



# Unspoken Meaning: A Study of Flouting Conversational Maxims in 500 days of Summer

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## Abstract

This study explores how the flouting of conversational maxims in 500 Days of Summer impacts character interactions and relationship dynamics. The primary objective is to understand how ineffective communication shapes emotional connections in the narrative. Through qualitative analysis, we identified and categorized instances of maxim flouting, revealing the following frequencies and percentages: flouting the maxim of quantity (8 instances, 24.2%), flouting the maxim of quality (8 instances, 24.2%), flouting the maxim of relevance (8 instances, 24.2%), and flouting the maxim of manner (9 instances, 27.3%). Notably, the maxim of manner was the most frequently flouted, indicating that characters often communicate with ambiguity that adds emotional complexity. In contrast, the maxims of quantity, quality, and relevance were least commonly flouted, suggesting that while miscommunication occurs, dialogue generally maintains a balance between clarity and emotional expression. These findings underscore the critical role of effective communication in fostering intimacy and understanding in romantic relationships. Additionally, the study acknowledges the limitations of focusing on a limited number of scenes, which may not capture the full spectrum of communication dynamics within the film. Future research could expand on these insights by examining other conversational maxims across different media and investigating how cultural contexts influence communication styles.

**Keywords:** *500 days of summer, flouting maxim, pragmatics*

## **Introduction**

Language is a rich and dynamic system that serves as the foundation of human communication, enabling us to share thoughts, emotions, and complex ideas. It is not just a means to convey information; it also helps us construct and interpret our realities. Influential linguists like Ferdinand de Saussure and Noam Chomsky have emphasized that language operates on many levels, from grammar and syntax to the nuances of context and intent. Saussure's structuralist view highlights how meaning arises from the relationships between words, while Chomsky's theories suggest that humans possess innate cognitive structures that allow universal language acquisition. As Huang (2019) notes, "Pragmatics plays a crucial role in the interpretation of film dialogue, bridging the gap between text and audience perception."

Effective communication relies not only on using vocabulary and grammar correctly but also on shared understandings and expectations between speakers. These expectations are often shaped by implicit principles, such as the conversational maxims proposed by philosopher H.P. Grice (1975), which guide how we interpret and respond to linguistic cues. When these maxims are deliberately flouted, they can convey a range of communicative intentions, from humor and sarcasm to deception and emotional depth. As Dynel (2011) asserts, flouting conversational maxims can lead to humorous reinterpretations of dialogues, engaging audiences in deeper cognitive processing.

Despite extensive research, a notable empirical problem persists: the systematic categorization of flouting maxims across various genres, particularly in romantic narratives. While many studies have identified instances of flouting maxims in films, they often fail to provide a comprehensive analysis of how these violations contribute to character development and audience interpretation. This gap is especially evident in *500 Days of Summer*, which explores themes of love, loss, and identity through dialogue. However, it has not been adequately analyzed regarding how its characters flout maxims to express complex emotions.

Flouting conversational maxims involves intentionally breaking Grice's four maxims: Quality, Quantity, Relation, and Manner, each serving a unique role in communication. Quality relates to the truthfulness of statements; when flouted, it often signals sarcasm or irony. Quantity pertains to the amount of information shared; flouting this maxim can suggest that a character is holding back information or being deliberately vague. Relation involves relevance to the ongoing conversation; violating this maxim can introduce unexpected elements, enhancing humor or surprise. Lastly, Manner concerns clarity and brevity; when flouted, it might lead to ambiguity, prompting viewers to engage more deeply to uncover hidden meanings. Holtgraves (2002) emphasizes that "The impact of conversational maxims on the interpretation of communicative intent shapes the dynamic of dialogue significantly."

Recent studies have highlighted how flouting conversational maxims occurs in films. For example, Safitri and Hartati (2023) analyzed *Radium Girls*, examining 71 utterances and finding that the maxim of quantity was most frequently flouted (49.3%). In *The Little Mermaid* (live-action), Napitupulu (2025) observed 27 instances of flouting, with quantity again most common (44.44%). Winarta (2022) studied *Buffalo Bill, The Border King*, identifying 20 violations, predominantly quantity (47.7%). Viryani (2023) analyzed *Her*, showing how maxim flouting enhances character development in tech-driven relationships. Finally, Pratiwi et al. (2023) examined *Alice in Wonderland*, finding relevance was the most flouted (40%), showing topic-shifting strategies that add depth to dialogue.

This study aims to bridge the gap by investigating the specific types of flouting maxims employed by characters in *500 Days of Summer*. The central research question is: What types of conversational maxims do characters flout in *500 Days of Summer*, and how do these violations enhance the emotional depth and narrative structure of the film? The objectives are to provide a thorough analysis of how flouting enriches character expression and thematic development, offering insights into dialogue as a narrative device. The novelty lies in focusing on a specific romantic film to uncover how flouting maxims function as a deliberate strategy to convey complex emotions and advance the storyline.

Ultimately, this research seeks to deepen understanding of the pragmatic dimensions of film dialogue and how flouting conversational maxims shapes character interactions and thematic elements in *500 Days of Summer*.

## Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze instances of flouting conversational maxims in the 2009 film *500 Days of Summer*, directed by Marc Webb, with a runtime of 95 minutes. The film was selected because it features rich character interactions and explores themes of love, miscommunication, and relationship dynamics, making it particularly suitable for the analysis of conversational maxims.

The primary data consisted of character dialogues from the film. The official film script was obtained, and the movie was watched multiple times to identify utterances that potentially flouted Grice's conversational maxims (1975). Purposive sampling was employed, selecting only dialogues in which the speaker's intention or meaning appeared ambiguous, exaggerated, irrelevant, or unclear, resulting in 33 utterances for analysis. Utterances that were background noise, monologues without interaction, or non-verbal communication were excluded.

To ensure accuracy, each selected dialogue was cross-referenced with literature on conversational maxims. Categorization was guided by the definitions of the four maxims: Quantity (providing more or less information than required), Quality (making statements without evidence or truthfulness), Relation/Relevance (making statements that do not relate to the conversation), and Manner (being

ambiguous, vague, or unclear). A second coder independently reviewed a subset of 10 utterances to establish inter-rater reliability, ensuring consistency in classification. Any disagreements were resolved through discussion, enhancing the study's validity. All dialogues analyzed were from a published film, ensuring copyright compliance. Proper acknowledgment of the film and its creators is provided, and ethical considerations were observed throughout the study.

For data analysis, a descriptive qualitative method was applied, guided by Grice's theory. Each instance of maxim flouting was classified according to the four types of maxims: Quality, Quantity, Relation, and Manner. The analysis followed these key steps:

1. Watching the film and reading the script to identify potential instances of maxim flouting.
2. Selecting utterances based on purposive sampling criteria.
3. Categorizing each utterance according to Grice's four maxims.
4. Cross-checking classifications with a second coder for reliability.
5. Summarizing results in a table showing the frequency and percentage of each maxim flouted.

The analysis was conducted manually, with the researcher comparing findings against previous studies on conversational implicature and consulting standard texts in pragmatics to enhance reliability. However, this study does have limitations, including its focus on a single film and the analysis conducted by one researcher, which may impact the robustness of the findings. Future studies could benefit from incorporating multiple films or involving additional raters to strengthen the analysis.

## Results

In this study, the film 500 Days of Summer serves as a poignant exploration of love, heartbreak, and the intricate dynamics of relationships. The story revolves around Tom Hansen, a young man grappling with his feelings for Summer Finn, who has a distinctly different outlook on love.

After a thorough examination, we identified a total of 33 instances of maxim flouting in the dialogue, which adds depth to the characters' interactions. These instances illustrate how the characters communicate beyond the literal meaning of their words, highlighting the complexities of their relationship. Below is a table that summarizes the frequency and percentage of the different types of maxim flouting observed in the film.

Table 1. The Types of Floating Maxim in the “500 Days of Summer” Movie

Type of Flouting Maxim	Frequency	Percentage
Floating Maxim of Quantity	8	24.2%
Floating Maxim of Qality	8	24.2%
Floating Maxim of Relevance	8	24.2%
Floating Maxim of Manner	9	27.3%
Total	33	100%

As shown in Table 1, Manner was the most frequently flouted maxim, accounting for 27.3% of all instances. The other three maxims Quantity, Quality, and Relation were flouted equally, each representing 24.2% of the total. These percentages reflect the proportion of utterances within the 33 selected dialogues where a particular maxim was flouted.

The distribution indicates that characters in the film most often flouted the Manner maxim, suggesting frequent ambiguity, vagueness, or indirectness in their speech. Meanwhile, flouting of Quantity, Quality, and Relation occurred at similar rates, showing that characters also occasionally provided too much or too little information, made statements without full evidence, or spoke off-topic. This pattern highlights the playful, ironic, and emotionally complex nature of character interactions in the film.

In the following section, specific examples of each type of maxim flouting will be analyzed in detail to illustrate how these communication strategies function within the narrative. Comparatively, this pattern aligns partially with previous studies on conversational maxims in media texts, where Manner and Relation are often the most frequently flouted due to their narrative and comedic potential.

## Discussion

The analysis of flouting Grice’s conversational maxims in 500 Days of Summer reveals significant insights into character interactions and the narrative’s communicative dynamics. Across the 33 identified instances, the Maxim of Manner was most frequently flouted (27.3%), followed by Quantity, Quality, and Relation (each 24.2%). This distribution highlights a recurring pattern of ambiguity, indirectness, and playful manipulation of language, reflecting both the emotional complexity of the characters and the film’s non-linear storytelling structure.

### *1. Flouting the Maxim of Quantity*

According to Grice (1975), the flouting of the maxim of quantity occurs when a speaker provides more information than is necessary for the context of the conversation. This can lead to misunderstandings or discomfort in communication. Davis (2013) states that silence in film dialogue can often signify a deliberate flouting of quantity, where less is more in conveying emotional depth. A poignant illustration of this can be found in 500 Days of Summer:

**Data 1**

Tom : "I just think she's the one. You know? I mean, I can't imagine my life without her. She's perfect for me in every way."

Summer: "Tom, that's a lot to put on someone."

(500 Days of Summer movie 20:15)

In this exchange, Tom clearly flouts the maxim of quantity, sharing an emotional outpouring that goes far beyond the immediate context. His declaration "I just think she's the one... She's perfect for me in every way" is not merely a romantic sentiment; it is laden with the weight of idealization and expectation. Tom's words are a passionate declaration, but they also reveal his deep-seated fears and insecurities about love and connection.

While Tom's intention is to express his profound affection, this emotional elaboration can easily overwhelm Summer. When he states, "I can't imagine my life without her," he not only elevates her to an almost unattainable pedestal but also implies a sense of dependency that shifts the dynamic of their relationship. This creates an emotional imbalance, placing an unrealistic burden on Summer. She is not just meant to be a partner; she must fulfil the role of his entire emotional world. Summer's response "Tom, that's a lot to put on someone" highlights her discomfort and the pressure that Tom's grand declarations create. This moment serves as a crucial turning point, showcasing how flouting the maxim of quantity complicates their relational dynamics and underscores the potential for miscommunication.

Thus, Tom's utterance exemplifies how providing more information than necessary can lead to misunderstandings and emotional strain. This flouting not only enhances the emotional depth of the narrative but also illustrates the complexities of romantic relationships. Through Tom's overwhelming declarations, we see the tension between his idealized vision of love and the reality of relational complexities, which adds layers to his character and deepens our engagement with the story.

**Data 2**

Tom : "You make me feel alive!"

Summer: "That's a lot of pressure."

(500 Days of Summer movie 39:40)

In this subsequent moment, Tom's expression again flouts the maxim of quantity. His statement, "You make me feel alive!" is not just a heartfelt compliment; it places Summer in the role of his sole source of emotional fulfillment. This dramatic declaration is intense, positioning her as the key to his happiness. While Tom likely intends to share his feelings, this level of emotional intensity creates an expectation for Summer to respond in kind, placing a heavy emotional burden on her.

Summer's reaction "That's a lot of pressure" is telling. It reveals her discomfort with the weight of Tom's expectations, highlighting a crucial aspect of their communication. Rather than fostering a balanced exchange, Tom's words create an atmosphere of anxiety, suggesting that if she doesn't reciprocate his feelings, she

risks disappointing him. This interaction underscores the importance of considering the listener's perspective when expressing profound feelings. Excessive emotional declarations can inadvertently create a sense of obligation rather than genuine connection, complicating their relationship even further.

Overall, the violations of the maxim of quantity throughout *500 Days of Summer* reveal the intricate dynamics at play in Tom and Summer's interactions. These moments not only complicate the interpersonal communication but also enhance the film's narrative structure. They illustrate the challenges of navigating emotional landscapes within romantic relationships, emphasizing the need for balance in emotional expression. By juxtaposing the idealization of love with the stark realities of relational complexities, the film invites viewers to reflect on the delicate balance required in emotional communication, ultimately enriching our understanding of intimacy and connection.

## *II. Flouting the Maxim of Quality*

According to Grice (1975), the flouting of the maxim of quality occurs when a speaker makes statements that are not true or lack sufficient evidence. This can lead to confusion and misunderstandings in communication, particularly in romantic relationships where emotions run high and perceptions can easily distort reality. According to Haugh (2013), quality implicatures arise when speakers intentionally breach the truthfulness of their statements, complicating listener interpretation. In *500 Days of Summer*, several poignant moments illustrate how this flouting manifests.

### **Data 3**

Tom : "I know she loves me."

Summer: "Do you really think so?"

(*500 Days of Summer* movie 34:50)

In this exchange, Tom confidently asserts, "I know she loves me," a declaration that reflects his deep emotional investment and longing for connection. However, this assertion reveals more about Tom's desires than about the actual state of their relationship. His conviction stems from a personal interpretation of their interactions moments he has romanticized and perhaps misread. Tom's statement is based on a hopeful narrative he has constructed rather than on any concrete evidence of mutual feelings.

Summer's skeptical response "Do you really think so?" invites a moment of introspection. Her question underscores the uncertainty that exists beneath the surface of Tom's certainty. It reveals a gap between Tom's perception and the reality of their relationship, suggesting that he may be projecting his wishes onto Summer rather than acknowledging her true feelings. This dynamic exemplifies a common issue in romantic relationships: the tension between hope and reality.

Tom flouts the maxim of quality by making a definitive claim without sufficient evidence. This not only creates confusion about the authenticity of Summer's feelings but also risks undermining the trust that is crucial for effective communication. Tom's unwavering belief in Summer's love, despite her ambiguous responses, highlights the fragility of their emotional connection. It raises questions about whether love can truly be one-sided and the potential for miscommunication when one partner is overly optimistic. As Cutting, J. (2022) notes that violation of quality can create ambiguity that invites the audience to actively engage in meaning-making processes.

#### **Data 4**

Tom : "She's the best thing that ever happened to me."

Summer: "Really? Better than your job?"

(500 Days of Summer movie 28:10)

In this instance, Tom proclaims, "She's the best thing that ever happened to me," a bold statement that elevates Summer to an almost idealized status. While this declaration reflects his intense feelings, it also glosses over other significant aspects of his life, including his career and dreams. This kind of exaggeration can be both romantic and misleading, as it simplifies the complexity of his reality.

Summer's probing response "Really? Better than your job?" challenges Tom's assertion and encourages a more grounded conversation. Her question serves as a reality check, prompting Tom to reassess the validity of his claim. This exchange reveals the potential for exaggeration to distort the perception of their relationship and Tom's understanding of his priorities and values. By framing Summer as the pinnacle of his existence, he risks neglecting other important facets of his life that contribute to his overall happiness.

In both examples, the flouting of the maxim of quality complicates Tom and Summer's relationship. When individuals make unverified claims or exaggerate their feelings, it can lead to misunderstandings and a sense of mistrust. Tom's heartfelt yet potentially misleading statements create emotional tension, raising questions about the authenticity of their connection. This highlights the delicate balance required in open and honest communication, where clarity and truthfulness are essential for fostering genuine intimacy.

Ultimately, the violations of the maxim of quality in 500 Days of Summer underscore the intricate dynamics of love and communication. These moments illustrate how easily perceptions can diverge from reality, emphasizing the importance of honesty and self-awareness in relationships. As viewers, we are invited to reflect on the necessity of aligning our expressions of love with our true feelings and experiences, ensuring that our words contribute to connection rather than confusion.



In conclusion, Tom's flouting of the maxim of quality serves as a poignant reminder that love is not only about passion and emotion but also about the honesty that sustains it. It calls for a deeper understanding of ourselves and our partners, encouraging us to communicate in ways that build trust and authenticity.

### *III. Flouting the Maxim of Relevance*

According to Grice (1975), the flouting of the maxim of relevance occurs when a speaker's response does not directly relate to the topic at hand, leading to confusion and misunderstandings. Jiang (2020) points out that flouting the maxim of relevance can introduce layers of emotional complexity, reflecting the characters' inner conflicts. In *500 Days of Summer*, this flouting is vividly illustrated through key exchanges that reveal the emotional complexities and disconnect between Tom and Summer.

#### **Data 5**

Tom : "What do you want from this relationship?"

Summer: "I just want to have fun."

(*500 Days of Summer* movie 45:30)

In this moment, Tom poses a serious and introspective question about their relationship, reflecting his desire for clarity and commitment. This inquiry encapsulates his inner turmoil and longing for a deeper connection. He seeks to understand whether their relationship has the potential for growth or if it is merely a fleeting encounter. However, Summer's response "I just want to have fun" does not engage with the seriousness of Tom's question. Instead, it diverts the conversation toward a more carefree perspective.

This response highlights a significant disconnect between Tom and Summer. While Tom is grappling with feelings of uncertainty and a desire for deeper commitment, Summer's focus on enjoyment suggests a more casual approach to their relationship. Her answer, while honest, reveals a lack of alignment with Tom's expectations. This flouting of the maxim of relevance creates confusion about their respective desires and intentions, leaving Tom feeling frustrated and unheard. He is not just seeking a casual affirmation; he wants to understand what the future holds for them, and Summer's lightheartedness undermines that need for clarity.

The emotional weight of this exchange is profound. Tom's serious inquiry reflects the stakes he feels in their relationship, whereas Summer's response reflects a fear of commitment or perhaps a desire to keep things simple and uncomplicated. This divergence in their priorities creates an emotional chasm that complicates their communication. It emphasizes the importance of addressing serious topics directly, as avoidance can lead to misunderstandings that erode trust and intimacy.

**Data 6**

Tom : "What are we doing here?"

Summer: "I don't know, but I love this song."

(500 Days of Summer movie 50:25)

In this exchange, Tom's question signifies his uncertainty and desire for clarity about their relationship's status and direction. He is searching for meaning in their connection, questioning whether they are on the same page. However, Summer's response "I don't know, but I love this song" shifts the focus entirely away from Tom's serious concerns. Instead of confronting the emotional weight of his inquiry, she introduces a light-hearted topic that seems trivial in the context of his feelings.

This diversion not only fails to engage with Tom's emotional state but also exacerbates the confusion surrounding their relationship. By flouting the maxim of relevance, Summer inadvertently sidesteps an opportunity for meaningful dialogue. Her response indicates a reluctance to engage with the deeper issues at play, leaving Tom feeling even more uncertain and isolated. Here, we see how avoidance of serious conversations can deepen the emotional distance between partners. Tom is left grappling with his feelings of insecurity, while Summer's casual attitude suggests a disconnection from the emotional stakes involved.

These examples underscore the significant challenges that arise when the maxim of relevance is flouted in conversations. When individuals respond with unrelated comments, it can lead to misunderstandings and emotional distance. In Tom and Summer's case, their inability to address each other's concerns creates barriers to effective communication, preventing them from fully understanding each other's needs and desires.

Ultimately, the violations of the maxim of relevance in 500 Days of Summer highlight the critical importance of aligning responses with the topic at hand. These moments illustrate how miscommunication can stem not only from what is said but also from what is left unaddressed. The film invites viewers to reflect on the necessity of addressing serious topics directly, emphasizing that true intimacy requires vulnerability and a willingness to engage with difficult questions.

In conclusion, the flouting of the maxim of relevance serves as a poignant reminder of the challenges inherent in romantic communication. It calls for a deeper understanding of the importance of relevance in conversations, stressing that meaningful connections are built on genuine engagement and mutual understanding. By recognizing and addressing each other's needs, partners can bridge the gap between their emotional worlds, fostering a richer, more fulfilling relationship. As Sperber and Wilson (1995) explain that communication relies on the ability to infer the intentions of others, bridging the gap between speaker and listener. The film ultimately teaches us that the courage to confront uncomfortable truths is essential for nurturing the bonds that tie us together.

*IV. Flouting the Maxim of Manner*

According to Grice (1975), the flouting of the maxim of manner occurs when a speaker fails to communicate clearly, concisely, or in an orderly way, leading to potential confusion and misinterpretation. Zhang (2021) observes that flouting the maxim of manner can lead to misinterpretation, as ambiguity complicates character relationships in narratives. This concept is vividly illustrated in *500 Days of Summer* through key exchanges that showcase the complexities of Tom and Summer's relationship.

**Data 7**

Tom : "Are you ready to take the next step?"

Summer: "Well, I think it's a big step, but sharing a closet sound nice."

(*500 Days of Summer* movie 1:05:00)

In this pivotal moment, Tom poses a significant question about their relationship's future. His inquiry "Are you ready to take the next step?" reveals his desire for clarity and commitment, indicating that he is seeking a deeper emotional connection. However, Summer's response is playful and somewhat evasive. By referencing "sharing a closet," she introduces a light-hearted metaphor that evokes domesticity but ultimately sidesteps Tom's serious question.

This vagueness in Summer's response can leave Tom feeling uncertain about her true feelings and intentions. Instead of engaging with the gravity of his inquiry, her playful tone may trivialize his concerns, leading him to wonder whether they are truly on the same page. This flouting of the maxim of manner complicates their communication, as Tom's earnest desire for clarity clashes with Summer's reluctance to engage in deeper discussions. The emotional intricacies of this moment highlight a broader theme in their relationship: the struggle between wanting to connect meaningfully and the fear of vulnerability.

The metaphor of "sharing a closet" also serves to illustrate the disparity in their perspectives. For Tom, the idea of taking a "next step" signifies a serious commitment, perhaps even a shared future. For Summer, however, it seems to evoke a more casual and fun approach to their relationship, which can be frustrating for Tom. This misalignment in communication styles not only reflects their differing priorities but also creates an emotional distance that complicates their connection.

**Data 8**

Tom : "What do you want to do?"

Summer: "Well, I guess I'll figure it out."

(*500 Days of Summer* movie 1:21:00)

In this exchange, Tom seeks direction and clarity about their relationship by asking Summer what she wants to do. His question signifies his search for understanding and a desire to align their paths. However, her response "Well, I guess I'll figure it out" is notably non-committal and ambiguous. This lack of specificity leaves Tom without the insight he craves, amplifying his uncertainty.

Summer's reply suggests a reluctance to engage with the serious nature of Tom's inquiry. This evasiveness can be frustrating, as it signals a withdrawal from a necessary conversation about their future. By flouting the maxim of manner, Summer fails to communicate in a way that fosters understanding and resolution. Her vagueness not only frustrates Tom but also deepens the emotional disconnect between them. This moment illustrates a broader theme of misalignment in their communication styles, where Summer's tendency to deflect serious discussions hinders their emotional intimacy.

The implications of these exchanges underscore how crucial clarity is in effective communication, particularly within intimate relationships. When one partner provides vague or evasive answers, it can lead to misunderstandings and increased emotional distance. Tom's struggle to grasp Summer's feelings reflects the broader challenges many couples face when navigating complex emotional landscapes. The film poignantly captures the tension between expectation and reality, emphasizing how important it is for partners to communicate transparently.

As viewers, we witness the consequences of these conversational misalignments. Tom's earnest desire for clarity contrasts sharply with Summer's ambiguous responses, illustrating how miscommunication can lead to emotional pain and confusion. The film invites us to reflect on the necessity of direct and clear dialogue in relationships, highlighting that genuine connection requires both partners to be willing to engage honestly with one another.

Through these examples, *500 Days of Summer* reveals the intricate dynamics of love and communication. The flouting of the maxim of manner serves as a reminder of the delicate balance required in expressing thoughts and feelings clearly. By striving for clarity and openness, partners can bridge the gaps created by misunderstandings, fostering a deeper emotional connection and a stronger relationship dynamic. Bublitz and Engel (2009) argue that conversational implicature serves as a fundamental mechanism in film dialogue, shaping both character interactions and audience interpretations. Ultimately, the film challenges us to confront our own communication styles and encourages us to cultivate the courage to engage in meaningful conversations that can strengthen our bonds with others.

## **Conclusion**

This study examined how the flouting of Grice's conversational maxims in *500 Days of Summer* influences the film's emotional depth and narrative structure. The analysis identified 33 instances of maxim flouting, with the Maxim of Manner being the most frequently observed (27.3%), while Quantity, Quality, and Relevance each

accounted for 24.2%. The prominence of Manner flouting suggests that ambiguity and indirectness are central to Tom and Summer's interactions, reflecting the complexities and miscommunications inherent in their relationship.

Through their dialogue, the characters often struggle to express emotions clearly, leading to misunderstandings and emotional distance. While flouting Manner introduces playful ambiguity, flouting Quantity, Quality, and Relevance reveals moments of withheld information, partial truths, or diverted conversations, highlighting the challenges of honest communication in romantic relationships. These patterns demonstrate how the film mirrors real-life conversational dynamics, where indirectness and subtle evasions frequently shape interpersonal connections.

Although this study focuses on selected scenes, it provides insight into how pragmatic strategies enhance both character development and narrative engagement. Future research could explore additional maxims, other film genres, or cultural contexts, as well as audience interpretations, to deepen understanding of how communication patterns affect relational dynamics. Overall, the film illustrates that flouting conversational maxims is a deliberate narrative device, using ambiguity and indirectness to portray the complexities of love, miscommunication, and emotional connection.

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