, Una is not being cooperative. Moreover, by intentionally saying something untrue and trying to mislead Pamela into thinking that the gravy really needs sieving, Una is violating the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." Pamela, however, does not know what Una is up to until she notices her non-verbal expression (Una's staring at her) of the local context. The knowledge of the local context and the mutual background knowledge between Pamela and Una allow Pamela to infer that Una is telling a lie rather than sincerely requesting for help in the kitchen. Pamela also infers that Una wants her to leave Mark

and Bridget right away. Una's utterance, therefore, implies "Come here and leave them alone."

**Sample 3** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 3]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample] Mrs. Darcy and her son (Mark Darcy) are talking at a corner of the turkey curry buffet.

**Situation:** Mrs. Darcy talks about Bridget in her attempt to match Mark up with Bridget.

Mrs. Darcy: Apparently ... she lives just 'round the corner from you.

Mark: **Mother, I do not need a blind date. Particularly not with some verbally incontinent spinster ... who smokes like a chimney, drinks like a fish ... and dresses like her mother.**

The use of simile comparing Bridget's smoking with a property of a chimney, her drinking habit with fish's drinking water, and her style of dressing with her mother's style suggests the semantic problems in Mark's utterance and then gives rise to conversational implicature. Mark, hence, apparently flouts the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." Furthermore, by using too many words and expressions in his utterance, Mark is not adhering to the maxim of manner "be brief," either. Mrs. Darcy assumes that Mark is being cooperative and implying something distinct from the literal meaning of the words. Mrs. Darcy then infers that Mark is trying to say that he does not need a single old lady who keeps babbling about nothing, smokes and drinks a lot and dresses like an old lady.

Mark's utterance, thus, implies that Mark is not interested in Bridget since she has so many unbearable characteristics.

**Sample 4** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 4]

**Setting:** Jude is unburdening herself to Bridget on the phone.

**Situation:** Bridget's boss, Daniel Cleaver, has come to Bridget's desk while Bridget is talking with Jude on the phone.

Bridget: Publicity.

Jude: All I asked-I only asked ... if he wanted to come on a mini-break to Paris ... I'm too needy. Am I codependent?

Bridget: No, you're not. It's not you. You're lovely. It's Vile Richard. Ugh. He's just a big knobhead with no knob-**is some people's opinion of Kafka ... but they couldn't be more wrong. This book is a searing vision ... of the wounds our century has inflicted on – on traditional masculinity. It's positively Vonnegut-esque. Thank you for calling, Professor Leavis.**

The second part of Bridget's latter utterance has no connection with the first part. Bridget does not thoroughly adhere to the cooperative principle. Bridget's utterance apparently flouts the maxim of relation as she immediately changes the topic. With the mutual background knowledge that Bridget works for the publishing company, Jude can infer that Bridget is changing the topic and pretending to talk about something related to her work. Jude then works

out that Bridget cannot talk longer as somebody probably Bridget's boss might be nearby. Bridget's utterance hence implies "My boss is here now."

**Sample 5** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 5]

**Setting:** Bridget faces Mark by chance at a press conference.

**Situation:** Bridget misbehaves when Mark greets her.

Bridget: What are you doing here?

Mark: I've been asking myself the same question. I came with a colleague. So how are you?

Bridget: **Well, apart from being very disappointed ... not to see my favorite reindeer jumper again ... I'm well.**

It is common knowledge that when someone asking "How are you?" or "How have you been?" he or she does not want a lengthy reply about how you are doing or how you have been, unless you are close friends. In other words, the person is just using a common greeting to say "Hello." By giving such an answer, Bridget is giving more information than is needed. Bridget's answer definitely flouts the maxim of quantity: "do not make your contribution more informative than is required." Additionally, Bridget, in fact, is not disappointed about not seeing Mark in his reindeer jumper, and the reindeer jumper is not one of her favorite things at all. By saying something untrue and implying that the opposite is true (being ironic), Bridget violates the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." Bridget's utterance,

therefore, implies “I was not impressed by seeing you in the reindeer jumper last time.”

**Sample 6** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 6]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample] Natasha speaks to Perpetua in a whisper.

**Situation:** Perpetua notices that Natasha comes along with Mark. She leads Natasha by the hand to a corner to talk about Mark.

Natasha: How odd. Ha ha. Perpetua, how’s the house hunt going?

Perpetua: Disaster. I oughtn’t go into it with you. By the way, that man is gorgeous.

Natasha: Ah, yes, Mark. **Just give me time. Give me time.**

Natasha’s utterance “Just give me time, give me time,” on the surface, seems to be irrelevant, although the immediate response “Ah, yes, Mark” suggests the connection between her utterance and Perpetua’s. However, this utterance can be interpreted as cooperative as well. The assumption that Natasha is being cooperative and following the maxim of relation allows Perpetua to infer that Natasha is somewhat interested in Mark, as she agrees that Mark is gorgeous. Perpetua then also infers that Natasha needs time to achieve her ambition to achieve a relationship with Mark. Natasha’s utterance, therefore, implies that Natasha has set herself a goal of her relationship with Mark sometime in the future.

**Sample 7** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 7]

**Setting:** Pamela calls Bridget up to meet at the store where she works as a product demonstrator.

**Situation:** Pamela keeps expressing her hardships in her married life with Bridget's father.

Pamela: **Darling, if I came in with my knickers on my head ... he wouldn't notice. I spent thirty-five years cleaning his house ... washing his clothes, bringing up his children.**

Bridget: I'm your child too.

Pamela's first utterance "if I came in with my knickers on my head ... he wouldn't notice" flouts the maxim of quality: "do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence." This is because this utterance is a conditional sentence and is based on supposition. By producing such supposition, Pamela believes this is true or takes this for granted without any proof. Moreover, Pamela's latter utterance, "I spent thirty-five years cleaning his house ... washing his clothes, bringing up his children" flouts another sub-maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." By using a possessive adjective *his*, she claims that the house she lives together with her husband, all clothes she washes, and their children belong to her husband only; although she knows that she shares the ownership of such things as well. The falsity in Pamela's utterance allows Bridget to infer that Pamela does not feel as if she is united with her husband. Pamela's utterance, thus, implies "He does not care for me."

**Sample 8** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 8]

**Setting:** Bridget gets back home and finds her father alone.

**Situation:** Bridget's father is upset that her mother has been seen with a man named Julian from a shopping TV show.

**Bridget:** Has she actually moved out then?

**Bridget's father:** **Apparently, she and this tangerine-tinted buffoon ... are suddenly an item.** Half our friends have had them around to bloody dinner.

By using the metaphorical expression, Bridget's father clearly flouts the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." Other than that, Bridget's father's answer, on the surface, seems to be irrelevant to the question being asked by Bridget. However, with the local context (Bridget and her father watched Pamela and Julian on the TV earlier), it can be assumed that Bridget's father is being cooperative and observing the maxim of relation and his answer provides a partial answer. The error in the conventional meaning together with the knowledge of the local context (Julian's wearing an orange suit on the TV) allows Bridget to determine the appropriate referent. Bridget then infers that her father is saying that her mother now is living with Julian, whose outstanding characteristic is being a "tangerine-tinted buffoon." Nevertheless, Bridget's father also flouts the maxim of quantity, "do not make your contribution more informative than is required," since he gives Bridget more information than being asked. Thus, the utterance implies that Bridget's mother has moved out to live with Julian.



**Sample 9** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 9]

**Setting:** Geoffrey comes to say hello to Bridget at Una's Tarts and Vicars fancy dress party.

**Situation:** Geoffrey makes fun of Bridget's coming to the party alone.

Geoffrey: So, where's this chap of yours, then, eh?

Bridget: Ah, yes, well, he had to work, so ...

Geoffrey: **Ha! A likely tale. Off they run. Whee!**

[Bridget laughs weakly]

By definition, tale is a story that might be invented or a story that is difficult to believe. By using metaphor comparing Bridget's matter as a tale, Uncle Geoffrey ostentatiously flouts the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." The flouting of the maxim of quality, then, gives rise to the implicature. The shared knowledge between Geoffrey and Bridget, together with the conventional meaning of the utterance, allows Bridget to infer that Geoffrey never believes that she has a boyfriend and thinks she makes up the story. Geoffrey's utterance, therefore, implies that Geoffrey does not believe that Bridget has a boyfriend.



**Sample 10** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 10]

**Setting:** Bridget is having a job interview for a television program for teenagers.

**Situation:** To be qualified, Bridget is trying to show her interest in the job she applies for.

Interviewer 2: So, why do you want to work in television?

Bridget: **Because I'm passionately committed ... to communicating with children. They are the future.**

Interviewer 2: Do you have any children of your own?

Bridget: Oh, Christ, no. Yuck! [Laughs] Ah. Sorry.

Bridget is being cooperative as she is trying to show her interest in the job she applies for in order to be qualified. However, it is not obvious to the hearer at the time of the utterance that Bridget does not really mean what she says. Bridget, therefore, deliberately and intentionally violates the maxim of quality, “do not say what you believe to be false,” as she tries to mislead the interviewer to think that she is qualified for the job though she is not. Bridget’s answer implies “I’m qualified for this job.”



**Sample 11** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 11]

**Setting:** Bridget is invited to a party that is full of married couples.

**Situation:** Cosmo asks Bridget about the affair with her ex-boss, Daniel Cleaver from the publishing company.

Cosmo: Hey, Bridge, how's your love life?

Bridget: Oh ...

Cosmo: Still going out with that publishing chappie?

Bridget: Uh, no, no.

Natasha: Terribly brill.

Cosmo: **Never dip your nib in the office ink.**

Bridget: Right.

“Never dip your nib in the office ink” is an expression which means “keep your social life separate from your work” or never date or have an affair with someone you work with. By stating this expression, Cosmo expects the listeners to notice. Cosmo, therefore, ostentatiously flouts the maxim of quality. The use of the expression to flout the maxim of quality gives rise to the implicature. However, such meaning of this expression is generally known by native speakers of English. With this kind of information, Bridget can assume that Cosmo intends to ridicule her about the affair with her boss. Cosmo's utterance, thus, implies that Bridget should not date or have an affair with her boss.

**Sample 12** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 11]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** Woney humiliates Bridget in front of everyone by asking a question concerning unmarried women in their thirties, which seriously offends Bridget.

Woney: Yes. Why is it ... there are so many unmarried women in their thirties ... these days, Bridget?

[Mark sets down silverware]

[Laughs]

Bridget: Oh, I don't know. **Suppose it doesn't help that underneath our clothes ... our entire bodies are covered in scales.**

[Faint laughter]

Bridget is not being cooperative and is flouting the maxim of quantity, “make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange,” and the maxim of relation, “be relevant,” as she does not answer Woney’s question and says something irrelevant to his question. Moreover, Bridget is ostentatiously flouting the maxim of quality: “do not say what you believe to be false.” The falsehood in her utterance allows the hearers to infer that Bridget is saying something distinct from the literal meaning of the utterance. By saying something obviously untrue, Bridget is reacting in a seemingly nonsensical way in order to annoy Woney, who intentionally tries to humiliate her in front of everyone. The hearers then work out that Bridget is trying to strike back at Woney by answering his question in

such an inappropriate manner. Bridget's answer, thus, implies that Woney's question is inappropriate and that Bridget finds it offensive.

**Sample 13** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 12]

**Setting:** Mark follows Bridget downstairs after the dinner with the married couples is over.

**Situation:** Mark is making a serious attempt to express his feelings for Bridget.

Bridget: That'll be my taxi. Good night.

Mark: Look, um ... I'm sorry if I've been ...

Bridget: What?

**Mark:** **I don't think you're an idiot at all. I mean, there are elements of the ridiculous about you. Your mother's pretty interesting. And you really are ... an appallingly bad public speaker. And you tend to let whatever's in your head ... come out of your mouth ... without much consideration of the consequences. I realize that when I met you at the turkey curry buffet ... that I was unforgivably rude and wearing a reindeer jumper ... that my mother had given me the day before. But the thing is, um ... what I'm trying to say very inarticulately is ... that, um ... in fact ... perhaps, despite appearances ... I like you very much.**

Mark is using unnecessarily complicated, confusing and verbose expressions in an attempt to express his feelings for Bridget. These features together create ambiguity and obscurity in his utterance. The complexity, confusion and verbosity in Mark's expressions suggest Mark's nervousness and hesitation rather than his intent to come out with such a lengthy utterance. Mark's speech, hence, flouts the maxims of manner, "avoid obscurity," "be brief" and "be orderly," and implies that he is feeling nervous because he likes Bridget very much.

**Sample 14** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 13]

**Setting:** At Sit Up Britain TV, Richard (Bridget's boss) is briefing Bridget about the case of Kafir Aghani and Eleanor Heaney.

**Situation:** Richard assigns Bridget to get an interview of the couple at the high court.

Richard: She's a British aid worker. He's a Kurdish freedom fighter. The government wants to extradite him home ... where he'll certainly be executed. She's married to him ... and they fought five years to keep him here. Today is the decision.

Bridget: Oh, that's exciting.

Richard: Yes, it is ... **so what are you waiting for?**

Richard simply flouts the maxim of quality as he is not sincerely asking the question, but rather making an imperative statement. By using the rhetorical question "so what are you waiting for?" Richard does not really

expect an answer. Similarly, hearing the question, Bridget can infer that Richard does not want her to answer the question, but, rather, wants her to ask herself why she is wasting time there. Richard's utterance, therefore, implies that he wants Bridget to start out immediately for the interview at the high court.

**Sample 15** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 14]

**Setting:** Mark is helping Bridget cooking her birthday dinner.

**Situation:** Mark's mentioning a mini-gherkin reminds them of the way Pamela and Una used to match them up.

Mark: You wouldn't by any chance have any beet root cubes? A mini-gherkin, stuffed olive?

Bridget: **No, Pam, and besides, I'm busy. The gravy needs sieving.**

Mark: Surely not. Just stir it, Una.

Bridget simply flouts the maxim of relation as she produces such a non-relevant remark. Doing this, Bridget intends to make Mark notice that a mini-gherkin reminds her the way Una and Pamela tried to match her up with Mark. Furthermore, by mimicking Una, Bridget also flouts the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." Mark infers that Bridget remembers the moment very well when Una asked Pamela to sieve the gravy in the kitchen in an attempt to match her up with Mark at the turkey curry buffet. However, Bridget's utterance implies that Bridget knew what Una and Pamela were up to, and she knew that Mark realized that, too.

**Sample 16** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 15]

**Setting:** Bridget, Mark and Bridget's close friends are eating at Bridget's birthday dinner.

**Situation:** Shazzer suddenly asks Mark a very personal question.

Shazzer: Say ... Mmm. Mark, why did your wife leave you?

Bridget: **Mmm. Eat up. Eat up. Two more lovely courses to go.**

Bridget's utterance lacks connection with Shazzer's. By changing the topic immediately, Bridget wants to turn everyone's interest away from Shazzer's improper question. Bridget thinks that Mark might not be happy to talk about his personal life or to be asked about it and that Shazzer's question could offend him. Bridget, therefore, ostentatiously flouts the maxim of relation: "be relevant." Bridget's utterance implies that Shazzer's question is improper and should be discarded from the conversation.

**Sample 17** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 16]

**Setting:** Mark knocks Daniel down on the street after they have been fighting.

**Situation:** Bridget is confused seeing Mark behave aggressively. She scolds Mark for this behavior.

**Bridget:** What is your problem?

**Mark:** My problem?

**Bridget:** Yes. You give the impression of being all moral and noble ... and normal ... and helpful in the kitchen ... but you're just as bad as the rest of them.

**Mark:** Well, I can see that I've been laboring ... under a misapprehension. **A very, very foolish mistake. Forgive me.**

By uttering an utterance "A very, very foolish mistake. Forgive me," Mark is being sarcastic and implying that the opposite is true. Mark, therefore, violates the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." Bridget infers that Mark does not feel really sorry for what he has done, so when he says, "A very, very foolish mistake," he does not really mean it. Mark's utterance, thus, implies that Mark does not admit that he is bad as Bridget accuses him of being and perhaps implies that he is very disappointed that Bridget misunderstands him.

The 17 utterances produced by the characters in Bridget Jones's Diary are analyzed and classified into cooperative utterances and non-cooperative utterance in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Frequency and Percentage of Cooperative and Non-cooperative Utterances in Bridget Jones's Diary*

| Kind of Utterance | Frequency of Occurrence | Percentage |
|-------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Cooperative       | 12                      | 70.59      |
| Non-cooperative   | 5                       | 29.41      |
| Total             | 17                      | 100        |

From Table 1, it is found that 12 of 17 utterances produced by the characters in *Bridget Jones's Diary*, representing 70.59% of the total, are cooperative, and 5 of 17 utterances are non-cooperative, which represent 29.41% of the total.

The frequencies of the conversational maxims that are observed, flouted, and violated in the 17 samples from *Bridget Jones's Diary* are given in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Frequency of Occurrence of Conversational Maxims Observed, Flouted, and Violated in Bridget Jones's Diary*

| Kinds of Conversational Maxims | Frequency of Occurrence |            |         |            |          |            |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|---------|------------|----------|------------|
|                                | Observed                | Percentage | Flouted | Percentage | Violated | Percentage |
| Maxim of Quality               | -                       | 0          | 9       | 36         | 3        | 12         |
| Maxim of Quantity              | -                       | 0          | 4       | 16         | 0        | 0          |
| Maxim of Relation              | 3                       | 12         | 4       | 16         | 0        | 0          |
| Maxim of Manner                | -                       | 0          | 2       | 8          | 0        | 0          |
| Total                          | 3                       | 12         | 19      | 76         | 3        | 12         |

In Table 2, out of the 17 samples of the utterances produced by the characters in *Bridget Jones's Diary*, the maxims are observed, flouted, and violated a total of 25 times altogether. Out of 25 times, it is found that the conversational maxims are flouted the most (19 times, or 76%), and the conversational maxims are observed and violated equally (3 times, 12%).

Out of 25 times, it is also found that the maxim of quality is flouted the most (9 times, representing 36%), followed by the maxim of quantity and the maxim of relation (4 times each, representing 16%), and the maxim of manner is flouted the least (2 times, representing 8%). Moreover, only the maxim of relation is observed (3 times, representing 12%), while only the maxim of quality is violated (3 times, representing 12%).

### Sweet Home Alabama (Samples 18-55)

**Sample 18** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 17]

**Setting:** In the models' changing room, Frederick comes to congratulate Melanie on her having her own fashion show for the first time.

**Situations:** Frederick admires Melanie for her gorgeous designs.

Frederick: Ooh, Miss Vixen, I'm scared of you.

Melanie: Frederick, what are you doing here? You're the competition.

Frederick: Competition? Please! Our design's for plumes and pearls ... and nothing is going to come between me and my protégé. And this is, after all, all about me. **Oh, I love this. Stella McCartney's gonna kill herself.**

Melanie: Then why do I feel like I'm in Times Square buck naked?

Mentioning Stella McCartney, who is one of the world's leading fashion designers, Frederick is using metonymic expression. By exploiting hyperbole and metonymy in his utterance, Frederick is flouting the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." Melanie, however, still assumes that Frederick is following a normal cooperative principle and saying something distinct from what he literally says. Melanie has to determine the appropriate referent for Frederick's metonymic expression. She then infers that Frederick has implied that Melanie's designs are as good as or even better than Stella McCartney's. Frederick's utterance hence implies that Melanie is going to be a world famous designer.

**Sample 19** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 17]

**Setting:** In the models' changing room, Frederick comes to congratulate Melanie on her first fashion show.

**Situations:** Melanie is very excited about her first show.

Frederick: Ooh, Miss Vixen, I'm scared of you.

Melanie: Frederick, what are you doing here? You're the competition.

Frederick: Competition? Please! Our design's for plumes and pearls ... and nothing is going to come between me and my protégé. And this is, after all, all about me. Oh, I love this. Stella McCartney's gonna kill herself.

Melanie: **Then why do I feel like I'm in Times Square buck naked?**

Melanie's expression ostentatiously flouts the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." By using a simile to express her feeling, Melanie is saying something literally false. However, Frederick can still assume that Melanie is being cooperative and then infers that she is trying to say something distinct from the literal meaning. Frederick can work out that if one is being completely naked in a public place like Time Square, he or she must be very embarrassed and getting nervous. Melanie's expression, hence, implies that Melanie is feeling extremely nervous.

**Sample 20** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 18]

**Setting:** At the fashion show, Melanie is watching Andrew on a monitor with broad smile on her face, and then Tabatha comes behind her.

**Situation:** Tabatha can see that the relationship between Melanie and Andrew has been progressing.

Tabatha: Please tell me he has a flaw somewhere.

Melanie: **He asked me to go to Ireland for Christmas.**

By not giving a response to Tabatha's statement above, Melanie is not adhering to the maxim of quantity: "make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange." In addition, by saying something irrelevant to Tabatha's line, Melanie is flouting the maxim of relevance: "make your contributions relevant." However, the shared background knowledge between Tabatha and Melanie – together with the cooperative principles and the maxims – allows Tabatha to assume that Melanie's lack of literal response to Tabatha's statement actually provides a contribution to the conversation. Tabatha hence infers that Melanie's giving no response implies that the statement "Please tell me he has a flaw somewhere" needs no response, but if there will be a response, it will probably be "You know that he doesn't have any flaw." Melanie's utterance, therefore, implies that Melanie thinks Andrew is a perfect man.

**Sample 21** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 18]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** [Continued from the previous sample]

Tabatha: Please tell me he has a flaw somewhere.

Melanie: He asked me to go to Ireland for Christmas.

Tabatha: **He's gonna ask you a lot more than that.**

Tabatha's utterance violates two maxims: the maxim of quantity, "make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange," and the maxim of manner, "avoid obscurity." By stating such an utterance, Tabatha intends to mislead Melanie since Melanie does not seem to be aware that her relationship with Andrew is becoming serious. However, Melanie still assumes that Tabatha is being cooperative and then infers that Tabatha is confident that Andrew will ask Melanie something much more special than spending time with her for Christmas. Tabatha's utterance implies that Andrew will definitely ask something very special, possibly asking Melanie to marry him.

**Sample 22** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 19]

**Setting:** Andrew comes to encourage Melanie at the fashion show.

**Situation:** The fashion show is full of the press and Melanie is worried if she will be criticized for being with Andrew, who is a well-known politician.

Melanie: Oh, God, honey, what if they hate me?

Andrew: Oh, they're critics, Mel. They hate themselves.

Melanie: That's easy for you to say. **I wasn't born with that thick Hennings skin.**

By using the metaphorical expression, Melanie is ostentatiously flouting the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." Andrew as the listener finds the literal meaning of the words in this utterance absurd, so he then rejects the literal meaning of the words. The specific knowledge shared by Andrew and Melanie here is that "Hennings" is Andrew's family name. It is also well known that the Hennings are in politics and have to encounter critics most of the time. Such information allows Andrew to infer that "the thick Hennings skin" illustrates a personality trait of the Hennings family, who are oblivious to criticism. In other words, critics cannot hurt the Hennings under any circumstances. The line "I wasn't born with that thick Hennings skin," therefore, implies that Melanie cannot tolerate being criticized.

**Sample 23** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 20]

**Setting:** Andrew proposes to Melanie at Tiffany's, the famous jewelry store.

**Situation:** Melanie responds in a hesitant manner.

Andrew: Melanie Carmichael ... will you marry me?

Melanie: **Are you sure? I mean, a-a-are you really sure? Because if you're not sure, we could just go back to the car.**

Melanie's response does not provide a "yes" or "no" answer. The nature of Melanie's response and the redundancy in her answer simply create obscurity and give rise to the implicature. Andrew can assume that if Melanie wishes to accept his proposal, she will try to be as clear as she can and she could simply answer "Yes." By not giving an exact answer to the question, Melanie's answer, therefore, flouts the maxim of quantity: "make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange." Furthermore, by making a redundant utterance, Melanie's answer flouts the maxim of manner: "avoid obscurity." The answer implies that Melanie is not yet sure if she wants to marry Andrew.

**Sample 24** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 21]

**Setting:** The Mayor, Andrew's mother, whose name is Kate, has just arrived at the ball and is looking for her son.

**Situation:** The Mayor is feeling anxious and angry at her son's being late.

Mayor: Where is he?

Barry: **He's running late.**

On the surface, Barry's answer appears to violate the maxim of relevance. However, it can be interpreted that Barry is cooperatively answering the Mayor's question and is obeying the maxim of relevance. From the assumption that the maxim of relevance is being observed, the Mayor can assume that Barry's answer "He's running late" might provide the Mayor with a relevant answer. The Mayor, thus, infers that Barry intends to convey that Andrew has not yet arrived at the ball. However, Barry fails to observe the maxim of quantity, "make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange," since he does not provide sufficient information in his answer to the question. The Mayor may assume that Barry is also observing the maxim of quality, so he may not want to say something he does not know exactly. Barry's answer implies that Barry does not know exactly where Andrew is. Like her, he knows only that Andrew is not at the ball yet.

**Sample 25** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 21]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** The Mayor is getting angry as she realizes that her son might be with Melanie.

Mayor: Where is he?

Barry: He's running late.

Mayor: **No doubt thanks to that Carbuncle girl.**

Barry: Carmichael ... designer, Southern.

Mayor: Right, whatever.

The Mayor's utterance flouts the maxim of quality, "do not say what you believe to be false," as she is not sincerely thanking Melanie, but is rather being sarcastic. With the context given, Barry assumes that the Mayor is upset that her son has not arrived at the ball. Barry can infer that the Mayor intends to convey her belief that Melanie is making Andrew late. Moreover, by saying the wrong family name of Melanie, the Mayor simply flouts another sub-maxim of quality: "do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence." Barry can assume that the word "Carbuncle" is meant to refer to Melanie's family name, but is the wrong one. He then can also infer that the Mayor does not remember exactly Melanie's family name, but just something that begins with the letter C and ends with a vowel. The Mayor's utterance, hence, implies that the Mayor is angry that Andrew is with Melanie.

**Sample 26** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 22]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** Reporters ask the Mayor questions concerning Andrew's engagement with Melanie. The Mayor does not seem to be informed about this news.

**Reporter:** Your son's relationship with Melanie Carmichael – sources say they're engaged. Do you have a comment?

**Mayor:** **Trust me, if my son were engaged, I'd have a comment.**

On the surface, it seems the Mayor is not being cooperative. However, by opting out of the maxim of quantity, "make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange," the Mayor is preserving the maxim of quality: "do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence." The unreal condition or supposition, together with the cooperative principle and the maxims, allows the hearers to infer that the Mayor sincerely thinks it is not possible that her son and Melanie are engaged. Thus, the Mayor's answer implies that she has not been told that Andrew and Melanie are engaged.

**Sample 27** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 23]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample] Andrew and Melanie have arrived at the ball.

**Situation:** The Mayor is still in a bad mood, especially when she sees Andrew and Melanie coming to the ball together.

Andrew: I'm sorry we're late.

Mayor: **That shade of lipstick does nothing for you. What kept you?**

The Mayor is not being cooperative as she does not accept Andrew's apology right away. By exploiting a personification in her response, the Mayor is flouting the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." The context here is that the Mayor notices the lipstick mark on Andrew's lips, which she supposes is from Melanie's lips. Andrew infers that the Mayor is saying that Melanie's lipstick does not look good on him. The Mayor's utterance, thus, implies that she knows that Andrew and Melanie were kissing before they arrived at the ball.

**Sample 28** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 24]

**Setting:** Tabatha is talking with Melanie on the phone as Melanie is on her way to Alabama.

**Situation:** Tabatha is curious about what it was like when Melanie was proposed to.

Tabatha: Bloody hell, Mel, I'm your first New York friend, and I have to read about it with 12 million other people!

Melanie: Sorry, honey, she just grabbed my hand. What was I supposed to do?

Tabatha: I know ... we read all about it. So, did you cry?

Melanie: **Wouldn't you?**

On the surface, Melanie's response seems to violate the maxim of quantity, "make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange," as she does not answer Tabatha's question directly. However, it can be interpreted that Melanie is being cooperative and obeying the maxim of quantity. The addressee can assume that Melanie's reply "Wouldn't you?" provides the answer to the question "So, did you cry?" Tabatha hence infers that Melanie's response implies that the question "So, did you cry" need not be asked because the answer will certainly be "Yes, of course." Melanie's utterance, therefore, implies that Melanie did cry.

**Sample 29** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 25]

**Setting:** Melanie has arrived at Jake's house.

**Situation:** Jake knows that Melanie really wants him to sign the divorce papers, so he makes fun of Melanie.

Melanie: Well, for starters, you can get your stubborn ass down here ... and give me a divorce.

[Jake drops a tool on the floor.]

Melanie: Come on, Jake, I mean it. The joke's over. Let's just finish this. I've got a plane to catch.

Jake: **You're shittin' me, right?**

Jake is not cooperating and is flouting the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." By using a pun with the intention of making fun of Melanie, Jake does not sincerely mean what he says, and Melanie as the listener of the utterance is aware of the falsehood at the moment of the utterance. Furthermore, Jake's utterance also flouts the maxim of manner, "avoid ambiguity," because his utterance is ambiguous and can be interpreted in two ways. The similarity of pronunciation between the word "shitting" and "cheating" creates some ambiguity in Jake's response to Melanie. By saying the crude slang word "shitting," which in this situation means telling a lie or speaking nonsense, instead of saying "cheating," which means having an affair, Jake intends to make it ambiguous to Melanie. Jake's response to Melanie's request, therefore, implies that Jake pretends not to understand Melanie's request.

**Sample 30** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 25]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** Jake speaks sarcastically because Melanie does not care to talk to him, but to get him to sign the divorce papers.

Jake: You show up here after 7 years without so much as a “Hey, there, Jake, remember me ... your wife?” Or a “Hi, honey. Lookin’ good. How’s the family?”

Melanie: You expect me to tell you you look good? **Did they run out of soap down at the Piggly Wiggly since I left?**

Although she asks if the Piggly Wiggly (a chain store located in the southern United States only) had run out of soap, Melanie does not sincerely believe so. This question simply flouts the maxim of quality: “do not say what you believe to be false.” The specific knowledge and the mutual knowledge shared by both allow Jake to infer that Melanie has implied that he looks so dirty as if he has not taken a shower for years. Melanie’s utterance, thus, implies that Jake looks awful.

**Sample 31** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 25]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** Melanie feels uncomfortable that Jake still calls her “honey” as he used to do.

Jake: Honey, those people are the only family you got.

Melanie: **Don’t you “honey” me, honey!**

The reason for Melanie's coming back to Alabama to see Jake is to get the divorce done before she can marry Andrew. Being called "honey" by her soon-to-be ex-husband is, in fact, not a sweet thing anymore for Melanie. By calling him "honey" (the second one), Melanie is saying something obviously false and is implying that the opposite is true (irony). The true meaning being expressed here is probably more like "you are not my honey anymore." Therefore, Melanie is not being cooperative and flouting the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." Melanie's utterance, thus, implies that Melanie wants to let Jake know that she has changed and is not anymore Jake's same old wife.

**Sample 32** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 26]

**Setting:** In the Mayor's office, Barry reports to the Mayor what he has found about Melanie's background.

**Situation:** The Mayor suspects that Melanie is probably hiding something about her family background.

**Mayor:** Oh, please! This is classic rebound. He's still wounded from ... who was his last girlfriend?

**Barry:** **Whitney Truesdale, lawyer, San Francisco.**

Barry's answer is informative since it offers sufficient information for the question being asked. The Mayor assumes that Barry is cooperating and observing the maxim of quantity, "make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange," and the maxim of manner,

“be brief.” She, therefore, infers that Barry offers her some necessary information she may need to recall Andrew’s last girlfriend. Barry’s answer then gives rise to the conversational implicature, as it conveys some meaning beyond what he says. His answer implies that Whitney and Andrew were suited for each other, since Whitney had more suitable qualifications.

**Sample 33** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 27]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample] The Mayor then asks Barry to get Andrew on the phone.

**Situation:** The Mayor tries to get Melanie’s family’s contact information from Andrew in order to find out what the truth is.

Mayor: I’m only thinking of you. Say, um ... do you happen to have the Carmichaels’ number down there in Greenville? **I thought perhaps I should introduce myself.**

Andrew: I would like to meet them first, if you don’t mind.

The Mayor violates the maxim of quality when she claims that she wants to have the Carmichaels’ number because she would like to introduce herself to the Carmichaels in Greenville, although she actually wants to find out the truth about Melanie’s background. The Mayor tries to deceive Andrew into thinking that she really wishes to build up a friendship with the Carmichaels. Andrew then makes immediate use of the common ground knowledge to figure out his mother’s true intentions. He then infers that she wants to get to know Melanie’s family, probably to meet them in person.

**Sample 34** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 27]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** [Continued from the previous sample]

Mayor: I'm only thinking of you. Say, um ... do you happen to have the Carmichaels' number down there in Greenville? I thought perhaps I should introduce myself.

Andrew: I would like to meet them first, if you don't mind.

Mayor: You do realize the press is going to be all over this. Happy couples don't sell. **So if there are any skeletons in her closet, Andrew ... we need to know about them.**

By using a metaphorical expression in her utterance, the Mayor is flouting the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." However, this is known that the metaphorical expression "a skeleton in the closet" refers to an embarrassing secret. The non-conventional meaning, together with the collaborative principle and the maxim, invites Andrew to look for the implicature of the utterance. Andrew hence infers that his mother thinks that Melanie has embarrassing secrets about her background. The utterance "So if there are any skeletons in her closet, Andrew ... we need to know about them" implies that the Mayor is thinking that Melanie has some embarrassing secrets about her background, which could be family, education, living conditions, or money.

**Sample 35** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 28]

**Setting:** Melanie sneaks into Jake's house using the hidden key.

**Situation:** Melanie does not know that Jake has called up Sheriff Wade to escort her out.

Jake: You make clothes, right?

Melanie: I design them. There's a big difference.

Jake: **Did you design anything with stripes ?**

At first, there seems to be a connection between Jake's question "Did you design anything with stripes" and Melanie's utterance "I design them. There's a big difference." Melanie assumes that Jake is being cooperative and following the maxim of relation. However, by using a pun (stripes) in his question, Jake intends to mislead Melanie into believing that he wants to know about her designs. Jake's question, thus, violates the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." It is not obvious to Melanie at the time of the utterance that Jake is not sincerely asking the question until she notices the appearance of the sheriff. By asking a question to which he actually does not want the answer, and by using the pun "stripes," which could refer to the stripes on a prisoner's uniform, he tries to imply something to Melanie, who is not aware of the sheriff's coming to arrest her soon. Jake's utterance "Did you design anything with stripes," thus, implies that the sheriff is coming to arrest her.

**Sample 36** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 29]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** Seeing Jake and Melanie being together brings back Sheriff Wade's childhood memory.

Sheriff Wade: You know what? I don't have a single childhood memory that doesn't have you two in it. And that includes the night I lit my ass on fire. Remember?

Jake: **Wade ... Memory Lane is closed.**

The phrase "memory lane" is usually used in the phrase "a walk down memory lane." It is thought of as a path that one may travel along to call up memories of the old days. By using such idiom in his utterance, Jake is flouting the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." The error in conventional meaning of Jake's utterance allows Wade to assume that Jake means to say something distinct from the literal meaning. Wade infers that Jake intends to convey that there is no way to revisit the time in the past. Jake's utterance then implies that Jake wants Wade to stop talking about their old memories.



**Sample 37** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 29]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** Sheriff Wade is about to leave Jake's house after learning that Jake and Melanie are still legally married.

Wade: Ah, boy, you two got a whole lot of catchin' up to do ... so I'm just gonna leave you to it.

Jake: **Man, I set you up with your wife. You owe me one!**

Wade: Why won't you just sign the papers?! There is nothin' I can do. The law is the law, and she has done nothin' wrong.

Jake's utterance on the surface has no connection with Wade's. Nevertheless, Wade still assumes that Jake is being cooperative and observing the maxim of relation. With the contextual knowledge, Wade then infers that Jake is trying to stop him from leaving by mentioning that he once used to help set him up with his wife, so Wade should help him as a favor. Jake's utterance, therefore, implies that Wade has to help him escort Melanie out in return for that help.



**Sample 38** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 30]

**Setting:** Earl and Melanie have conversation on the way home after Earl has bailed Melanie out of jail.

**Situation:** Earl always defends Jake for the mistakes he made.

Earl: I'm not sidin' with anybody. The boy's changed, is all.

Melanie: Can we just not talk about Jake, okay? **I know he's the son you never had, but I'm your only daughter ...** and maybe you want to know what's new with me.

Earl: Okay, shoot.

Melanie's statement "I know he's the son you never had, but I'm your only daughter" flouts the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." The semantic error found in this statement allows Earl as the listener to assume that Melanie is cooperating and trying to convey something apart from what she literally says. Earl infers that Melanie is trying to say that Earl treats Jake as if Jake was his own son because Earl does not have a son. Melanie's statement hence implies that Melanie is thinking that Earl does not care for her.



**Sample 39** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 31]

**Setting:** Earl brings Melanie home after bailing her out of jail.

**Situation:** Pearl has not seen Melanie for years. She is very surprised at seeing her daughter today.

Pearl: Come to Mama, sugar!

Melanie: Hey, Mama.

Pearl: **Oh, good land of the livin', you are skin and bones.** Well, don't I get a smile? I know you got one in there somewhere.

It is known by native speakers of English that the phrase “land of the living” is an expression meaning being alive. “Oh, good land of the livin'” is then an exclamation of surprise used to express the feeling of being thankful to find someone still alive. However, the context given is that Melanie has not visited her parents for years and her mother (Pearl) knows very well that Melanie is still alive. Pearl's exclamation of surprise here then is a bit exaggerated. In addition, uttering the statement “you are skin and bones,” Pearl is exploiting a metaphor. Pearl's utterance, then, flouts the maxim of quality: “do not say what you believe to be false.” The error in the conventional meaning invites Melanie to infer that Pearl is trying to say something distinct from the literal meaning. With the knowledge about the phrase “skin and bones”, Melanie then works out that Pearl means to say that Melanie is very thin. Therefore, Pearl's utterance implies “It's unbelievable that you're back home. Look! you're so skinny.”

**Sample 40** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 31]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** Pearl gives the tickets to New York back to Melanie. Melanie is upset that her parents did not visit her, but visited other places.

Melanie: These were a gift. I'd rather you guys just use them. You know what I can't understand is how y'all will visit ... every stupid battlefield in the continental U.S., but you can't manage to visit your only daughter.

Pearl: **Well, the door swings both ways, sweetie.** Anyway, don't get me started on the things I don't understand.

Pearl's utterance, on the surface, seems to be irrelevant to that of Melanie. However, Melanie as the addressee can assume that Pearl is being cooperative and obeying the maxim of relevance. By using that idiomatic expression, Pearl is flouting the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." The error in the conventional meaning allows Melanie to assume that Pearl is saying something distinct from what is literally said. With her knowledge of the idiomatic expression, Melanie then can infer that Pearl means to convey that the two similar situations should be treated in the same way. Melanie then also infers that her parent's not visiting her in New York and her not visiting her parents in Alabama are similar and should be treated in the same way. Pearl's utterance, therefore, implies that Melanie's parents should not be blamed for not visiting Melanie in New York as Melanie never visited her parents either in all these years.

**Sample 41** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 31]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** Melanie and Pearl keep speaking sarcastically to each other. Earl then tries to stop this by asking Pearl to get the baloney cake.

Pearl: I'm just sayin', is all.

Melanie: What?! What are you trying to say?! I mean, just tell me what I can do to make you happy!

Pearl: Just make yourself happy, darlin'.

Melanie: Done. We're there, all right? You know, I've really made something of myself. I have a career. People actually want to be me. And somebody loves me, and I love him.

Earl: **Pearl, why don't you get us that baloney cake out the icebox?** [To Melanie] Your mama's a complex woman.

Earl's utterance has no connection with those of Melanie and Pearl. By changing the topic immediately, Earl intentionally violates the maxim of relation. Earl's violating the maxim of relation, together with the mutual background knowledge, allows Pearl as the addressee to assume that Earl intends to say something beyond what is said. Pearl then infers that Earl is asking her to leave the conversation by asking her to get the cake instead. Earl's utterance, hence, implies that Earl wants Pearl to stop arguing with Melanie.

**Sample 42** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 32]

**Setting:** Melanie goes to the bank in her hometown and has a short conversation with her old friend Dorothea, who works for the bank.

**Situation:** Melanie does not know that Dorothea and Wade are engaged.

**Dorothea:** Wade said you and Jake had quite the reunion. But that's just pillow talk talkin'.

**Melanie:** A-Are you and Wade ...

**Dorothea:** **Goin' on three years. 'Course, it ain't Tiffany's. But then again, you can't believe everything you hear on TV.**

By providing more information than she was asked to provide, Dorothea simply flouts the maxim of quantity: "do not make your contribution more informative than is required." The specific knowledge shared between Melanie and Dorothea here is the knowledge that "Tiffany's" refers to one of the world's premier jewelry stores. Although Dorothea's utterance, on the surface, seems to be irrelevant, Melanie assumes Dorothea is cooperating and observing the maxim of relation. So Melanie infers that Dorothea's answer is relevant to her relationship with Wade, and Dorothea's mentioning the brand Tiffany's is related to the ring she wears on her ring finger in the local context. Dorothea's utterance, thus, implies that Dorothea and Wade are engaged.

**Sample 43** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 33]

**Setting:** Jake comes back home and finds Melanie waiting for him there.

**Situation:** Jake makes fun of Melanie's spending her money buying new things to make the house nicer.

Jake: Holy shit! What happened to the stove?! And where are them little magnets I had over here, huh?! What the hell is this ... chick food?

Melanie: Light beer ... less calories. I tried to pick out a new bed ... but have you been to the Sit 'n Sleep lately? Yuck. I'll just have to order something from New York.

Jake: **Whatever blows your dress up, darlin'. You go right ahead and spend your money.**

“Whatever blows your dress up” is an idiom that refers to anything that makes one happy or feel good. By using this expression, Jake is flouting the maxim of quality: “do not say what you believe to be false.” However, Melanie still assumes that Jake is being cooperative and trying to say something distinct from the literal meaning. With the knowledge of the expression, Melanie can infer that probably Jake meant to say something like “whatever makes you happy.” However, the contextual knowledge also allows Melanie to infer that Jake is being ironic and implying the opposite is true. Melanie then can work out that Jake is making fun of her spending her money buying things to make the house nicer in order to play a trick on him.

Jake's utterance, therefore, implies that Jake knows that Melanie is playing a trick on him and he is not going to stop her.

**Sample 44** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 33]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** Jake knows that Melanie has taken the money in their joint account. He decides to sign the divorce papers and then Melanie is curious about the money saved in that account.

Melanie: Hold on. What are you doing with all that cash saved up? And since when did you quit the tire factory? You're not doing anything illegal, are you, Jake?!

Jake: **Maybe I am. So what?**

By producing this answer, Jake intentionally misleads Melanie into thinking that he is doing something illegal. He then violates the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." Moreover, by providing such an ambiguous answer instead of the exact answer, Jake flouts the maxim of manner: "avoid ambiguity." The ambiguity in Jake's answer gives rise to a conversational implicature and invites Melanie to infer that Jake knows very well what he is doing, but he does not want to give the clear answer to the question. Jake's utterance hence implies that Jake is avoiding telling the truth, probably because he finds that she is insulting him by asking such a question, so he just lets her remain curious.

**Sample 45** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 33]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** [Continued from the previous sample]

Jake: Maybe I am. So what? I don't ask you about your boyfriend ...  
you keep your nose out of my life ... deal?

Melanie: Who told you?

Jake: **Honey, just 'cause I talk slow doesn't mean I'm stupid.**

By not answering the question, Jake simply flouts the maxim of quantity: "make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange." Moreover, Jake also flouts the maxim of relevance by making an apparently non-relevant remark. Jake flouts the two maxims to let Melanie know that he is aware of Melanie's attitude toward him, that is, that he is not very smart. However, Melanie can infer that Jake intends to convey that Melanie always takes it for granted that Jake knows nothing just because he does not tell what he knows. Jake's utterance, therefore, implies that Jake is actually well-informed.

**Sample 46** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 33]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** Jake has just remembered that he has a date tonight. He then changes his mind not to sign the divorce papers yet.

**Jake:** Oh, hey, Mel, you know what? I just remembered I got myself a hot date. You don't mind if I have my lawyer take a look at these.

**Melanie:** What?!

**Jake:** Hell, I'm just a simple country boy. There's words in there I can't even pronounce. **You might be takin' me to the cleaners for all I know.**

By using the idiom about taking someone to the cleaners, Jake is flouting the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." Nevertheless, the meaning of this idiom is normally understood by native speakers of English. Although "You might be takin' me to the cleaners for all I know" seems on the surface to be irrelevant to Melanie's line, Melanie as the listener still assumes that Jake is being cooperative and observing the maxim of relation. Melanie then infers that Jake is implying that he wonders if Melanie will try to take a lot of his money by some trick in the divorce papers. Jake's utterance, therefore, implies that Jake is afraid that the divorce might force him to pay Melanie a lot of money.

**Sample 47** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 34]

**Setting:** Melanie follows Jake to a local bar, which belongs to Jake's mother, Stella.

**Situation:** Stella still calls Melanie her daughter-in-law. Melanie then tries to correct it by showing the engagement ring on her finger.

**Stella:** Batten down the hatches, boys! Trouble done just walked back into my life ... disguised as my favorite daughter-in-law! Honey, drive that pretty face over here and give me a hug!

**Melanie:** **Soon-to-be ex-daughter-in-law.**

**Stella:** Who's the lucky guy?

**Melanie:** His name is Andrew. He's in politics.

Melanie's utterance is informative as it offers some necessary information Stella, as the listener, may need. Stella assumes that Melanie is cooperating and observing the maxim of quantity, "make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange," and the maxim of manner, "be brief." Stella hence infers that Melanie intends to say that she will no longer be Stella's daughter-in-law, as her marriage with Jake is soon to be over. Although the utterance can be interpreted literally, there is also an additional conveyed meaning that can be understood by Stella with the assistance of the local context (Melanie's showing the engagement ring on her finger). This can be seen in Stella's immediate response "Who's the lucky guy?" Melanie's utterance, therefore, implies that Melanie is divorcing Jake and getting married with someone else soon.

**Sample 48** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 35]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** Lurlynn, an old friend of Melanie, is surprised to see Melanie again after a long time. She admires Melanie's fashionable dress.

Lurlynn: Oh ... my ... God! Melanie?!

Melanie: Lurlynn?

Lurlynn : Yes! Oh, my God! Look at you, all fancy. **You look like you just stepped out of a magazine.**

By using a simile in her utterance, “You look like you just stepped out of a magazine,” Lurlynn is flouting the maxim of quality: “do not say what you believe to be false.” Lurlynn’s flouting the maxim of quality then gives rise to the conversational implicature. The non-conventional meaning – together with the mutual knowledge of the local context – enables Melanie to infer that Lurlynn is comparing her clothes with fashions worn by models in magazines. Lurlynn’s utterance, therefore, implies that Melanie dresses fashionably, like a model.

**Sample 49** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 36]

**Setting:** [Continue from the previous sample] Melanie walks over to Jake and Starr, Jake's date.

**Situation:** Melanie and Starr had never met before. Melanie tries to disgrace Jake.

Melanie: Mind if I join you?

Jake: Actually, we do.

Melanie: You must be Jake's hot date.

Starr: I'm Starr.

Melanie: **Hi, I'm Melanie, Jake's snotty Yankee-bitch wife ... whom he refuses to divorce, even though I'm engaged to another man.**

It is common knowledge that when someone introduces him/herself to another person, he or she expects a similar response, such as the common greeting "Glad to meet you" or "Nice to meet you." By giving such an unusual response, Melanie is giving more information than is needed in the conversation. Melanie is clearly and obviously flouting the maxim of quantity: "do not make your contribution more informative than is required." However, Starr still assumes that Melanie is being cooperative and implying something beyond what she says. Starr then infers that Melanie intends to let her know that she is still Jake's wife, although she is engaged to another man. Melanie's utterance, however, implies that Melanie wants to remind Jake that he should not have an affair with another woman before he gets a divorce. She also wants to make Starr think that she is more significant to Jake than Starr.

S k njc 4/ [See Appendix B, Excerpt 37]

**Setting:** At the local fair, Melanie comes to apologize to Lurlynn for what she did the night before at the local bar.

**Situation:** Lurlynn tells her something about Jake that Melanie did not know before.

Melanie: Jake was in New York?

Lurlynn: **He tojd Cjinton he'd never seen anything jike it. He reajzed straight off ... he'd need k ore than an anojogy to win you back. He needed to conquer the worjd first. He's been tryin' ever since.**

Melanie: That's why he kept sending the papers back.

Lurlynn's utterance flouts three maxims: the maxim of quantity, the maxim of quality, and the maxim of manner. By giving more information than is needed, Lurlynn simply flouts the maxim of quantity: "do not make your contribution more informative than is required"; by using the idiom, which is literally false, Lurlynn flouts the maxim of quality, "do not say what you believe to be false"; and by giving such obscure information, Lurlynn flouts the maxim of manner, "avoid obscurity." The assumption that Lurlynn is being cooperative and observing the maxim of relation, along with the shared background knowledge between Melanie and Lurlynn, allows Melanie to infer that Jake went to New York, which was something he had never seen before. Melanie also infers that Jake needed to do something very difficult and challenging in order to get her back. Lurlynn's utterance, however, implies

that Jake went to New York, and he wanted to do something special to prove that he deserved to have Melanie back.

**Sample 51** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 38]

**Setting:** At the local fair, where Melanie's old friends and Jake meet one another, Melanie is holding up a glass and looking at the bottom of the glass.

**Situation:** Melanie is the only one who does not know that Jake owns the company that manufactures the brand Deep South Glass

Lurlynn: Oh, honey, you ... you drink that from the top.

Melanie: I'm just lookin' to see who makes this Deep South Glass. I wonder if you can get it in New York. It's beautiful.

Eldon: **Hey, Jake, Mel would like to know ... where she can find some of that snooty-faluty glass.**

Eldon knows that Jake owns the company that manufactures Deep South Glass, and probably knows where Melanie can get them, but he does not say that he knows. Eldon's utterance violates the maxim of quantity, "make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange," because it provides too little information to answer the question asked by Melanie. To be more exact, he basically answers nothing and intentionally misleads her into thinking that he does not know who makes the Deep South Glass or where to find the glasses. Melanie assumes that Eldon is being cooperative and implying something beyond what he says. She

then infers that Eldon cannot give a more informative statement, but he asks if Jake can. The conversational implicature of this utterance is probably “I cannot answer your question for some reason. You may ask Jake because he knows about Deep South Glass.”

**Sample 52** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 38]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** [Continued from the previous sample]

Melanie: I’m just lookin’ to see who makes this Deep South Glass. I wonder if you can get it in New York. It’s beautiful.

Eldon: Hey, Jake, Mel would like to know ... where she can find some of that snooty-faluty glass.

Jake: **Why ask me?**

By not providing the information requested by his friend, Jake is not being cooperative and flouting the maxim of quantity: “make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange.” Moreover, by asking Eldon back and pretending that he knows nothing about the Deep South Glass, Jake is saying something obviously false and flouting the maxim of quality: “do not say what you believe to be false.” The fact that Jake owns the company that manufactures Deep South Glass is known among all of his friends, except Melanie. The flouting of the maxims allows Eldon as the addressee to infer that Jake’s question “Why ask me?”

needs no answer, but implies that Jake does not want to let Melanie know about his business.

**Sample 53** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 39]

**Setting:** Melanie is about to leave home to New York.

**Situation:** Pearl expresses her concern about Jake's feelings for Melanie. She does not want her daughter to be confused and make a mistake again.

Pearl: Don't sass me, okay? Don't you dare sass me, 'cause I have put up with an awful lot from you over the years.

Melanie: Like what?! Like me quitting your precious pageants?

Pearl: I didn't want you to end up like me! Damn it! Now, you need to stay as far away from here as you can. **That boy is quicksand.**

By using a metaphor in the utterance "That boy is quicksand," Pearl is flouting the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." The non-conventional meaning allows Melanie to assume that Pearl is conveying something distinct from the literal meaning. Melanie can work out that Pearl probably intends to say that Jake's behavior is like a pool of quicksand that sucks people down to the bottom of the hole. Melanie then works out that Pearl means to say that Jake is someone who would stop her from having a better life.

**Sample 54** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 40]

**Setting:** Mr. Buford, Melanie's lawyer, interrupts the wedding ceremony between her and Andrew to inform them that the divorce is still not final because Melanie had not signed the divorce papers.

**Situation:** Stella talks to Melanie when she is about to sign the papers.

Melanie: Does anybody have a pen?

Andrew: Mom?

Mayor: Oh, yeah, sure.

Stella: These things don't just happen, you know.

Earl: **Can't ride two horses with one ass, sugar bean.**

Earl's utterance does not appear on the surface to adhere to the maxim of relation. However, Melanie as the addressee still assumes that Earl is being cooperative and following the maxim of relation. Nevertheless, by using the metaphorical expression in his utterance, Earl simply flouts the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." Melanie has to make immediate use of the background knowledge shared by both Earl and Melanie to figure out Earl's intended meaning. Melanie then infers that Earl is comparing her having two men at the same time with one's riding two horses at the same time. Such an utterance hence implies that Earl is telling Melanie to make the decision before signing the divorce papers.

**Sample 55** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 40]

**Setting:** Melanie decides at the last minute not to marry Andrew, as she realizes that she still loves Jake.

**Situation:** The Mayor goes hysterical because she loses face.

Mayor: I will not allow the future President of the United States ... to be dumped at the altar by some psycho Daisy Mae! You go after him, you little bitch!

Pearl: Wait just a minute, missy. Uh, there ... there's no need for name-calling, now. Now, she spoke her piece, and that's all there is to it.

Mayor: **Oh, go back to your double-wide and fry something.**

It is a stereotype in the United States that southerners who live in mobile homes are poor or lower-class and they usually have fried food. The word "double-wide" here refers to a type of mobile home, in which two units are connected lengthwise, making the width double. By exploiting a metonymy in her utterance, the Mayor is flouting the maxim of the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." Calling Pearl's house a double-wide and mentioning such stereotypical cooking, the Mayor is trying to convey that Pearl is a lower-class person. With the specific knowledge shared between the Mayor and Pearl, Pearl as the addressee infers that the Mayor is insulting her with what she says about her mobile home and the way she cooks. The Mayor's utterance implies that the Mayor does not want to speak anymore with Pearl, whom she regards as beneath her.

The total of 38 utterances produced by the characters in *Sweet Home Alabama* are analyzed and classified into cooperative utterances and non-cooperative utterances in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Frequency and Percentage of Cooperative and Non-cooperative Utterances in Sweet Home Alabama*

| Kinds of Utterance | Frequency of Occurrence | Percentage |
|--------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Cooperative        | 28                      | 73.68      |
| Non-cooperative    | 10                      | 26.32      |
| Total              | 38                      | 100        |

From Table 3, it can be seen that 28 of 38 utterances produced by the characters in *Sweet Home Alabama*, representing 73.68% of the total, are cooperative, and 10 of 38 utterances are non-cooperative, representing 26.32% of the total.

The frequencies of the kinds of the conversational maxims that are observed, flouted, and violated in the 38 samples from *Sweet Home Alabama* are given in Table 4.

**Table 4***Frequency of Occurrence of Conversational Maxims Observed, Flouted, and Violated in Sweet Home Alabama*

| Kinds of Conversational Maxims | Frequency of Occurrence |            |         |            |          |            |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|---------|------------|----------|------------|
|                                | Observed                | Percentage | Flouted | Percentage | Violated | Percentage |
| Maxim of Quality               | 1                       | 1.85       | 21      | 38.89      | 3        | 5.56       |
| Maxim of Quantity              | 3                       | 5.56       | 9       | 16.67      | 2        | 3.70       |
| Maxim of Relation              | 4                       | 7.41       | 3       | 5.56       | 0        | 0          |
| Maxim of Manner                | 2                       | 3.70       | 4       | 7.40       | 2        | 3.70       |
| Total                          | 10                      | 18.52      | 37      | 68.52      | 7        | 12.96      |

Table 4 shows that, across the 38 sample utterances produced by the characters in *Sweet Home Alabama*, the maxims are observed, flouted, and violated a total of 54 times. Out of 54 times, it is found that the conversational maxims are flouted the most (37 times, representing 68.52%); the conversational maxims are observed the second most (10 times, representing 18.52%); and the conversational maxims are observed the least (7 times, representing 12.96%).

However, the data analysis and interpretation reveals that out of 56 times, the maxim of quality is flouted the most (21 times, or 38.89%), followed by the maxim of quantity (9 times, or 16.67%), the maxim of manner (4 times, or 7.40%), and the maxim of relation (3 times, or 5.56%). The maxim of relation is observed the most (4 times, or 7.41%), followed by the maxim of quantity (3 times, or 5.56%), the maxim of manner (2 times, or 3.70%), and the maxim of quality (1 time, or 1.85%).

In addition, the maxim of quality is violated the most (3 times, or 5.56%), followed by the maxim of quantity and the maxim of manner (2 times each, or 3.70%), while the maxim of relation is not violated at all.

## Two Weeks Notice (Samples 56-75)

**Sample 56** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 41]

**Setting:** Ruth and Larry, Lucy's parents, bail Lucy and her friends out of jail after they were arrested for protesting against Wade Corporation.

**Situation:** Lucy is upset knowing that she could not stop people from Wade Corporation knocking down the community theater.

Lucy: So did they knock it down? I'm not getting through to people. Why don't people respond to me?

Ruth: **Honey, Wade Corporation is not people. It's a heartless profit machine.** And it's getting worse all the time.

It is common knowledge that machine is a non-living thing that is operated by people. When one is called a machine, he or she is then thought of as a person who keeps working all the time and has no feelings or human nature. However, by using the metaphor, Ruth simply flouts the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." The assumption that Ruth is being cooperative allows Lucy to assume that Ruth is providing an answer to her question by saying something distinct from the literal meaning of the utterance. The non-conventional meaning of the utterance invites Lucy to look for the implicature of the utterance. Lucy hence infers that Ruth is trying to say that people from Wade Corporation do nothing but work for the company's profit and they have no heart. Ruth's utterance, therefore, implies

that people at Wade Corporation are like robots and do not care about the employees.

**Sample 57** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 42]

**Setting:** Howard Wade calls his younger brother George and tells him to see him in Westchester, New York.

**Situation:** Tony, George's driver, knows that George cannot refuse his brother's order.

George: There's no way I'm running up to Westchester just because he calls. It's absurd. He'll just have to wait.

Tony: Right on. Hey, man, forget him.

George: Yeah.

Tony: **Should I get the car?**

George: Yes, get the car.

Tony's question is interpreted as cooperative, although it does not seem to be relevant to George's utterance on the surface. The assumption that Tony is being cooperative and being relevant to the current exchange allows George to infer that Tony knows what George is up to, i.e., that he will have to see Howard in Westchester eventually. The question "Should I get the car?" therefore implies "Would you like to go now?"

**Sample 58** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 43]

**Setting:** In a restaurant, Larry, Ruth, and Lucy are discussing Lucy's decision to be working for George Wade, whom they regard as their enemy because his company develops property and often tears down old but culturally important buildings.

**Situation:** Ruth does not want Lucy to work for George, whereas Larry thinks it is a chance to get close to their enemy.

Ruth: Honey, you cannot work for that man.

Larry: Hey, we can use the bail money. Remember what Sun Tzu said?

Lucy: Yes.

Larry: "Keep your friends close and your enemies closer."

Ruth: **Sun Tzu didn't have a daughter.**

Sun Tzu, a Chinese military strategist and general, is the author of *The Art of War*, a very influential ancient Chinese book on military strategy. His principles for the conduct of war can be used and adapted across various other fields, such as business and politics, and his quotes are well-recognized all over the world. Larry, in this conversation, quotes one of Sun Tzu's principles and Ruth unexpectedly claims that Sun Tzu had no daughter. Ruth's statement seems to be irrelevant to Larry's. However, her statement can be interpreted as being cooperative. With the assumption that Ruth is being cooperative and observing the maxim of relation, Larry can infer that Sun Tzu's having no daughter supports the substance of his own saying, "Keep your friends close and your enemies closer," and that someone should not let his or her daughter

get close to his or her enemy. Larry then can also infer that Ruth intends to convey that they should not let their own daughter (Lucy) work for Wade, their enemy.

**Sample 59** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 44]

**Setting:** Lucy (as George Wade's lawyer), Mrs. Wade's lawyer, George, and his soon-to-be ex-wife are in a room dealing with the issues of the divorce of George and Mrs. Wade.

**Situation:** Mrs. Wade's lawyer is trying to negotiate more alimony for Mrs. Wade.

Mrs. Wade's lawyer: Now that we're all here, I'd like to discuss the settlement terms.

Lucy: The terms have been set. It's called a pre-nup.

Mrs. Wade's lawyer: We both know ... that a pre-nup doesn't preclude certain recompensatory ...

Lucy: **In plain English, although I can follow you in German and Japanese if you prefer.**

Mrs. Wade's lawyer: She wants double the alimony.

Lucy's utterance, on the surface, seems to have no obvious connection with Mrs. Wade's lawyer's utterance. However, the lawyer can still assume that Lucy is being cooperative and observing the maxim of relation. The assumption that Lucy is being cooperative and following the maxim of relation allows Mrs. Wade's lawyer to infer that Lucy is implying that she

wants him to say in a straightforward manner what he wants. Furthermore, by not producing a straightforward utterance herself and also speaking verbosely, Lucy has failed to observe the maxim of manner: “be brief.” Lucy’s flouting the maxim of manner allows Mrs. Wade’s lawyer to infer that Lucy is trying to emphasize that she knows what he is up to.

**Sample 60** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 45]

**Setting:** George and Lucy finished dealing with George’s divorce and have a chat while walking.

**Situation:** Lucy is irritated that George gave his wife double alimony, as she requested.

Lucy: Why did you give her the money?

George: She’d never have stopped till she got what she wanted. You always say I have a responsibility towards those less fortunate.

Lucy: Everybody is less fortunate than you ... **so just give the money to someone who’s not gonna spend it on collagen.**

The word “collagen” in this utterance is metonymy or a synecdoche. It could stand for both cosmetics and cosmetic surgery, which are intended to improve one’s appearance. Lucy’s utterance “so just give the money to someone who’s not gonna spend it on collagen” simply flouts the maxim quality: “do not say what you believe to be false.” However, it can be interpreted that Lucy is being cooperative and following the maxim of relation. Such knowledge of what collagen is, together with the assumption

that Lucy is being cooperative and adhering to the maxim of relation, allows George to determine the appropriate referent for the metonymic expression in Lucy's statement. He then can work out that Lucy meant to say that he should not give his money to his wife, who prefers spending money on cosmetics or having cosmetic surgery. Lucy's utterance, therefore, implies that George's ex-wife does not deserve the money.

**Sample 61** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 46]

**Setting:** George and Lucy are shopping for clothes and accessories.

George asks Lucy for her opinion on a belt.

**Situation:** Lucy is still upset that George did not let her use her potential in negotiating George's divorce.

George: Okay, now, what do you think? Too ornate?

Lucy: **I don't care about the belt.**

Lucy is not being cooperative and flouting the maxim of quantity: "make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange." By not giving an answer to the question asked by George, Lucy wants George to be aware of something unsaid in her utterance. The components of the local context such as Lucy's facial expression and her tone of voice allow George to infer that Lucy is not really in the mood for choosing clothes and accessories for George and even not in the mood for commenting on them. Lucy's response implies that she is still upset and possibly implies that it is George's fault.

**Sample 62** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 46]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** George is trying to calm Lucy down by making a joke of the matters discussed.

George: Where is Staten Island? Why don't we go there?

Lucy: Thanks, but Harvard doesn't give a degree in yenta. I'm not here to find you a wife or to pick out your clothes. My heroes are Clarence Darrow, Thurgood Marshall ... Who's another non-scummy lawyer? My parents! My father worked for Martin Luther King. My mother is a law professor. They taught me that lawyers should be treated with respect.

George: **I have complete respect for you. R-E-S-P-E-C-T.** Luce, wait. Wait!

By playing with the word “respect,” with the intention of making fun of Lucy, George is ostentatiously flouting the maxim of manner, “avoid ambiguity,” and the maxim of quality, “do not say what you believe to be false.” It is obvious at the time of the utterance that George’s utterance is false and absurd. Lucy then rejects the literal meaning of the words and looks for the implicature. Lucy infers that George provides a senseless argument by playing with the word “respect,” instead of responding to her in appropriate manner. Lucy then works out that George is teasing her in order to make a joke. George’s utterance hence implies that Lucy is taking things too serious and being very difficult.

**Sample 63** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 47]

**Setting:** George calls Lucy out of her friend's wedding to help him pick out a suit.

**Situation:** Lucy is very angry after she finds that it is not an emergency. George does not seem to feel guilty about it at all.

**George:** Why do you keep your phone on? You crave the excitement. This is entirely my thing ... because I've managed to turn myself into this ... It's not like I'm enjoying it either. Now I can't. I'm addicted. I have to know what you think. What do you think?

**Lucy:** **I think you are the most selfish human being on the planet.**

By using hyperbole, Lucy is saying something obviously untrue and flouting the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." The falsity in the statement allows George to assume that Lucy is trying to say something distinct from the literal meaning of the utterance. George then infers that Lucy probably meant to say that she has never met such a selfish person before in her life. Lucy's statement, therefore, implies that she cannot tolerate that sort of behavior from George anymore.

**Sample 64** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 48]

**Setting:** Lucy is talking to her parents, Ruth and Larry, over the telephone.

**Situation:** Lucy has her parents take a look at the contract made between her and Wade Corporation.

Larry: Honey, this contract is excellent work. I'm very proud of you.

Lucy: Dad, I'm trying to get out of it.

Ruth: **I don't know why you went to work for that philandering robber baron.** You usually have impeccable instincts. Look at your boyfriend, Ansel. He's a dedicated environmental warrior.

By calling George a "philandering robber baron," Ruth is ostentatiously flouting the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false" The semantic error found in this utterance invites Lucy as the addressee to assume that Ruth is being cooperative and trying to say something distinct from the literal meaning. Lucy infers that Ruth has implied that George is a powerful businessman who allegedly engages in unethical business tactics in order to build a large personal fortune, and who also has sex with a lot of different women.

**Sample 65** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 49]

**Setting:** Lucy arrives at the office, where George and Howard are waiting for her.

**Situation:** Lucy intends to offend George and Howard in order to get fired. She comes to the meeting late and misbehaves.

Lucy: Good morning, boys. Sorry, I am so late.

George: **That's fine. We only just got here.**

Howard: Forty-five minutes ago.

George intentionally violates the maxim of quality: “do not say what you believe to be false” when he claims that he and Howard have just got to the office, despite the fact that they arrived 45 minutes ago. Violating the maxim of quality, George intends to let Lucy know that he thinks nothing of Lucy’s being late. Knowing that George is saying something false, Lucy, however, can infer that George is trying to say that her coming to the office late cannot irritate him. George’s response to Lucy, thus, implies that George will not fall for her trick.

**Sample 66** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 49]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample]

**Situation:** [Continued from the previous sample]

Lucy: Good morning, boys. Sorry, I am so late.

George: That's fine. We only just got here.

Howard: Forty-five minutes ago.

Lucy: **Howie, are these your kids? You know, I've never actually met them. They are good-looking boys.**

George: That's a girl. That's Sue and Paul.

Giving her opinion on Howard's children but knowing nothing about them really, Lucy simply flouts the maxim of quality: "do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence." Furthermore, skipping from one subject to another immediately, Lucy also flouts the maxim of relation: "make your contributions relevant." Lucy, however, intentionally fails to observe the maxim of quality and the maxim of relation in order to make the listeners notice. Howard, as the addressee, then infers that Lucy intends to irritate him by taking it for granted that Howard's two children are both boys without having the correct information about them. Lucy's utterance hence implies that Lucy is trying to get fired for being rude and silly and showing her boss no respect.

**Sample 67** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 50]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample] George takes Lucy out of the office room.

**Situation:** George knows what Lucy is up to. He knows that she is trying to get fired.

**George:** You think if you come in late and spit on the boss that will get you fired? Not in this company.

**Lucy:** **George, I have an ulcer. I don't sleep well, mostly because you keep calling me at night. If you don't call me, I dream you're gonna call me. I think about you in the shower, not in a good way ... but in an I'm-so-distracted-I-can't-remember-if-I-washed-my-hair way. So I wash my hair twice. So I have a hole in my stomach, I am running out of shampoo ... and today is the first time in my life that I did not give a hundred percent on the job ... and I hate that feeling**

Instead of using simple expressions here, Lucy speaks verbosely. Such lengthy and verbose utterance of Lucy ostentatiously flouts two sub-maxims of manner: "be brief" and "be orderly." It can be assumed that Lucy fails to observe the two sub-maxims in order to emphasize the message and generate additional meaning. The verbosity and prolixity of the utterance here allows George as the listener to infer that Lucy is trying to appeal to him to understand and care for her suffering, caused by working for him. Lucy's

verbose utterance, therefore, implies that Lucy appeals to George to have sympathy for her and allow her to quit the job.

**Sample 68** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 51]

**Setting:** Lucy takes George to the deck of the community centre.

**Situation:** Lucy mentions her argument with her mother when she was in her childhood.

George: And you up here on your own.

Lucy: It's hard to find a quiet place in Brooklyn to think. Or to replay whatever argument I just had with my mother.

George: **Yeah, she's terrifying. I thought she was gonna kill me and feed me to the poor.**

Using hyperbole in his utterance, George is flouting the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." The exaggeration then creates a falsity and forces the listener to notice. The falsity in George's utterance allows Lucy to assume that George is trying to say something apart from the literal meaning of the utterance. Lucy then infers that George has implied that her mother acted in an unfriendly manner, as if he is a hostile creature. George's utterance, thus, implies that George could sense that Lucy's mother does not really like him.

**Sample 69** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 52]

**Setting:** Lucy asks George to join a job interview to find her replacement.

**Situation:** George misunderstands that Polly, an applicant, is pregnant.

Lucy: Here's somebody interesting, Polly St. Clair.

George: **Well, it's a terrific resume, Polly. Congratulations on the baby.**

Polly: What baby?

Lucy: Maybe you should check with me before you talk.

George makes a mistake with Polly, who is overweight, by saying she is pregnant. By claiming that Polly is pregnant without having sufficient information about Polly, George is saying something obviously false and flouting the maxim of quality: "do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence." Moreover, George's response seems to flout the maxim of relevance. In order to preserve the assumption of cooperation, Polly as the addressee, has to look at herself (her physical appearance, in this case) to comprehend why George made an apparently non-relevant remark. Polly then infers that George finds her quite overweight, so he assumes that she is pregnant. George's utterance hence implies that he thinks Polly looks like a pregnant woman.

**Sample 70** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 53]

**Setting:** George and Lucy are discussing about the applicants who will replace Lucy as a chief counsel.

**Situation:** George does not want a man, but a woman to work for him.

Lucy: Harry Raskin, Richard Beck. Interesting prospects for my replacement. Let's see.

George: No, it's gotta be a woman.

Lucy: **What a surprise. I suppose a certain bust size would help. Maybe some bathing-suit shots?**

Lucy obviously flouts the maxim of quality, "do not say what you believe to be false," with the intention of conveying sarcasm to George. The background knowledge shared between George and Lucy, together with the sarcastic tone of voice, allows George to infer that Lucy is being sarcastic and her intention must be in contrast with what she says on the surface. By saying that the size of breasts and pictures in swimming suits could help in considering someone for the job, Lucy has implied that George would like to use his subjective criteria in considering someone for the job.

**Sample 71** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 54]

**Setting:** June Carver calls on Lucy as she applies for a job as an attorney.

**Situation:** June does not have a strong background in property law. She tries to show her admiration for Lucy and her potential for the post.

Lucy: Did you have Criminal with Professor Rappaport?

June: **Oh, my God. I'm still shaking. Yeah. But I have to tell you, Miss Kelson, you are a legend there.**

June's response to Lucy's question provides more information than was needed. June, therefore, flouts the maxim of quantity: "do not make your contribution more informative than is required." The common knowledge shared between the speakers here is that when one is being asked questions for his or her job interview, he or she usually tries to say something to impress the interviewer in an attempt to appear qualified for the job. June's flouting the maxim of quantity here then gives rise to the conversational implicature and allows Lucy to infer that June is trying to tell Lucy that she is very excited to meet Lucy because Lucy is very famous among the alumni of Harvard. Her response hence implies that June is trying to show her admiration for Lucy.

**Sample 72** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 55]

**Setting:** [Continued from the previous sample] George calls on Lucy and happens to see June in Lucy's office.

**Situation:** George seems interested in June. He offers to interview June himself and not go to a meeting with Lucy.

Norman: They're calling from the Zoning Commission, Lucy.

Lucy: June, why don't we set up a proper interview for tomorrow.

George: It's all right. It's all right. I could finish up with June.

Lucy: You're not coming to the meeting?

George: **Have I ever come to the meeting?**

By asking such question instead of answering Lucy's question directly, George does not really want the answer, but rather provide a reply to the question asked by Lucy earlier. With the assumption that George is being cooperative and following the maxim of quantity, Lucy can assume that the answer to the question "Have I ever come to the meeting?" would provide the answer to her question. The shared background knowledge between George and Lucy then allows Lucy to infer that the way George responds to her implies that the question "You're not coming to the meeting?" need not to be asked because the answer will certainly be "No." George's utterance, therefore, implies that George is not going to the meeting.

**Sample 73** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 56]

**Setting:** George comes over to see Howard right away after knowing that Howard is going to knock down the community center.

**Situation:** Howard orders George to close the deal concerning the Island Towers. George does not want to help him, because it would mean tearing down the community center, which he promised Lucy he would not do.

**Howard:** We need this built. You're our closer and you will help me close this deal ... or I will fire you and take all your stock options. And I can't bear to see you like that, George. You will help me close this deal, George, won't you?

**George:** **I'm surprised you have to ask.**

**Howard:** I wasn't really asking.

George is not cooperating and violating the maxim of quantity: "make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange." By responding in that way, George quietly avoids answering Howard's question. Moreover, George also flouts the maxim of manner, "avoid obscurity," since his answer is not clear as to the point being asked. Howard can infer that George has implied that Howard is very bossy and usually orders George to do whatever he wants without asking if George wants to do so or not. Furthermore, George's response also implies that he wants to assure Howard that he will help, as requested.

**Sample 74** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 57]

**Setting:** Lucy is back home again after resigning from Wade Corporation.

**Situation:** Larry is trying to persuade Lucy to join the protest again at the community centre.

Larry: Your mom is teaching today ... so we'd better grab a bite to eat and be on our way. We have some protesting to do at the community center.

Lucy: I'm not going.

Larry: What are you talking about?

Lucy: I cannot watch ... another building get knocked down.

Larry: **Hey. We didn't raise you to sit on the sidelines.** Ever since you were a little girl, you fought for what you believed in. You were on the White House Enemies list at 5!

Larry's utterance, "We didn't raise you to sit on the sidelines," ostentatiously flouts the maxim of quality: "do not say what you believe to be false." The metaphorical meaning together with the assumption that Larry is being cooperative and observing the maxim of relation allows Lucy to assume that Larry has implied something beyond the literal meaning of his utterance. The knowledge of the expression then allows Lucy to infer that Larry has implied that he and Ruth have raised Lucy to take part or get involved in fighting for what she believes in rather than just observing. Larry's utterance,

therefore, implies that Larry does not want Lucy to give up doing protest against robber barons.

**Sample 75** [See Appendix B, Excerpt 58]

**Setting:** After giving a speech at the community center, George goes to the Legal Aid office to find Lucy, and he happens to see Polly again. He remembers that he had interviewed Polly for a job at his company few weeks ago.

**Situation:** That time George congratulated Polly, because he thought was pregnant, but she was not. He does not want to make a mistake again this time.

George: Oh, yes. Yes, Polly. Wow. So you work here now. Terrific. How are you?

Polly: Pregnant.

George: I'm not falling for that one again.

Polly: No, I'm really pregnant. You can congratulate me now.

George: **Polly, I was not born yesterday.**

By not congratulating Polly on her being pregnant, George is flouting the maxim of quantity, "make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange," in order to preserve the maxim of quality: "do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence." In addition, George's utterance, on the surface, is irrelevant to Polly's. However, Polly assumes that George is cooperating and observing the maxim of relation. So,

Polly infers that George's answer is relevant to a reason not to congratulate her on being pregnant. By saying he was not born yesterday, George wants to convey that he is not a newborn baby who would believe what Polly has just said. George's utterance "Polly, I was not born yesterday," therefore, implies that Gorge does not believe that Polly is pregnant.

The 20 utterances produced by the characters in *Two Weeks Notice* are analyzed and classified into cooperative utterances and non-cooperative utterance in Table 5.

**Table 5**

Frequency and Percentage of Cooperative and Non-cooperative Utterances in *Two Weeks Notice*

| Kinds of Utterance | Frequency of Occurrence | Percentage |
|--------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Cooperative        | 15                      | 75         |
| Non-cooperative    | 5                       | 25         |
| Total              | 20                      | 100        |

Table 5 shows that 15 of 20 utterances produced by the characters in *Two Weeks Notice*, representing 75% of the total, are cooperative, and 5 of 20 utterances are non-cooperative, representing 25% of the total.

The frequencies of the kinds of the conversational maxims that are observed, flouted, and violated in the 20 samples from *Two Weeks Notice* are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6**

*Frequency of Occurrence of Conversational Maxims Observed, Flouted, and Violated in Two Weeks Notice*

| Kinds of Conversational Maxims | Frequency of Occurrence |            |         |            |          |            |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|---------|------------|----------|------------|
|                                | Observed                | Percentage | Flouted | Percentage | Violated | Percentage |
| Maxim of Quality               | 1                       | 3.57       | 10      | 35.71      | 1        | 3.57       |
| Maxim of Quantity              | 1                       | 3.57       | 3       | 10.71      | 1        | 3.57       |
| Maxim of Relation              | 6                       | 21.43      | 1       | 3.57       | 0        | 0          |
| Maxim of Manner                | 0                       | 0          | 3       | 10.71      | 1        | 3.57       |
| Total                          | 8                       | 28.57      | 17      | 60.72      | 3        | 10.71      |

In Table 6, it can be seen that, in *Two Weeks Notice*, the maxims are observed, flouted, and violated a total of 28 times. Out of 28 times, it is found that the conversational maxims are flouted the most (17 times, or 60.72%); the conversational maxims are observed the second most (8 times, 28.57%); and the conversational maxims are violated the least (3 times, 10.71%).

Out of 28 times, it is found that the maxim of quality is flouted the most (10 times, 35.71%), followed by the maxim of quantity and the maxim of manner (3 times each, 10.71%), while the maxim of relation is flouted only 1 time (3.57%). On the other hand, the maxim of relation is observed the most (6 times, 21.43%), followed by the maxim of quality and the maxim of quantity, which are equally observed (1 time, 3.57%), while the maxim of manner is not observed at all. Moreover, the conversational maxims are slightly violated here. The maxim of quality, the maxim of quantity, and the maxim of manner are violated very little here (only 1 time each, 3.57%), while the maxim of relation is not violated at all.

In sum, the frequencies of the total 75 utterances produced by the characters in the three films, classified into the cooperative and non-cooperative utterances, are shown in Table 7.

**Table 7**

Frequency and Percentage of Cooperative and Non-cooperative Utterances in the Three Films

| Kinds of Utterance | Frequency of Occurrence | Percentage |
|--------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Cooperative        | 55                      | 73.33      |
| Non-cooperative    | 20                      | 26.67      |
| Total              | 75                      | 100        |

Table 7 shows that, out of the total of 75 sample utterances produced by the characters in *Bridget Jones's Diary*, *Sweet Home Alabama*, and *Two Weeks Notice*, 55 of 75 utterances are cooperative, representing 73.33% of the total, and 20 of 75 utterances are non-cooperative, representing 26.67% of the total.

In addition, the kinds of the conversational maxims being observed, flouted and violated across the 75 samples are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8***Frequency of Occurrence of Conversational Maxims Observed, Flouted, and Violated in the Three Films*

| Kinds of Conversational Maxims | Frequency of Occurrence |            |         |            |          |            |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|---------|------------|----------|------------|
|                                | Observed                | Percentage | Flouted | Percentage | Violated | Percentage |
| Maxim of Quality               | 2                       | 1.87       | 40      | 37.38      | 7        | 6.54       |
| Maxim of Quantity              | 4                       | 3.74       | 16      | 14.95      | 3        | 2.80       |
| Maxim of Relation              | 13                      | 12.15      | 8       | 7.48       | 0        | 0          |
| Maxim of Manner                | 2                       | 1.87       | 9       | 8.41       | 3        | 2.80       |
| Total                          | 21                      | 19.63      | 73      | 68.22      | 13       | 12.14      |



According to Table 8, out of the total of 75 utterances produced by the characters in the three films, the conversational maxims are observed, flouted, and violated 107 times altogether. The conversational maxims are flouted the most (73 times out of 107 times, or 68.22% of the total occurrences); the conversational maxims are observed the second most (21 times out of 107 times, 19.63%); and the conversational maxims are violated the least (13 times out of 107 times, 12.14% of the total).

With respect to the flouting of the maxims, the maxim of quality is flouted the most (40 times, or 37.38% of the total occurrences), followed by the maxim of quantity (16 times, 14.95%), the maxim of manner (9 times, 8.41%), and the maxim of relation (8 times, 7.48%). When it comes to the violation of the maxims, the maxim of quality is violated the most (7 times, 6.54%), followed by the maxim of quantity and the maxim of manner (3 times each, 2.80%), while the maxim of relation is not violated at all. Moreover, in the matter of the maxims being observed, the maxim of relation is observed the most (13 times, or 12.15% of the total occurrences), followed by the maxim of quantity (4 times, 3.74%) and the maxim of quality and the maxim of manner (2 times each, 1.87% of the total occurrences)

## **Summary**

The data analysis and interpretation, together with the identification of the conversational implicatures, are presented in this chapter. The findings of the data analysis and interpretation reveal that all of the conversational

maxims are observed, flouted, and violated independently and freely. The conversational maxims, however, are observed, flouted and violated a total of 108 times altogether. The number of occurrences of the conversational maxims being observed, flouted, and violated in each film is 25 times across 17 samples from *Bridget Jones's Diary*; 54 times across 38 samples from *Sweet Home Alabama*; and 28 times across 20 samples from *Two Weeks Notice*. The findings reveal that the conversational maxims are flouted 73 times (68.22%), observed 21 times (19.63%), and violated 13 times (12.14%).