


## Particularized Conversational Implicature in the Movie *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018) by Jon M. Chu

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### A B S T R A C T

Particularized conversational implicature plays an important role in indirect communication because meaning can only be interpreted through specific contextual conditions. In socially structured interaction, speakers often rely on implied meaning rather than direct expression, especially when communication involves hierarchy, interpersonal tension, cultural expectation, and relational sensitivity. These patterns can be observed in the film *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018), where indirect communication frequently emerges through the flouting of conversational maxims. This research employed a qualitative descriptive method. The data consisted of 22 utterances containing particularized conversational implicature collected from film dialogues, scripts, subtitles, and repeated observation of relevant scenes. The data were analyzed using Grice's theory of conversational implicature and conversational maxims. The findings show that particularized conversational implicature is generated through the flouting of the maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner. The implied meanings identified in the interactions depend heavily on contextual interpretation and cannot be understood solely through literal meaning. The study also reveals that indirect communication functions as an interactional strategy for managing hierarchy, regulating interpersonal tension, avoiding confrontation, and negotiating social relationships. Overall, the findings highlight that particularized conversational implicature operates not only as a pragmatic phenomenon, but also as a context-dependent interactional mechanism shaped by social and cultural dynamics.

**Keywords:** *Particularized Conversational Implicature, Pragmatics, Maxim Flouting, Social Interaction, Film Discourse*

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## INTRODUCTION

Communication is not limited to the literal meaning of linguistic expressions, but also involves the interpretation of implied meaning shaped by context, social relations, and shared knowledge. In pragmatics, meaning is understood as something constructed through interaction rather than conveyed solely through words themselves (Levinson, 1983; Yule, 1996). As a result, speakers often communicate indirectly, especially in situations influenced by social expectations, interpersonal tension, or power relations. This highlights the importance of pragmatics in explaining how meaning is negotiated and interpreted within social interaction.

In everyday communication, people do not always say things directly. In many situations, especially when there is social pressure, emotional tension, or differences in status, speakers tend to express their meaning indirectly. Instead of stating something clearly, they imply it, and the listener has to understand the meaning based on the context. This shows that communication often involves meanings that are conveyed implicitly rather than stated directly.

In communication, meaning does not solely depend on linguistic forms, but also on how participants construct shared understanding within interaction. In this sense, communication occurs when individuals achieve a shared interpretation of meaning (Hikmat,

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2018). This reveals that meaning is not fixed, but negotiated through interaction, requiring attention not only to what is said but also to how it is interpreted in context.

This phenomenon is closely related to conversational implicature in pragmatics. Communication is guided by the Cooperative Principle, where speakers are expected to be clear, relevant, truthful, and informative (Grice, 1975). However, in actual interaction, these principles are often not fully followed. When speakers provide less information than expected or express something indirectly, listeners are required to interpret the implied meaning. Understanding language, therefore, involves not only literal meaning but also the speaker's intended meaning (Yule, 1996).

Conversational implicature can be divided into generalized and particularized implicature (Levinson, 1983). While generalized implicature can usually be understood without relying too much on context, particularized implicature depends strongly on the specific situation in which the conversation takes place. In this case, meaning is not directly stated, but needs to be inferred based on factors such as the relationship between speakers, the setting of the interaction, and shared background knowledge. Because of this, particularized implicature often appears in situations where speakers choose not to speak explicitly, especially when there are social considerations involved.

Implicature can also arise through the flouting of conversational maxims, where speakers deliberately do not follow the maxims in an obvious way (Grice, 1975). Instead of causing confusion, this kind of violation actually signals that the speaker intends to communicate something beyond the literal meaning. For example, when a speaker gives too little information, exaggerates, changes the topic, or uses unclear expressions, the listener is expected to interpret the intended meaning behind it. In this way, flouting becomes a strategy for indirect communication. Therefore, particularized implicature and maxim flouting are closely connected, since both rely on context and interpretation. The meaning is not directly expressed, but constructed through the interaction between what is said and the situation in which it is said.

In conversational interaction, speakers do not always fully observe Grice's maxims. Instead, they may intentionally flout them in a way that is noticeable to the hearer. According to (Grice, 1975), this kind of non-observance does not lead to misunderstanding, but rather invites the listener to interpret an implied meaning beyond what is explicitly stated. In this sense, flouting becomes an important mechanism in the production of conversational implicature. The flouting of the Maxim of Quantity occurs when a speaker provides less or more information than is required. Rather than giving a complete or direct answer, the speaker may reduce, generalize, or limit the information. This lack of sufficient detail signals that something is left unsaid, prompting the listener to infer the intended meaning behind the response. The flouting of the Maxim of Quality takes place when a speaker says something that is not meant to be taken literally. This often appears in the form of exaggeration, irony, or figurative expression. Although the utterance may seem untrue on the surface, the listener recognizes this and interprets the underlying meaning conveyed by the speaker (Yule, 1996).

The flouting of the Maxim of Relation happens when a response does not directly address the expected topic. Instead of answering the question, the speaker may shift the focus or provide an indirect reply. This apparent irrelevance is not random, but functions as a way of avoiding certain information or controlling the direction of the interaction. Meanwhile, the flouting of the Maxim of Manner occurs when a speaker does not express their message clearly. The use of vague, ambiguous, or indirect expressions makes the utterance less explicit, requiring the listener to interpret the meaning based on context. In this case, the lack of clarity itself becomes meaningful. Overall, the flouting of these maxims shows that communication is not always direct. Speakers may intentionally depart from expected norms to convey meaning indirectly, while listeners actively interpret what is implied. This highlights the role of context and inference in understanding how meaning is constructed in interaction (Grice, 1975).

Recent studies on conversational implicature and maxim flouting have increasingly emphasized the role of context, interaction, and social meaning in discourse analysis,

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particularly in film and media communication. Previous studies have examined conversational implicature and maxim flouting in various contexts, particularly in film and media discourse. A study on film discourse shows that implicature is often used to express feelings and judgments indirectly, and that understanding meaning requires attention to context and character relationships (Ainiyah & Sholichah, 2025a). Another study found that conversational implicature in film dialogue is influenced by contextual and social factors, including gender differences and interactional conditions, which affect how implied meaning is constructed and interpreted (Wijayanti, 2016). Similarly, it is found that implicature in film dialogue depends on contextual factors, where meaning is interpreted based on situational context and interactional conditions (Sitorus et al., 2019). Previous research also shows that conversational implicature frequently occurs in movie scripts, with particularized implicature appearing more dominant than generalized implicature, and is often generated through the non-observance of conversational maxims (Akmal & Yana, 2020). Furthermore, a recent study on animated film demonstrates that implicature is used to convey implicit meanings such as sarcasm, criticism, and subtle expressions, and plays a significant role in developing character interaction and narrative depth (A'maliyah et al., 2023).

In other contexts, studies have also examined the flouting of conversational maxims. It is found that the maxim of relation is the most frequently flouted in talk show interaction, indicating that patterns of maxim flouting may vary depending on interactional context (Firda et al., 2021). A study on movie dialogue identifies all four types of maxim flouting, showing that speakers use excessive or insufficient information and irrelevant responses to generate implicature (Ramadhanisya & Hartati, 2021). Furthermore, in stand-up comedy, implicature is used to deliver criticism and satire, where speakers deliberately violate conversational maxims and rely on contextual interpretation (Nurrohmah et al., 2025)

Although these studies provide important insights, most of these studies mainly focus on identifying types and frequencies of implicature or maxim flouting. They tend to describe what implicature is, rather than explaining how implicature operates within interaction. In particular, the role of particularized conversational implicature, which depends heavily on context, remains underexplored in relation to social hierarchy and interactional dynamics. Previous studies have largely focused on identifying implicature types and maxim flouting patterns rather than examining how implicature functions as an interactional mechanism within socially structured communication.

This issue becomes particularly relevant when examined in film, where communication often reflects social structures and relationships between characters. Film dialogue is not merely a stylistic choice, but also a way of managing relationships, expressing power, and avoiding direct conflict. Although film dialogue is scripted, it often reflects how communication works in real situations, especially in terms of how meaning is shaped by context, relationships, and social expectations. One film that clearly illustrates this is *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018), directed by Jon M. Chu. The film presents interactions influenced by family expectations, social class, and cultural values, where meaning is often conveyed indirectly and can only be understood through context.

Based on this gap, this study addresses how particularized conversational implicature is generated through the flouting of conversational maxims in *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018), and how it functions in shaping interaction in the film. This study focuses not only on identifying implicature, but also on explaining how meaning is constructed through context and how indirect expressions operate in socially complex interactions. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on implicature as both a linguistic and interactional mechanism, particularly in relation to social hierarchy and interactional dynamics. This focus allows the study to move beyond descriptive identification toward explaining how implicature functions within socially structured interaction.

## METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach within a pragmatic framework, aiming to examine how meaning is constructed through context-dependent interaction rather than measured quantitatively. It is grounded in a constructivist perspective, where meaning is viewed as emerging through interpretation, shaped by context, rather than being fully encoded in linguistic form (Cresswell, 2011).

The focus of this study is not only on identifying instances of implicature, but also on understanding how meaning is constructed within interaction. More importantly, each utterance is analyzed as part of a larger communicative event rather than as an isolated linguistic unit. This approach allows the analysis to capture how meaning emerges through the relationship between utterance, context, and speaker intention.

The data are drawn from the film *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018), directed by Jon M. Chu. The data consist of selected utterances that reflect particularized conversational implicature, drawn from scenes in which characters communicate indirectly, especially in situations involving social hierarchy, cultural expectations, and interpersonal tension. The data were obtained from the movie dialogues, supported by the film script, official subtitles, and repeated observation of relevant scenes in the film. This study analyzed 22 utterances containing particularized conversational implicature. The utterances were selected using purposive sampling based on their relevance to the research objectives and the analytical criteria related to maxim flouting and context-dependent meaning. The film was selected because it presents interactions shaped by social hierarchy, cultural expectations, and interpersonal tension, which provide rich examples of indirect communication and socially constructed meaning.

The selection of data was guided by three criteria. First, the utterance must contain indirect meaning that requires contextual inference, indicating the presence of particularized implicature. Second, the utterance must show a deviation from expected conversational norms, either through the flouting of conversational maxims or through the absence of explicit meaning that prompts inferential interpretation (Grice, 1975). Third, the utterance must occur within a socially or relationally constrained interaction, particularly those shaped by hierarchy, cultural expectations, or power relations.

In this study, the unit of analysis is individual utterances that contain implied meaning within specific interactional contexts. However, the interpretation of each utterance is not limited to its linguistic form. Instead, it is examined in relation to the surrounding dialogue, situational background, and the relationship between the speakers. This is important because particularized conversational implicature cannot be understood without considering the context in which the utterance occurs (Levinson, 1983). Each utterance was treated as a unit of analysis because particularized conversational implicature depends heavily on contextual interpretation within specific interactional situations.

Data collection was conducted in several stages. The film was first viewed repeatedly to establish a comprehensive understanding of the narrative and interactional context. Relevant dialogues were then identified and transcribed. From this set, utterances were selected based on the analytical criteria outlined above, ensuring that the data were theoretically grounded rather than arbitrarily chosen.

The analysis was conducted through several stages. First, the researcher identified utterances containing indirect meaning within the film dialogue. The selected utterances were then classified based on the type of conversational maxim flouted, namely Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner. After that, the implied meanings were interpreted by considering the situational context, the relationship between speakers, and the interactional conditions surrounding the conversation. Finally, the data were interpreted to explain how particularized conversational implicature functions within socially structured interaction.

To ensure the credibility of the data, the selected utterances were repeatedly reviewed in relation to the full narrative context of the film. This process helped minimize misinterpretation and ensured that the analysis remained grounded in the interactional setting.

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of the film. In addition, the analysis was discussed with academic supervisors to reduce subjective interpretation and maintain analytical consistency throughout the study. Only utterances that clearly demonstrated context-dependent meaning were included to ensure that the analysis remained focused on particularized conversational implicature rather than general indirect expressions (Yule, 1996).

The analysis focuses on how implicature is generated and interpreted within specific contexts. Each utterance is examined by identifying how implicature is generated through the flouting of conversational maxims and interpreted within specific contextual conditions (Grice, 1975). The interpretation takes into account the situational context, the relationship between speakers, and the broader social conditions of the interaction. To ensure a systematic analytical process, this study follows the interactive model of qualitative data analysis, which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2014). These components are applied in an interactive and continuous manner throughout the analysis rather than in a linear sequence.

In this study, data condensation is conducted by selecting, focusing, and simplifying utterances that meet the analytical criteria, particularly those that demonstrate particularized conversational implicature and maxim flouting. Data display is used to organize and structure the data in relation to their contextual features, including the interactional setting, the relationship between speakers, and the type of maxim flouted. Conclusion drawing is carried out through an interpretive process in which implicature is identified and explained based on the relationship between linguistic form and contextual factors. The use of this interactive model allows the analysis to move iteratively between data and interpretation, ensuring that the findings remain grounded in the data while being analytically systematic (Miles et al., 2014).

The analysis in this study does not rely on a single interpretive step, but develops gradually through close engagement with the data. Rather than directly assigning meaning to each utterance, the analysis begins by examining how the utterance relates to its immediate context, including the preceding dialogue and the situation in which it occurs. From this point, the implied meaning is interpreted by considering both linguistic cues and contextual factors, such as the relationship between speakers and the social conditions of the interaction.

This process is important because particularized conversational implicature cannot be identified simply from the surface form of an utterance. The meaning often emerges only when the utterance is viewed within a broader interactional framework. A closer look shows that the analysis moves back and forth between the utterance and its context, allowing interpretation to develop in a more grounded and systematic way rather than relying on immediate or intuitive judgment.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the analysis of particularized conversational implicature (PCI) in *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018), focusing on how implicature is generated through the flouting of conversational maxims in interactions shaped by hierarchy and social expectations. The analysis is based on selected utterances that require contextual interpretation, particularly in interactions shaped by social hierarchy, cultural expectations, and interpersonal dynamics. To provide an overview of the data, all identified instances of maxim flouting are classified according to the type of maxim involved, as shown in Table 1. The distribution highlights how different maxims contribute to the construction of implicature in the film. While all data are included in the table, only selected examples are discussed in detail, as they represent the most relevant patterns.

Table 1. Frequency and Distribution of Flouting of Conversational Maxims in *Crazy Rich Asians*

Type of Maxim Flouted	Number of Data	Percentage
Maxim of Quantity	6	27,3%
Maxim of Quality	6	27,3%
Maxim of Relation	5	22,7%

The overall distribution shows that the flouting of the Maxim of Quantity and Quality occurs most frequently, each accounting for 27.3% of the data. The Maxim of Relation and the Maxim of Manner appear less frequently, each representing 22.7%. This pattern suggests that implicature in the film is primarily generated through the management of information and the use of non-literal expressions, rather than through topic shifting alone.

### Flouting of the Maxim of Quantity

The flouting of the Maxim of Quantity occurs when speakers provide less information than is required in a given interaction. In the data, this pattern is often associated with situations where information is deliberately reduced or softened, prompting the hearer to infer meanings that are not explicitly stated.

#### Data 1

Rachel: "So your family is, like, rich?"

Nick: "Uh, we're comfortable."

#### Context

This interaction occurs when Rachel begins questioning Nick about his family background before traveling to Singapore. Rachel becomes curious about Nick's family and financial background, while Nick appears reluctant to reveal the true extent of his family wealth directly.

#### Interpretation

Nick's response flouts the Maxim of Quantity because he provides less information than Rachel expects. Instead of directly answering whether his family is rich, he uses the word "comfortable," which gives only limited information and softens the actual reality of his family's wealth. Although the response appears simple, it indirectly signals that there is something being understated. The implicature emerges because Rachel is expected to infer the meaning beyond the literal expression based on the context of the interaction.

This indirect response also reflects Nick's attempt to manage the interaction carefully. By avoiding a direct statement about his family's wealth, he minimizes the social distance between himself and Rachel and prevents the conversation from becoming uncomfortable. The utterance demonstrates how particularized conversational implicature operates not only as a linguistic phenomenon, but also as an interactional strategy shaped by interpersonal sensitivity and social considerations. In this context, meaning is constructed through the relationship between the utterance, the situational background, and the social dynamics between the speakers.

#### Data 2

Rachel: "What do your parents do?"

Nick: "Nothing interesting."

#### Context

This interaction occurs when Rachel continues asking Nick about his family before accompanying him to Singapore. At this point, Rachel still has very limited knowledge about Nick's social and family background, while Nick appears reluctant to reveal the actual status and influence of his family. The conversation takes place in a casual and intimate situation, but the indirectness of Nick's response suggests an attempt to avoid discussing his family's privileged social position explicitly.

#### Interpretation

Nick's response flouts the Maxim of Quantity because he provides significantly less information than Rachel expects. Instead of explaining his parents' occupations, he gives a brief and dismissive answer that conceals more than it reveals. The expression "nothing interesting" cannot be interpreted literally within the context of the film, since Nick's family is known to possess considerable economic and social influence. This creates a gap between

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the expected response and the information actually provided, encouraging Rachel to infer that certain information is being intentionally withheld.

The implicature emerges through Nick's strategic reduction of information. By minimizing the importance of his family background, he avoids emphasizing his privileged social position and prevents the interaction from becoming uncomfortable. This indirect response functions not only as an attempt to control the flow of information, but also as a way of maintaining relational closeness and a sense of normalcy within the interaction. In this context, the utterance demonstrates how particularized conversational implicature operates through the tension between literal expression and underlying social reality.

### Data 3

Rachel: "I want to know what I'm getting into."

Nick: "My family is like anybody else's."

#### Context

This interaction occurs when Rachel seeks reassurance before meeting Nick's family in Singapore. At this point, Rachel becomes increasingly concerned about the unfamiliar social environment she is about to enter, while Nick continues to avoid revealing the true nature of his family background and social status.

#### Interpretation

Nick's response flouts the Maxim of Quantity because it provides only a vague and generalized description instead of the specific information Rachel expects. The phrase "like anybody else's" minimizes the uniqueness and social influence of his family, despite the fact that their social position is far from ordinary within the context of the film. As a result, the response fails to adequately address Rachel's concern and creates a gap between what is expected and what is actually communicated.

The implicature emerges through this intentional generalization. Rachel is expected to infer that Nick is withholding important information about his family and the social environment she will encounter. Rather than directly describing the complexity of his family background, Nick presents it as ordinary in order to reduce potential tension within the interaction. This strategy allows him to manage Rachel's expectations while simultaneously concealing the social hierarchy surrounding his family. In this context, the utterance demonstrates how particularized conversational implicature functions as an interactional strategy for maintaining relational comfort and controlling sensitive social information.

### Flouting of the Maxim of Quality

The flouting of the Maxim of Quality occurs when speakers say something that is not intended to be taken literally, often through exaggeration, irony, or figurative expression. In the data, such instances tend to appear in situations where speakers convey evaluation, attitude, or stance indirectly, especially in interactions shaped by social positioning and cultural expectations.

### Data 1

Ormsby: "Try Chinatown."

Felicity: "You can explore Hell."

#### Context

This exchange occurs in a hotel setting where Felicity experiences discriminatory treatment after being dismissed and redirected because of her appearance and ethnic background. Ormsby's remark carries a condescending implication, positioning Felicity as someone who does not belong in the luxurious environment.

#### Interpretation

Felicity's response flouts the Maxim of Quality because the expression "explore Hell" is clearly not intended to be interpreted literally. Instead, the utterance functions as an exaggerated and emotionally charged response to the discriminatory treatment she receives.

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The hyperbolic expression signals strong rejection and hostility toward Ormsby's dismissive attitude rather than providing a factual statement.

The implicature emerges through the contrast between the literal meaning and the intended evaluation conveyed by the speaker. Rather than confronting Ormsby directly through explicit accusation, Felicity expresses resistance indirectly through exaggeration. This allows her to communicate anger and rejection while maintaining the interactional form of a response.

In this context, the utterance also reflects a social power dynamic within the interaction. Felicity's response challenges the discriminatory positioning imposed on her and symbolically rejects the exclusion she experiences. The meaning is therefore constructed not only through exaggeration, but also through the tension between social judgment, emotional resistance, and indirect communication.

## Data 2

Kerry: "They're different."

Rachel: "I'm so Chinese..."

### Context

This exchange takes place during a conversation about cultural identity and social expectations surrounding what it means to be "Chinese." Rachel is positioned as someone whose identity is being implicitly questioned because of her different cultural background and upbringing.

### Interpretation

Rachel's response flouts the Maxim of Quality because the statement "I'm so Chinese" is not intended to be interpreted literally. Instead, the utterance is delivered ironically to challenge the assumption that cultural identity can be measured according to a fixed standard. By overstating the expression, Rachel indirectly exposes the narrow expectation imposed on her within the interaction.

The implicature emerges through the contrast between the literal statement and the speaker's intended meaning. Rather than genuinely claiming cultural authenticity, Rachel uses irony to express discomfort with the categorization directed at her. The utterance invites the hearer to recognize that the issue being discussed is not simply identity itself, but the social expectations attached to it.

In this context, the implicature functions as a strategy of identity negotiation. Instead of openly confronting the assumption, Rachel responds indirectly in a way that allows her to resist the categorization while maintaining the flow of interaction. The meaning is therefore constructed through the tension between literal expression, cultural expectation, and Rachel's position within the social interaction.

## Data 3

Peik Lin: "They're crazy rich."

### Context

This utterance occurs when Peik Lin explains Nick's family background to Rachel before Rachel fully realizes the extent of their wealth and social influence. The conversation functions as an introduction to the elite social environment Rachel is about to enter.

### Interpretation

The expression "crazy rich" flouts the Maxim of Quality because it is clearly exaggerated rather than intended as a literal description. Instead of providing a precise explanation of Nick's family wealth, Peik Lin uses hyperbole to emphasize how extraordinary and overwhelming their financial status is. The exaggeration signals that the family's wealth exceeds ordinary social expectations.

The implicature emerges through this intensified expression, where the hearer is expected to interpret that Nick's family occupies an exceptionally privileged social position. Rather than functioning merely as a descriptive statement, the utterance also shapes Rachel's

perception of the social world surrounding Nick and prepares her for the differences she will encounter.

In this context, the implicature contributes to the construction of social hierarchy within the interaction. By describing the family in exaggerated terms, Peik Lin indirectly highlights the distance between Rachel's background and the elite environment associated with Nick's family. The utterance therefore functions not only to describe wealth, but also to frame the social boundaries and expectations embedded within the film's interactional setting.

### **Flouting of the Maxim of Relation**

The flouting of the Maxim of Relation occurs when a speaker gives a response that does not directly address the expected topic. In the data, this pattern often appears in situations where speakers avoid giving direct answers, especially in interactions shaped by hierarchy and control. Rather than responding explicitly, speakers shift the focus, allowing them to manage the flow of conversation and limit what is revealed.

#### **Data 1**

Jacqueline: "Who is she?"

Eleanor: "Return to the word of God."

#### *Context*

This interaction takes place in a formal family gathering where Rachel becomes the subject of conversation. Jacqueline expects Eleanor to explain Rachel's identity and background, particularly because Rachel's presence has begun attracting attention within the social environment.

#### *Interpretation*

Eleanor's response flouts the Maxim of Relation because it does not address Jacqueline's question directly. Instead of explaining who Rachel is, Eleanor shifts the conversation to an unrelated statement, creating a clear disconnect between the expected response and the utterance provided. The irrelevance of the response is intentional rather than accidental, signaling that Eleanor deliberately avoids engaging with the topic.

The implicature emerges through this refusal to participate in the discussion about Rachel. By redirecting the conversation, Eleanor indirectly communicates that Rachel is not someone she wishes to acknowledge or discuss openly within that setting. The absence of a direct answer therefore becomes meaningful, as the silence itself functions as a form of evaluation and exclusion.

In this context, the implicature reflects Eleanor's authority within the hierarchical family structure. She does not need to justify her refusal or provide clarification because her social position allows her to regulate the direction of the interaction. The utterance demonstrates how irrelevance can function as an interactional strategy for maintaining social boundaries and limiting recognition within a privileged social environment.

#### **Data 2**

Eleanor: "Are you bringing her?"

Nick: "How could you know?"

#### *Context*

This interaction occurs when Eleanor questions Nick about Rachel's presence before a family gathering. Eleanor expects a direct confirmation, placing Nick in a position where he is pressured to answer openly about his relationship and Rachel's involvement within the family environment.

#### *Interpretation*

Nick's response flouts the Maxim of Relation because it does not directly answer Eleanor's question. Instead of confirming or denying Rachel's presence, he introduces another question that shifts the focus of the interaction away from the expected response. This redirection creates a mismatch between the topic raised by Eleanor and Nick's actual reply.

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The implicature emerges through Nick's avoidance of direct confirmation. Rather than openly refusing Eleanor's authority, he indirectly resists the pressure embedded in her question by redirecting the conversation. The utterance suggests that the information is being intentionally withheld, not because Nick lacks an answer, but because he chooses not to provide it directly.

### **Flouting of the Maxim of Manner**

The flouting of the Maxim of Manner occurs when speakers do not present their message in a clear or straightforward way. Instead of being explicit, they rely on vague or indirect expressions that leave room for interpretation. In the data, this pattern is often linked to situations where speakers avoid giving precise information, particularly when clarity could expose sensitive details about social position or expectations.

#### **Data 1**

Rachel: "What business?"

Nick: "Real estate... other things."

#### *Context*

This interaction occurs when Rachel asks about Nick's family business in an attempt to better understand his family background. Rachel expects a clearer and more informative explanation, while Nick appears reluctant to disclose the full extent of his family's influence and activities.

#### *Interpretation*

Nick's response flouts the Maxim of Manner because the phrase "other things" creates ambiguity and leaves the explanation intentionally incomplete. Although he initially provides a general answer by mentioning "real estate," the continuation of the response lacks clarity and avoids specifying what the "other things" actually refer to. This makes the utterance vague and open to interpretation rather than straightforward and informative.

The implicature emerges through this strategic ambiguity. Instead of fully explaining his family's business activities, Nick limits the amount of accessible information while still appearing cooperative within the interaction. The vague expression suggests that there are additional aspects of his family's influence that he deliberately chooses not to explain directly.

In this context, the ambiguity functions as a way of managing sensitive social information. By avoiding a more explicit explanation, Nick prevents the conversation from exposing the full scale of his family's economic and social power. The utterance therefore demonstrates how vagueness can operate as an interactional strategy that allows the speaker to maintain politeness while simultaneously restricting access to information

#### **Data 2**

Rachel: "What's tonight?"

Nick: "It's a whole thing."

#### *Context*

This interaction occurs when Rachel asks about an upcoming family event before entering Nick's social environment in Singapore. Rachel expects a clearer explanation about the occasion, while Nick appears hesitant to describe the situation directly.

#### *Interpretation*

Nick's response flouts the Maxim of Manner because the phrase "a whole thing" is intentionally vague and does not provide any concrete explanation about the event. Rather than clarifying what will happen, the utterance replaces specific information with an ambiguous expression that leaves the meaning open to interpretation. As a result, Rachel is required to infer the significance of the event based on the surrounding context rather than the literal response itself.

The implicature emerges through the lack of clarity contained in the expression. By describing the event indirectly, Nick suggests that the situation is more complicated and significant than he explicitly states. The vague wording also minimizes the seriousness of the

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event while simultaneously implying that Rachel may not fully understand the social expectations attached to it.

In this context, the ambiguity functions as a form of emotional and interactional buffering. Instead of openly describing the pressure and complexity of the family gathering, Nick softens the situation through indirect language. The utterance therefore demonstrates how vagueness can be used to manage interpersonal tension and reduce the potential discomfort that might arise from explicit explanation.

### Data 3

Rachel: "Explain your family."

Nick: "You'll see."

#### Context

This interaction occurs when Rachel asks Nick to explain his family more clearly before meeting them in Singapore. Rachel expects a more informative response because she feels uncertain about the unfamiliar social environment she is about to enter, while Nick continues to avoid giving a direct explanation about his family background.

#### Interpretation

Nick's response flouts the Maxim of Manner because the phrase "you'll see" does not provide any immediate clarification or descriptive information. Instead of explaining his family directly, Nick postpones the explanation and leaves the meaning unresolved. The response is therefore intentionally unclear, requiring Rachel to wait and interpret the situation through future experience rather than explicit description.

The implicature emerges through this postponement of information. By delaying the explanation, Nick indirectly suggests that his family and social environment are too complex to be fully explained in advance. At the same time, the utterance indicates an unwillingness to disclose sensitive information openly within the interaction.

In this context, the lack of clarity functions as a strategy for controlling both timing and interpretation. Nick determines when Rachel will gain access to a fuller understanding of his family, allowing him to manage the flow of information within the relationship. The utterance therefore demonstrates how indirectness and ambiguity can operate as interactional strategies for maintaining control over sensitive social knowledge.

### Discussion

The findings demonstrate that particularized conversational implicature in *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018) depends heavily on contextual interpretation and cannot be understood solely through the literal meaning of the utterances. The implied meanings identified in the interactions become interpretable only when the hearer considers specific contextual conditions such as family hierarchy, interpersonal relationships, social expectations, emotional tension, and shared background knowledge. This confirms Grice's notion that particularized conversational implicature requires special contextual understanding in order for the intended meaning to be successfully inferred.

Across the findings, speakers frequently communicate meanings indirectly through the flouting of conversational maxims, yet the implicatures produced are highly dependent on the interactional situations surrounding the utterances. In the flouting of the Maxim of Quantity, for example, incomplete and generalized responses become meaningful because the hearer understands the hidden social realities behind the interaction. Nick's minimized descriptions of his family background cannot be interpreted literally, since the broader context of wealth, privilege, and social hierarchy shapes how the utterances are understood. Without that contextual knowledge, the intended implicature would not fully emerge.

Similarly, the findings show that implicatures generated through the flouting of the Maxim of Quality rely strongly on contextual and emotional interpretation. Ironic and exaggerated expressions such as "I'm so Chinese" and "You can explore Hell" carry meanings that extend beyond their literal forms. Their intended meanings become understandable only when interpreted in relation to discrimination, identity negotiation, emotional resistance, and

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cultural expectation within the interaction. This demonstrates that the implicatures are particularized because their interpretation depends entirely on the specific social and conversational context in which they occur.

The same pattern appears in the flouting of the Maxim of Relation and Maxim of Manner. Responses that appear irrelevant, ambiguous, or incomplete function meaningfully because the participants share contextual awareness regarding hierarchy, authority, and interpersonal tension. Indirect refusals, delayed explanations, and vague expressions require listeners to infer meanings through contextual understanding rather than explicit linguistic information. In this sense, the findings indicate that the implied meanings are not inherently contained within the utterances themselves, but emerge through interactional interpretation shaped by social context.

The study also reveals that particularized conversational implicature functions as a strategy for negotiating socially sensitive situations. Speakers frequently avoid direct communication when discussing issues related to status, family expectation, authority, and cultural identity. Through indirectness, characters are able to reduce interpersonal tension, maintain politeness, regulate emotional expression, and manage social positioning without explicitly stating their intentions. This suggests that particularized conversational implicature operates not only as a pragmatic phenomenon, but also as an interactional mechanism closely connected to hierarchy and relational management.

These findings support previous studies which argue that conversational implicature and maxim flouting are closely related to contextual interpretation in discourse (A' maliyah et al., 2023; Ainiyah & Sholichah, 2025b). However, while previous studies mainly focus on identifying implicature types and maxim flouting patterns, this study specifically highlights how particularized conversational implicature functions through context-dependent interpretation within socially structured interaction. The findings therefore extend previous research by emphasizing the role of contextual inference, relational dynamics, and social hierarchy in the construction of implied meaning.

Overall, the study demonstrates that meaning in *Crazy Rich Asians* is constructed through the interaction between language, context, and social relationship rather than through literal expression alone. The findings highlight that particularized conversational implicature becomes meaningful only when interpreted within specific interactional situations, where contextual understanding plays a central role in shaping communication and social meaning.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that particularized conversational implicature in *\*Crazy Rich Asians\** (2018) is highly dependent on contextual interpretation and interactional conditions. The findings reveal that implied meanings are generated through the flouting of conversational maxims and can only be understood by considering factors such as social hierarchy, interpersonal relationships, emotional tension, cultural expectations, and shared background knowledge. The flouting of the maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner serves various interactional functions, including minimizing sensitive information, negotiating identity, avoiding confrontation, and managing social relationships indirectly. Theoretically, this study contributes to pragmatic research by reinforcing Grice's theory of conversational implicature and highlighting the importance of social and contextual factors in interpreting implied meaning. The findings suggest that particularized conversational implicature functions not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as an interactional strategy shaped by social dynamics and discourse contexts. Practically, the study offers insights for discourse analysis and language learning by demonstrating how indirect meanings are communicated and interpreted in socially sensitive situations. However, the analysis is limited to a single film and a restricted set of scripted utterances. Future research is recommended to examine particularized conversational implicature in real-life interactions, digital communication, intercultural settings, and other discourse contexts.

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