

**COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE AND POLITENESS PRINCIPLE IN HARRY
POTTER FILMS AND THE CHRONICLE OF NARNIA**

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ABSTRACT; *The Harry Potter films, adapted from J.K. Rowling’s popular book series, offer rich dialogue that reflects complex relationships and character development. This paper examines how characters in both the Harry Potter and The Chronicles of Narnia film series adhere to or violate the Cooperative Principle (CP) and Politeness Principle (PP). By applying these pragmatic theories, this study conducts a comparative analysis of selected dialogues to uncover the implicit meanings, relational dynamics, and narrative functions of conversational behavior in both series. The findings reveal notable contrasts in the use of politeness and cooperation strategies, shaped by each story’s tone and character roles. This comparative perspective provides deeper insights into how language reflects values and power across different fantasy narratives.*

Keywords: *Pragmatics, Cooperative Principle, Politeness Principle, Comparative Pragmatics, Fantasy Film Dialogue.*

ABSTRAK; Film-film Harry Potter, yang diadaptasi dari serial buku populer karya J.K. Rowling, menawarkan dialog yang kaya yang mencerminkan hubungan kompleks dan perkembangan karakter. Makalah ini mengkaji bagaimana karakter-karakter dalam serial film Harry Potter dan The Chronicles of Narnia mematuhi atau melanggar Prinsip Kooperatif (KP) dan Prinsip Kesopanan (PP). Dengan menerapkan teori-teori pragmatik ini, penelitian ini melakukan analisis komparatif terhadap dialog-dialog terpilih untuk mengungkap makna tersirat, dinamika relasional, dan fungsi naratif dari perilaku percakapan di kedua serial tersebut. Temuan penelitian ini mengungkapkan kontras yang mencolok dalam penggunaan strategi kesantunan dan kerja sama, yang dibentuk oleh nada dan peran karakter di setiap cerita. Perspektif komparatif ini memberikan wawasan yang lebih mendalam tentang bagaimana bahasa mencerminkan nilai-nilai dan kekuasaan di berbagai narasi fantasi.

Kata Kunci: Pragmatik, Prinsip Kooperatif, Prinsip Kesopanan, Pragmatik Komparatif, Dialog Film Fantasi.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Fantasy films often convey not only imaginative worlds but also rich interpersonal dynamics through character dialogue. Among the most influential are Harry Potter by J.K. Rowling and The Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis—two fantasy series that differ in tone, theme, and character interactions. This study compares these two series by analyzing selected film dialogues through the lens of two pragmatic theories: the Cooperative Principle (CP) by H.P. Grice and the Politeness Principle (PP) by Geoffrey Leech. By exploring how characters in both series follow or violate these principles, this research aims to uncover how pragmatic choices reflect differing values, character roles, and narrative strategies. The comparison offers insight into how language in fantasy films can be used to assert power, express emotion, and shape social relations.

1.2 Significance of the Research

This study contributes to the field of pragmatics by offering a comparative analysis of two iconic fantasy series: Harry Potter and The Chronicles of Narnia. While both series are often analyzed for their themes and literary value, their dialogues reveal significant differences in how characters manage politeness and cooperation. By applying the Cooperative Principle and Politeness Principle, this study aims to uncover how these pragmatic strategies reflect character roles, values, and narrative tone. The comparison not only highlights the distinctive communication styles between the two series but also deepens our understanding of how language is used to shape relationships and convey meaning in fantasy films.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Previous Studies on Harry Potter And Narnia

Several studies have examined the literary and cultural significance of Harry Potter and The Chronicles of Narnia individually. Smith (2020) analyzed the blend of folklore and modern elements in Harry Potter, while Zhao (2015) explored the role of humor and irony in its dialogue. In contrast, Lewis's Narnia series has often been studied for its religious symbolism and allegorical tone. However, there is limited research that compares these two

series from a linguistic or pragmatic perspective. Most previous studies focus on themes, morality, or genre characteristics, leaving a gap in understanding how dialogue functions differently between the two. This study seeks to fill that gap by applying pragmatic theories to compare the language used by characters in both film series, particularly in terms of cooperation, politeness, and implied meaning.

2.2 Pragmatic Theories in Literature and Film

Pragmatic theories have long been applied to analyze character dialogue in both literary texts and films. Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975), which includes the maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner, helps explain how speakers generate meaning through cooperation or strategic violation. Similarly, Leech's Politeness Principle (1983) identifies strategies that maintain social harmony, such as tact, modesty, and agreement. These theories offer tools for examining how language reflects relationships, social roles, and conflict.

In the context of comparative analysis, these frameworks are especially useful for identifying differences in communicative behavior across narratives. While Harry Potter often features tension-driven violations for dramatic effect, *The Chronicles of Narnia* tends to favor more harmonious and didactic exchanges. By applying CP and PP to selected scenes from both series, this study explores how pragmatic principles are employed differently depending on narrative goals, character dynamics, and genre tone.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Cooperative Principle

The Cooperative Principle, introduced by H.P. Grice (1975), suggests that effective communication relies on mutual cooperation between participants. This principle is structured into four maxims: the maxim of quantity, which advises speakers to provide as much information as needed—no more and no less; the maxim of quality, which requires them to say only what they believe to be true and supported by evidence; the maxim of relevance, which ensures that contributions are pertinent to the discussion; and the maxim of manner, which emphasizes clarity and the avoidance of ambiguity. When any of these maxims are flouted or violated, it can lead to conversational implicature, where meaning is

implied rather than directly stated—often used for dramatic, humorous, or strategic purposes in fiction and film.

3.2 Politeness Principle

The Politeness Principle, developed by Geoffrey Leech (1983), focuses on the social aspects of language use, particularly the ways speakers maintain harmony and avoid conflict. Leech identified six maxims that guide polite interaction: the tact maxim (minimize cost and maximize benefit to others), the generosity maxim (minimize benefit to self and maximize cost to self), the approbation maxim (maximize praise and minimize criticism of others), the modesty maxim (minimize self-praise and maximize self-deprecation), the agreement maxim (maximize agreement and minimize disagreement), and the sympathy maxim (maximize concern and minimize antipathy toward others). These maxims function within cultural and situational contexts and are especially useful in analyzing how characters navigate power relations and social dynamics in narrative texts.

ANALYSIS OF THE VIOLATIONS OF THE COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE AND POLITENESS PRINCIPLE IN HARRY POTTER FILMS

The dialogues in the Harry Potter film series frequently reflect violations of Grice's Cooperative Principle and Leech's Politeness Principle. These violations are not random; they often serve narrative functions, reveal character traits, and create dramatic or humorous effects. This section analyzes selected scenes that demonstrate how such pragmatic deviations enhance the storytelling and character dynamics in the series.

4.1 Violations of the Cooperative Principle

4.1.1 Violation of the Quantity Maxim

In *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, Harry confronts Dumbledore with the question, "Why didn't you tell me sooner?" to which Dumbledore replies, "You weren't ready." This response violates the maxim of quantity, as Dumbledore provides less information than expected. His omission is deliberate—it protects Harry from premature emotional burden and reflects the recurring theme of adult secrecy. Similarly, Sirius Black often withholds details about the prophecy or the Order, reinforcing the recurring power imbalance between adults and students.

4.1.2 Violation of the Quality Maxim

Ron Weasley, known for his loyalty and optimism, frequently violates the quality maxim to comfort others. In one scene, Hermione asks, “We’ll be fine, won’t we?” and Ron answers, “Sure, we’ve got this.” Although he cannot know for certain, his reassurance, though false, serves a relational function. This shows how violations of truth can support emotional bonding and reduce anxiety in uncertain situations.

4.1.3 Violation of the Relevance Maxim

Luna Lovegood is a character whose speech often drifts from conventional expectations. In response to a serious question about whether they’ll win the battle, Luna says, “Things we lose have a way of coming back to us in the end.” Though poetic, this violates the relevance maxim by diverting the topic. However, it reflects Luna’s philosophical worldview and encourages Harry to reflect on hope and loss.

4.1.4 Violation of the Manner Maxim

Professor Trelawney’s prophetic statements often lack clarity, as seen when she warns about “The Grim.” Her vague and overly dramatic style violates the maxim of manner. This not only enhances her mystical persona but also builds suspense and fear among the students. Voldemort, in contrast, uses indirect threats and cryptic phrases like “There is no good or evil, only power,” which likewise obscure his true intentions and manipulate others.

4.2 Violations of the Politeness Principle

4.2.1 Violation of the Tact Maxim

Severus Snape frequently violates the tact maxim, particularly in his interactions with Harry. In a scene where he says, “Foolish boy! What do you know of sacrifice?”, Snape prioritizes his own anger and pain over minimizing harm. However, this rudeness also masks a deeper truth: his harshness stems from unresolved grief and duty, not hatred alone.

4.2.2 Violation of the Modesty Maxim

Gilderoy Lockhart openly boasts about his fabricated achievements: “It’s all in my books—great accomplishments!” This exaggeration violates the modesty maxim. Rather

than being self-deprecating, Lockhart seeks validation and fame, which later unravels when his lies are exposed—making the violation a tool for comic relief and critique of vanity.

4.2.3 Violation of the Sympathy Maxim

Draco Malfoy’s language often disregards sympathy, as in the threat, “You’ll be next, Mudbloods.” This shows his alignment with Voldemort’s ideology and his attempt to establish dominance through cruelty. Bellatrix Lestrange, too, mocks Hermione’s identity while torturing her, clearly violating both tact and sympathy, enhancing her portrayal as a sadistic antagonist.

4.3 Comparative Glimpse: Narnia vs. Harry Potter

While the Harry Potter films feature frequent violations of the Cooperative and Politeness Principles to create tension or express emotional complexity, The Chronicles of Narnia presents a contrasting approach. Characters such as Aslan, Lucy, and Peter often maintain politeness and clarity, in alignment with the didactic and allegorical tone of the series.

For example, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Lucy says to Mr. Tumnus, “You’re the nicest faun I’ve ever met.” This reflects the approbation maxim of the Politeness Principle, where Lucy emphasizes praise and warmth rather than critique. It also demonstrates tact and sympathy, contributing to the friendly and trusting relationship between them.

Another instance occurs when Aslan responds to Edmund’s betrayal with calmness and compassion. Rather than scolding him directly, Aslan states, “What’s done is done. There is no need to speak to Edmund about what is past.” This avoids direct confrontation and exemplifies multiple politeness maxims: tact (avoiding blame), sympathy (showing understanding), and modesty (not elevating himself). Aslan’s communication style contrasts sharply with Dumbledore’s tendency to obscure the truth or Snape’s confrontational tone.

In terms of the Cooperative Principle, characters in Narnia generally follow the conversational maxims closely. Relevance and clarity are maintained even during battle scenes, where commands are concise and purposeful. For example, Peter’s statement, “To the battlefield. We fight for Narnia!” is direct and cooperative, aiming to unify and motivate.

There is little use of sarcasm, deception, or hidden meanings—elements that are often present in Harry Potter.

This contrast shows that while Harry Potter uses pragmatic violations to reflect moral ambiguity and interpersonal tension, Narnia uses cooperation and politeness to reinforce themes of redemption, faith, and clarity. These differences highlight the impact of genre, authorial intent, and moral tone on the use of language in fantasy narratives.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that the characters in Harry Potter and The Chronicles of Narnia exhibit markedly different uses of the Cooperative and Politeness Principles. In Harry Potter, violations of Grice's and Leech's maxims are frequently used to create dramatic tension, reveal hidden intentions, and deepen character complexity. Characters like Dumbledore, Snape, and Ron often flout these principles—sometimes to withhold truth, sometimes to provide emotional comfort or assert authority.

In contrast, the Narnia films portray a more consistent adherence to pragmatic norms. Characters such as Aslan and Lucy communicate with clarity, politeness, and emotional restraint. Their dialogue reflects a narrative tone centered on redemption, harmony, and moral clarity—mirroring the Christian allegory that underpins the series. Violations of the maxims are rare and often occur for protective or moral reasons rather than manipulation.

By comparing these two series, this study reveals how pragmatic strategies reflect deeper narrative structures, character roles, and thematic goals. Language is not only a tool for dialogue but a reflection of each world's values. This comparative analysis contributes to the broader understanding of how pragmatics functions in fantasy films and literature. Future research could expand this study by including additional fantasy franchises or by exploring cross-cultural interpretations of politeness and cooperation in global cinema.

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