

## **Pragmatic Analysis of Orphan Abuse in 'Anne of Green Gables' by Lucy Maud Montgomery"**

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### **Abstract :**

The current study employs pragmatics theories to examine the issue of orphan abuse in Lucy Maud Montgomery's novel *Anne of Green Gables*. The analysis is based on Searle's (1979) speech acts and Grice's Maxims of Conversation as theoretical frameworks. The main goal is to examine how the novel portrays and tackles the subject of abuse faced by orphans via the use of certain linguistic choices. The study explores the influence of speech acts and Grice's maxims on relationships, specifically in relation to the use of authority and control over orphans. It addresses two main questions: What types of speech acts are used in *Anne of Green Gables* to depict the abuse of orphans? And how frequently does the novel violate conversational maxims to convey the abuse of orphans through its characters? The research demonstrates that the novel utilizes three distinct forms of speech acts, suggesting a deliberate choice rather than arbitrary usage. Among these, assertive speech acts are the most commonly used, occurring (10) times and accounting for (43.47%) of all instances. Analysis of conversational maxims reveals that the most frequent infringement is related to the Quality principle, appearing (4) times and accounting for (36.36%) of all infractions. These violations emphasize the manipulative and deceitful communication directed towards orphans, thereby highlighting the seriousness of their mistreatment. The findings indicate that Montgomery intentionally employs specific speech acts and violations of conversational maxims to portray the mistreatment of orphans in the narrative.

**Keywords:** Pragmatics, orphan abuse, speech act, cooperative principle..

## 1. Interdiction

Language is commonly employed by individuals in their everyday lives to accomplish tasks or exert influence on others. It enables individuals to make requests, inquire, provide instructions, make commitments, offer apologies, and more. Thus, pragmatics, as a subfield of linguistics, focuses on the actual meaning of spoken words, including implied meanings. Therefore, the study selects pragmatics as the framework for analyzing its data, with a specific focus on the verbal and social exchanges that highlight the challenges experienced by Anne Shirley.

So, this study aims to shed light on how the novel depicts the psychological and social intricacies of orphan abuse and how these depictions impact readers' understanding of the problem. The primary challenge is to analyse the novel's language and social behaviours in light of how they depict and tackle the problem of orphan maltreatment.

Consequently, the study adopts pragmatics as its framework and specifically applies Grice's conversational maxims and speech act theory to investigate how interaction within the text promotes communication. This theory helps readers understand how characters' words perform actions and convey social goals. Additionally, Grice's ideas, such as the maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner, assist readers in recognizing how pragmatic inferences and conversational implications can reveal deeper themes of abuse and neglect. The study aims to provide a deeper

understanding of the social commentary and lasting relevance of the novel by closely analyzing the dialogues and narrative techniques used to depict the various forms of abuse and neglect suffered by orphans during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Therefore, the study raises the following questions: What types of speech acts are used in *Anne of Green Gables* to depict the abuse of orphans? And how frequently does the novel violate conversational maxims in order to convey the abuse of orphans through its characters?

## **2 Theoretical Background**

### **2.1 Pragmatics**

Pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics that studies how context affects the interpretation of meaning in communication. It examines how different parts of a message can be understood differently depending on the surrounding context. Pragmatics delves into the ways people communicate with one another and how others interpret what they say based on the circumstances

#### **2.1.1 Context**

In linguistics, the term "context" refers to the various elements that surround and affect the meaning of an utterance, whether spoken or written. This includes both linguistic and non-linguistic components. Context often distinguishes pragmatics from semantics. Pragmatics is closely linked to context and focuses on how context influences the meaning of a speaker's words and the interpretation of their underlying intentions. It involves understanding what people imply through their expressions in a particular

situation and how it impacts the content of their speech (Yule, 1996). According to Levinson (1983), pragmatics is commonly defined as the examination of the connections between language and its context.

Additionally, Leech (1983) suggests that pragmatics involves all the background knowledge a speaker conveys to a listener to facilitate understanding of a particular expression. In other words, pragmatics studies the transmission of meaning from speaker to listener. Huang (2007) emphasizes that pragmatics focuses on the relationship between signs, their users, and interpreters. Pragmatics encompasses a wide range of fundamental principles that illustrate its purpose. Given its broader scope compared to conventional disciplines, it can be pragmatically analyzed. It is crucial to differentiate between the inherent meaning of a term based on its semantic value and the intended meaning conveyed by using that term in a specific context, known as pragmatic meaning. Pragmatics primarily focuses on understanding how speakers convey hidden, indirect, or implicit meanings in spoken words or written texts (Crystal, 1987).

### **2.1.2 Speech Acts**

Speech act theory connects grammatical structures and linguistic functions with pragmatics (Sotillo, 2017). Yule (1996) states that language is used to convey meanings and perform actions with specific goals that affect the listener. Austin introduced the theory of speech acts in 1962, and Searle expanded on it in 1969 by demonstrating how speakers and writers perform actions through words. The focus of speech act theory is on understanding and executing acts that address specific circumstances.

The core concept of speech act theory, as proposed by Searle in 1979, is the use of words to accomplish particular purposes.

Specifically, the excerpts being studied include a variety of actions, such as offering, describing, advising, and threatening. However, examining each act in isolation may not fully capture their impact; analyzing them together reveals the complete effect of the speech. For example, an expression that may seem neutral when read alone can become offensive when juxtaposed with other similar expressions. For instance, the statement "they didn't pick you for your looks" (p. 91) could be considered a descriptive speech act. Although it might not appear overtly hateful, the statement "You are terribly skinny and homely" (p. 91) can be perceived as aggressive and upsetting, potentially qualifying as abuse of an orphan. Consequently, words carry connotations that can alter the course of ordinary events.

According to Nurani (2015), Searle categorizes speech acts into five distinct types. The first type, assertions, involves committing the speaker to the psychological state expressed, with belief serving as the illocutionary point. The second type comprises commands, which aim to influence the audience to take some action. This involves a desire for the listener to act, expressed as a psychological state (sincerity condition), and world-to-words indicating the direction of fit. The third type includes commissives, where the illocutionary goal is to make the speaker commit to a certain course of action. The fourth type involves expressing a genuine mental attitude toward the subject of the proposal, which does not fit into any



specific direction. Declarations are the final type of speech acts according to Searle. When performed effectively, they help align the world and reality. In terms of fit, communication can occur in two ways: words to the world and words to one another.

### **2.1.3 Cooperative Principle:**

Implicature theory is closely associated with Grice's principle of cooperation. Grice's theory of the cooperative principle states that conversations should adhere to certain guidelines to ensure cooperation and rationality. These guidelines include quality, which emphasizes truthfulness; quantity, which stresses providing a sufficient amount of relevant information; relation, which focuses on the relevance of the speaker's communication; and manner, which highlights clarity, brevity, orderliness, and lack of ambiguity. Deviation from or disregard for a specific principle might lead to the creation of an implied meaning. According to Grice (1978), implicature refers to the implied or intended meaning of the speaker, which differs from the literal meaning of what is actually said. From a pragmatic standpoint, implicature is regarded as one of the most complex aspects of its implementation.

In conversation, Grice (1975) argues that the cooperative principle governs verbal exchange through cooperative, rational, and sequential linguistic behavior. Grice considered speech to be a systematized action that integrates all four subcategories—Quality, Quantity, Relation, and Manner—into a single framework. He emphasized the importance of rationality in communication.

Grice's (1975) model of the Cooperative Principle can be summarized by these maxims:

1. The primary principle here is to ensure that one's contributions are accurate. Grice (1975, p. 45) introduces two further sub-maxims:
  - a. Refrain from making statements that one knows to be false.
  - b. Avoid making statements without sufficient evidence to support them.
2. The Maxim of Quantity : This maxim states that the amount of information provided in a discussion should be appropriate for the purpose of the exchange. It includes the following sub-maxims:
  - a. Every contribution must provide sufficient information and meet the informational needs aligned with the current objective of the exchange.
  - b. The quantity of information should be appropriate to the needs of the interaction, neither exceeding nor falling short.
3. The Maxim of Relation: This maxim dictates that one should provide only information relevant to the conversation.
4. The Maxim of Manner: This maxim focuses on the clarity of expression. The overarching principle in this category is to be perspicuous, which includes the following sub-maxims:
  - a. Ensure clarity of expression.
  - b. Eliminate ambiguity.
  - c. Strive for conciseness (avoid superfluous verbosity).
  - d. Maintain a logical structure (Grice, 1975, p. 45).

In a typical conversation, it is expected that individuals provide appropriate and accurate information that is relevant and easy to understand.

Adherence to these principles ensures effective communication. Conversely, non-observance of these maxims occurs when participants fail to adhere to one or more of them. According to Thomas (2011), the five ways in which maxims are not observed are: flouting, infringing, violating, opting out, and suspending.

### 3 Definition of Abuse and its Types

Abuse is defined as inappropriate treatment of an individual, involving deliberate actions that cause harm or suffering. According to Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Quality Assurance (2024), "Abuse is defined as the willful infliction of injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation or punishment with resulting physical harm, pain, or mental anguish" (p.1). Further, broadly speaking, abuse encompasses behaviors intended to inflict physical, emotional, psychological, or verbal harm. In linguistics, abusive language specifically refers to verbal or written expressions designed to inflict hurt, demean, or oppress others. In essence, abuse involves the mistreatment of an individual, typically through force, coercion, or manipulation to gain control over them. It can manifest in various forms, each with distinct characteristics and consequences (The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2019).

Abuse can result from intentional actions, negligence, or ignorance. A person may experience multiple forms of abuse simultaneously. Generally, abuse can be categorized into verbal, physical, electronic, and other forms. The following is a comprehensive explanation of several types of abuse:



1. Physical Abuse: This involves intentionally using physical force to harm or incapacitate someone. Examples include hitting, slapping, or any form of physical assault. Physical abuse can have severe effects on health, both short-term and long-term, leading to injuries and chronic health issues.
2. Emotional or Psychological Abuse: Emotional or psychological abuse involves actions that harm an individual's emotional and mental well-being. This includes making threats, frightening people, constant criticism, and manipulation. Victims of emotional abuse may develop long-term mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and PTSD.
3. Verbal Abuse: Verbal abuse refers to the use of words to insult, degrade, or belittle another person. Examples include name-calling, yelling, and using language intended to hurt someone's feelings or self-esteem. Verbal abuse can significantly impact a person's mental health and sense of self-worth.
4. Neglect: Neglect is a type of abuse involving the failure of a caregiver to provide essential needs such as nutrition, housing, medical care, and emotional support. This can lead to adverse effects on a child's mental, emotional, and physical health during their formative years.
5. Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse involves any sexual contact or behavior that is unwanted by the other person. It includes molestation, rape, and other non-consensual sexual acts. Sexual abuse can result in severe physical and mental harm, including sexually transmitted diseases and psychological issues (International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children, 2020), (Social Care Institute for Excellence, 2015)

For this study, we will focus on three types of abuse that are likely to be prevalent during the time period of the study sample: verbal, neglect, and emotional abuse.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1 Data Selection**

In the present investigation, the novel *Anne of Green Gables* by Lucy Maud Montgomery is used as the source. The selection of this novel is based on the operational definition of the term "abuse".

A total of six extracts are randomly selected from the entire novel, representing various characters. These extracts illustrate the abuse of the orphan Anne according to The Alliance for Child Protection Humanitarian Action, (2019) 's classification.

### **4.2 Method of Analysis**

This study employs qualitative analysis to descriptively interpret the target data from the novel. Qualitative data analysis and interpretation are tools for describing and understanding data based on its content. The qualitative analysis is carried out as follows:

1. The researcher classifies extracts for analysis to determine the type of abuse.
2. The eclectic model, combining Searle's Speech Acts Theory and Grice's Maxims (1975–1978), is used to analyze the extracts. After analyzing the qualitative data, the research will present its findings and conclusions.

### 4.3 Data Analysis

The data collected for this study include words, phrases, sentences, and utterances. Conversations serve as the framework for the information extracted from each character in the novel. The novel *Anne of Green Gables* by Lucy Maud Montgomery, initially released in 1908, has captivated readers for over a hundred years with its vibrant depiction of the challenges and successes of an orphaned little girl.

### 4.4 Synopsis of the Selected Novel

*Anne of Green Gables* is a renowned novel that tells the story of Anne Shirley, an imaginative and talkative 11-year-old girl who is sent to live with Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert by mistake. The Cuthberts, a middle-aged brother and sister, had intended to adopt a boy to help with their farm in the fictional town of Avonlea on Prince Edward Island. Although Anne is initially disappointed, her vibrant personality and rich imagination quickly win over the Cuthberts and the rest of the town. Throughout the novel, Anne's mishaps and adventures, such as dyeing her hair green and accidentally getting her friend Diana drunk, illustrate her growth and the positive impact of a supportive environment. The story explores themes of connection, imagination, and personal growth. As Anne matures, she excels in school and gains admiration from her peers and teachers. In the end, she chooses to remain at Green Gables to care for Marilla after Matthew's death, giving up a scholarship to further her education. This

decision highlights her loyalty and deep bond with her new family. The novel's characters develop significantly, and the settings are richly described. It offers a timeless reflection on the resilience of the human spirit and the role of love and community in shaping who we are.

### **Extract (1)**

“Mrs. Rachel felt that she had received a severe mental jolt. She thought in exclamation points. A boy! Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert of all people adopting a boy! From an orphan asylum! Well, the world was certainly turning upside down! She would be surprised at nothing after this! Nothing! What on earth put such a notion into your head? she demanded disapprovingly. This had been done without her advice being asked, and must perforce be disapproved”.p8

This quotation is taken from Lucy Maud Montgomery's novel *Anne of Green Gables* and is spoken by the character Mrs. Rachel. The scene depicts Mrs. Rachel's disbelief regarding Marilla and Matthew's decision to adopt a boy from an orphanage, highlighting her surprise and disapproval at not being informed earlier.

**Speech Act:** In this extract, Mrs. Rachel performs an assertive speech act by expressing her disbelief and disapproval of Marilla and Matthew's choice to adopt a boy from an orphanage. Her statements, such as “A boy!” and “Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert of all people adopting a boy!” illustrate her shock and confusion. These remarks reflect her perception of the situation and emphasize how unexpected and unconventional she finds the event.

Then, a directive act exists in this extract. According to Mrs. Rachel, the question "What on earth gave you that idea?" asked by her could be seen as a directing speech act. She is not only asking for information; she is also implying in an indirect manner that Marilla and Matthew's choice is not logical or based on facts, and she doesn't agree with what they are doing. She seems to think the idea is illogical and needs to be justified, as it demands an explanation and conveys her displeasure.

Additionally, the expressive acts are reflected in remarks made by Mrs. Rachel, such as "A boy!" and "Well, the world was certainly turning upside down!" These expressions convey a sense of surprise or wonder upon witnessing or discovering something unexpected. An expressive act communicates the speaker's psychological condition.

Finally, the extract contains a second assertive speech act expressed by Mrs. Rachel in "This had been done without her advice being asked, and must perforce be disapproved." Here, she is expressing her belief that Marilla and Matthew's decision is made without her advice and, as a result, should be disapproved. This approach is employed to establish her position and viewpoint on the subject.

Grice's Conversational Maxims:

Maxim of Quantity: Mrs. Rachel's statement complies with the maxim of quantity by offering sufficient details to express her dissatisfaction.

Maxim of Quality: She disapproves of Marilla and Matthew's decision, which suggests that she believes it is not well-founded.



Maxim of Relation: Her inquiries and statements are pertinent to the subject matter, as they demonstrate her apprehension regarding the adoption decision.

Maxim of Manner: Mrs. Rachel's emotion and disapproval are inferred from her tone and word choice, particularly the use of exclamation marks and the phrase "disapprovingly."

A pragmatic analysis using Searle's theory of speech acts and Grice's Maxims shows that Mrs. Rachel's reaction was both curious about the decision's rationale and strongly displeased because she thought her input should have been asked.

### **Extract (2)**

“Oh, she can talk fast enough. I saw that at once. It's nothing in her favour, either. I don't like children who have so much to say. I don't want an orphan girl and if I did she isn't the style I'd pick out. There's something I don't understand about her. No, she's got to be despatched straight- way back to where she came from”. p41

This extract shows Marilla Cuthbert reflecting on her initial feelings about Anne Shirley, the orphan girl sent to her and her brother Matthew instead of the boy they were supposed to adopt. Marilla's words reveal her distrust and dislike for Anne. She expresses a strong desire to send Anne back to the orphanage, viewing Anne's talkativeness as a negative trait. This

chapter illustrates Marilla's initial reluctance to accept Anne and sets the stage for the development of their relationship throughout the novel.

According to the analysis of speech acts, an assertive act is identified in this extract. The speaker expresses their negative opinions and decisions, clearly indicating their dislike for the orphan girl and their intention to return her to where she came from. Additionally, two expressive acts are also identified: "I don't like children who have so much to say" and "There's something I don't understand about her." These comments convey the speaker's negative emotions towards the orphan.

A directive act is found in "she's got to be despatched straightaway back to where she came from," used by Marilla. Marilla issues this directive to send the orphan back to her place of origin.

According to Grice's Maxims Analysis:

Maxim of Quantity: The speaker clearly expresses her opinion of Anne in relation to the Maxim of Quantity. Marilla acknowledges Anne's talkativeness, expresses her personal aversion to excessively talkative children, explicitly states her lack of interest in adopting an orphan, and reveals her intention to send Anne back. Marilla adheres to the principle of quantity by providing sufficient information to effectively express her viewpoint without being excessively wordy. Therefore, the quantity maxim is not violated. The speaker's statements adequately convey her unfavorable perceptions and objectives while following the principle of providing enough information.

**Maxim of Quality:** The statements of the speaker reflect her true opinions. Marilla dislikes Anne's talkativeness and does not want to adopt her. She appears honest and does not lie. Since she appears honest, she adheres to the quality maxim. Therefore, the quality maxim is upheld. Clear and honest assertions of negative opinions and intentions towards the orphan girl support the quality maxim.

**Maxim of Relation:** Marilla's comments about Anne, the orphan girl sent to them by mistake, are relevant. Everything Marilla says influences her assessment of Anne and her future plans. She adheres to the maxim of relation by staying on topic. The comments address orphan abuse and reveal mistreatment and unfavorable sentiments towards the orphan girl, which does not violate the relation maxim.

**Maxim of Manner:** There is no confusion in Marilla's speech. By clearly stating why she doesn't like Anne and why she wants to send her back, she avoids any ambiguity. In line with the maxim of manner, Marilla's speech is clear and to the point. While her comments may seem rude, they are honest and direct, adhering to the general principle of clarity. As a result, the manner maxim is not violated.

The excerpt's speech by Marilla aligns well with Grice's Maxims. She tells the truth (Quality), provides sufficient and relevant information (Quantity and Relation), and speaks in a clear and direct manner (Manner). This analysis highlights her honesty and straightforwardness, illustrating her initial reluctance to accept Anne. Through this analysis, we can see how Marilla's

words effectively convey her feelings and set the stage for the tension and development in her relationship with Anne.

### **Extract (3)**

"Well, they didn't pick you for your looks, that's sure and certain, was Mrs. Rachel Lynde's emphatic comment. Mrs. Rachel was one of those delightful and popular people who pride themselves on being outspoken. You are terrible skinny and homely, Marilla. Come here, child, and let me have a look at you. Lawful heart, did anyone ever see such freckles? And hair as red as carrots! Come here, child, I say". **p91**

This scene depicts Mrs. Rachel Lynde delivering a direct harsh evaluation of Anne Shirley, the main character of the story, who has recently arrived at Green Gables. Mrs. Rachel is renowned for her candid and incisive demeanour, and her remarks mirror her inclination to express her opinions without much consideration for the emotions of others.

**Speech Act:** This extract contains multiple illocutionary acts. Two illocutionary acts of statement and description are evident in "Well, they didn't pick you for your looks, that's sure and certain" and "You are terribly skinny and homely." These are expressed linguistically through assertive acts. This statement affirms a verifiable truth regarding Anne's selection process, suggesting that her appearance did not influence it. Here, Mrs. Rachel is expressing her disapproval of Anne's physical characteristics by making a definitive declaration. Additionally, a directive act is found in "Come here, child, and let me have a look at you," used by Mrs. Rachel.

Regarding the Maxim of Quantity: Mrs. Rachel provides more detail than necessary about Anne's appearance, which could be seen as a partial violation of the maxim of quantity. The detailed commentary does not add useful information but rather highlights her dislike, indicating a violation of the quantity maxim.

Regarding the Maxim of Quality: Mrs. Rachel's statements reflect her genuine belief and observations, adhering to the maxim of quality. However, they may be exaggerated and biased, revealing her subjective viewpoint. Thus, the quality maxim is violated.

Concerning the Maxim of Relation: As this is Mrs. Rachel's first meeting with Anne, her remarks about Anne's appearance are somewhat relevant to the context. While meeting a new child is significant, the specific critical comments are unnecessary at this time. This results in a violation of the relation maxim.

Maxim of Manner: Mrs. Rachel's behavior contradicts the maxim of manner because it is rude and blunt. Her speech is clear but unnecessarily harsh and direct. This demonstrates a violation of the manner rule.

The exchange highlights the harsh criticism orphans such as Anne had to endure. Anne is likely psychologically affected by Mrs. Rachel's negative



comments, which exacerbate her feelings of alienation and inadequacy. The analysis confirms its accuracy in light of its alignment with Grice's Maxims and Searle's Speech Acts. While Mrs. Rachel's harsh and abrupt words often violate conversational maxims, she uses language to express her thoughts, control Anne's behavior, and convey her disapproval. This practical study enhances our understanding of orphan maltreatment and social dynamics in "Anne of Green Gables."

#### Extract (4)

"Marilla took it as a display of defiance. I believe you are telling me a falsehood, Anne, she said sharply : I know you are. There now, don't say anything more unless you are prepared to tell the whole truth. Go to your room and stay there until you are ready to confess". **p135**

The scene depicts Marilla, Anne Shirley's strict guardian, discussing a time when Anne may not have been truthful. Marilla interprets Anne's lack of response as a sign of rebellion and accuses her of lying. When Anne refuses to confess the truth, Marilla locks her in her room as punishment until she admits her wrongdoing.

**Speech Act:** In the extract, an assertive act is used by Marilla in "I believe you are telling me a falsehood, Anne." This assertive act reflects Marilla's belief that Anne is not being truthful. Marilla's statement demonstrates her conviction about Anne's dishonesty. The sentence "I know you are" further

emphasizes Marilla's firm belief in Anne's falsehood, showing her certainty without doubt.

Two directive acts are present in this extract. The first is found in "Don't say anything more unless you are prepared to tell the whole truth." This directive instructs Anne to remain silent unless she is ready to confess honestly. The second is in "Go to your room and stay there until you are ready to confess." This directive commands Anne to go to her room as a consequence of her perceived defiance and supposed dishonesty.

**Maxim of Quantity:** Marilla accuses Anne of lying and instructs her on what to do next. Marilla provides sufficient information about her belief in Anne's dishonesty and the subsequent actions she expects Anne to take. Therefore, the maxim of quantity is upheld, as Marilla offers adequate information relevant to the situation.

**Maxim of Quality:** Marilla asserts that Anne is lying, which reflects her belief, but she does not provide evidence to support her claim. While Marilla is confident in her belief, the lack of proof constitutes a partial violation of the maxim of quality.

**Maxim of Relation:** Marilla's comments are directly relevant to the situation at hand—addressing what she perceives as Anne's dishonesty and instructing her on what to do next. Thus, the maxim of relation is adhered to, as her remarks are pertinent to the context.

**Maxim of Manner:** Marilla's speech is straightforward and unambiguous. She communicates her allegations and directives in a clear and concise manner, adhering to the maxim of manner.

Analyzing this part of "Anne of Green Gables" using Searle's Speech Acts and Grice's Maxims reveals the complex dynamics of authority and trust between Marilla and Anne. Marilla uses language to assert her views, issue directives, and express her frustration, generally aligning with Grice's maxims while navigating the intricacies of caregiver authority and trust. This analysis enhances our understanding of the interpersonal dynamics and themes of power and honesty within the story.

#### Extract (5)

"Anne returned no answer. It was asking too much of flesh and blood to expect her to tell before the whole school that she had been called 'carrots. It was Gilbert who spoke up stoutly. It was my fault, Mr. Phillips. I teased her. Mr. Phillips paid no heed to Gilbert. I am sorry to see a pupil of mine displaying such a temper and such a vindictive spirit, he said in a solemn tone, as if the mere fact of being a pupil of his ought to root out all evil passions from the hearts of small imperfect mortals. Anne, go and stand on the platform in front of the blackboard for the rest of the afternoon. Anne would have infinitely preferred a whipping to this punishment, under which her sensitive spirit quivered as from a whiplash. With a white, set face she obeyed. Mr. Phillips took a chalk crayon and wrote on the blackboard above her head: Anne Shirley has a very bad temper. Anne Shirley must

learn to control her temper," and then read it out loud so that even the primer class, who couldn't read writing, should understand it. Anne stood there the rest of the afternoon with that legend above her. She did not cry or hang her head". p157

In this scene, Anne Shirley, the main character, is unfairly punished by her teacher, Mr. Phillips, for an incident involving Gilbert Blythe. Gilbert attempts to take the blame, but Mr. Phillips ignores him and claims that Anne has a bad temper and is out to get him. Anne is publicly humiliated by Mr. Phillips, who writes an insulting message on the whiteboard above her head and makes her stand there.

**Speech Act:** In this extract, Mr. Phillips employs two assertive speech acts: "I am sorry to see a pupil of mine displaying such a temper and such a vindictive spirit," and "Anne Shirley has a very bad temper. Anne Shirley must learn to control her temper." These assertive statements reflect Mr. Phillips's disapproval and frustration with Anne's behavior.

Additionally, the directive act is present in: "Anne, go and stand on the platform in front of the blackboard for the rest of the afternoon." This directive instructs Anne to move to a specific location as a form of punishment.

An expressive speech act is found in: "I am sorry to see a pupil of mine displaying such a temper and such a vindictive spirit." This statement reveals Mr. Phillips's disappointment and disapproval of Anne's behavior. Anne's silence and her "white, set face" are non-verbal expressive acts indicating her emotional state—anger, humiliation, and resilience.

Grice's Maxims: According to the maxim of Quality, Mr. Phillips's comments about Anne's temper seem to reflect his genuine beliefs about her. However, the public shaming exacerbates the situation, and his comments may not accurately represent Anne's true character. Gilbert's attempt to take the blame highlights the possibility that Mr. Phillips's accusations may not reflect the entire truth. Thus, there is a potential violation of the maxim of Quality, as Mr. Phillips's statements are based on his perception rather than objective evidence.

Maxim of Quantity: Mr. Phillips provides just the right amount of detail about Anne's behavior and the punishment to make his point. He clearly expresses his disappointment and gives specific instructions on the punishment. However, his public shaming—writing and reading the insulting message aloud—may be considered excessive. This could be seen as a violation of the maxim of quantity, as it involves sharing more information than necessary.



Maxim of Relation: Mr. Phillips' comments and actions are relevant to the context of disciplining a student and addressing Anne's behavior. However, by ignoring Gilbert's confession, he fails to consider all relevant factors, which could indicate a partial violation of the maxim of relation. While his focus on Anne's behavior is pertinent, disregarding Gilbert's involvement undermines the relevance of his actions.

Maxim of Manner: Mr. Phillips' behavior is clear and direct in terms of what he expects Anne to do and how he punishes her. However, his approach lacks tact and empathy, which conflicts with the maxim of manner. Although his instructions are unambiguous, the harshness of his actions—particularly the public humiliation—creates an unnecessarily negative impact on Anne. Therefore, while the manner of communication is clear, it is also excessively harsh, which violates the maxim of manner.

This analysis highlights the severe nature of punishments common at the time, such as public shaming, and its potential long-term effects on a child's mental health. The use of Searle's Speech Acts Theory and Grice's Maxims illustrates the complexity of social interactions and the emotional impact on Anne during Mr. Phillips's punishment. These speech acts demonstrate power dynamics, directives, and disapproval, often exceeding the norms of polite conversation and emphasizing themes of authority, fairness, and emotional impact in "Anne of Green Gables."

## Extract (6)

"Mr. Phillips' brief reforming energy was over; he didn't want the bother of punishing a dozen pupils but it was necessary to do something to save his word, so he looked about for a scapegoat and found it in Anne, who had dropped into her seat, gasping for breath, with her forgotten lily wreath hanging askew over one ear and giving her a particularly rakish and dishevelled appearance. 'Anne Shirley, since you seem to be so fond of the boys' company we shall indulge your taste for it this afternoon,' he said sarcastically. Take those flowers out of your hair and sit with Gilbert Blythe. The other boys snickered. Diana, turning pale with pity, plucked the wreath from Anne's hair and squeezed her hand. Anne stared at the master as if turned to stone. 'Did you hear what I said, Anne?' queried Mr. Phillips sternly. Yes, sir, said Anne slowly, but I didn't suppose you really meant it.' 'I assure you I did". p161

This extract depicts the schoolteacher Mr. Phillips, who, frustrated and exerting his authority, targets Anne Shirley for public humiliation. Mr. Phillips cynically forces Anne to sit with Gilbert Blythe, a boy she has conflicts with, insinuating that Anne has an interest in boys. This act of public shaming and his harsh tone highlight the punitive and unfair measures of the time.

Speech Act: Two illocutionary acts are evident in the sentences "Mr. Phillips' brief reforming energy was over." and "I assure you I did." These

statements reflect Mr. Phillips' overt hostility towards Anne and his assertive speech behaviors, which confirm the seriousness of his previous commands.

Additionally, Mr. Phillips employs directive speech acts with the commands "Take those flowers out of your hair and sit with Gilbert Blythe" and "Did you hear what I said, Anne?" These directives are used to enforce his punitive measures, subjecting Anne to public insults and humiliation.

Moreover, Mr. Phillips uses an expressive speech act of scolding in his statement, "Anne Shirley, since you appear to be so fond of the boys' company, we shall indulge your taste for it this afternoon." This expression of disapproval and derision reveals his negative view of Anne's behavior. Anne's non-verbal responses, such as "gasping for breath," her "rakish and disheveled appearance," and her "staring at the master as if turned to stone," further convey her emotional state—shock, humiliation, and disbelief.

Finally, the directive speech act "sit with Gilbert Blythe" involves Mr. Phillips commanding Anne to change her seating arrangement as a form of punishment, altering the social dynamics and reinforcing his authority.

Grice's Maxims: Maxim of Quantity: Mr. Phillips provides sufficient information for Anne to understand her punishment and gives clear instructions. However, his sarcastic remarks add unnecessary detail meant to degrade rather than inform. This use of sarcasm violates the maxim of

quantity, as it includes more information than necessary for the purpose of instruction.

Maxim of Quality: Mr. Phillips suggests, with sarcasm, that Anne has a preference for boys, a claim unsupported by evidence. His comments are not based on factual information but serve to justify the punishment. This results in a violation of the maxim of quality, as his remarks are not entirely truthful or reflective of Anne's actual feelings.

Maxim of Relation: Mr. Phillips' comments and actions are focused on punishing Anne, which is relevant to the situation as he perceives it. Thus, there is no violation of the maxim of relation. His remarks are pertinent to the context of disciplining Anne.

Maxim of Manner: Although Mr. Phillips' instructions are clear and direct, the use of sarcasm complicates the clarity of his message, potentially causing confusion about the seriousness of his directives. This introduces a minor violation of the maxim of manner due to the ambiguity introduced by his tone.

#### Analysis:

By applying Searle's Speech Acts Theory and Grice's Maxims to this extract, we gain insight into the complexity of the social interactions and the emotional impact of Mr. Phillips' actions on Anne. His speech acts—assertive, directive, and expressive—demonstrate his dominance, attempt to control behavior, and convey disapproval. His disregard for conversational norms through his caustic and exaggerated manner highlights the themes of authority, justice, and resilience in "Anne of Green

Gables," emphasizing the broader implications of orphan mistreatment and social interactions in the story.

## 5. Discussion of the Findings

An analysis of the data reveals that a total of (23) speech acts are utilized. These speech acts are divided into a variety of strategies and had various frequencies. The fact that there are only three types of speech acts suggests that they are not employed at random. The assertive speech act is used most frequently, with a total of 10 instances, accounting for (43.47%) of the total. This indicates that the originators of orphan abuse tend to convey facts and state evidence as clearly as possible. The communication observed in the current study relies primarily on declarations of fact or belief, reflecting a focus on conveying information and expressing truth through statements.

A total of (8) directives are used, which is equivalent to (34.78%) of the total. This implies a significant use of speech acts intended to prompt the listener to take action. It also highlights a notable degree of interaction and attempts to influence behavior or decision-making within the communication samples. Expressives occurred (5) times, accounting for (21.73%) of the overall count. The inclusion of expressives indicates that emotional expressions or reactions are part of the communication, though to a lesser degree than assertives and directives. However, the data do not contain any occurrences of declarations or commissives. The absence of speech acts that create a new state of affairs (declarations) or commit the



speaker to future actions (commissives) suggests that the communication does not involve such activities. This may indicate a focus on current conditions and activities rather than commitments or changes in the existing situation.

Regarding Grice's maxims, there are eleven cases of violations in the selected data, suggesting deviations from the conversational principles that typically guide effective communication. Despite varying in frequency, all four maxims are violated.

The most common violation, making up (36.36%) of all violations, occurred (4) times and pertains to the Quality principle, which states that information provided must be accurate and supported by evidence. This suggests cases of exaggeration, lies, or disinformation in the communication.

There were (3) violations of the Quantity maxim, representing (27.27%) of the total violations. This indicates instances where either too much or too little information is provided, making the communication less clear and efficient.

Two violations each of the Relation maxim (importance) and the Manner maxim (shortness and clarity) accounted for (18.18%) of the total violations. A violation of the Manner maxim indicates imprecise or confusing communication, while a violation of the Relation maxim shows that the information given is not directly pertinent to the discussion. Disregard for the Manner maxim indicates that the communication is not clear, organized, or is too lengthy, leading to comments that may be difficult for the audience to understand due to being unclear, lengthy, or both.

## 6 Conclusion

The frequent use of assertive speech acts highlights the significance of these comments in accurately portraying the orphans' reality, while the principles of conversational maxims help to underscore the abusive and deceitful nature of interactions involving orphan characters. The results show that controlling and directive communication styles predominate, and people's attitudes towards orphans are varied. Issues with candor, clarity, and transparency that lead to the abuse and neglect of orphans are reflected in the frequency with which Grice's maxims are disregarded. The study shows that these linguistic features not only define how people talk to each other, but they also show how society as a whole feels about orphan abuse and mistreatment and how the system fails to protect them.

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