

Flouted Maxims Used by the Host of *Purbasari Indonesia* in TikTok Live Shopping

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the flouting of conversational maxims in TikTok Live shopping by *Purbasari Indonesia* using Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle. A qualitative descriptive method was applied, with data taken from a TikTok Live session conducted on September 13, 2025. Thirty utterances produced by the host were analyzed. The findings show that the host flouted the maxims of Quantity, Quality, and Relation. These floutings appeared through repetitive explanations, exaggerated promotional claims, and sudden topic shifts to maintain interaction. However, the maxim of Manner was generally observed, as the host used clear and easy-to-understand language. The study shows that flouting conversational maxims in TikTok Live serves persuasive and interactional purposes in live-commerce settings.

Keywords: advertisement, flouted maxims, non-luxury brand, persuasive, TikTok Live

INTRODUCTION

Advertising functions as a form of persuasive discourse that strategically employs language to influence consumer perception and purchasing behavior. With the advancement of digital media, advertising has shifted from static, one-way communication in traditional platforms to interactive and real-time engagement on social media (Lin et al., 2022). This shift has increased the prominence of spoken language, particularly in live-streaming contexts, where advertisers must continuously interact with audiences while promoting products.

One platform that exemplifies this transformation is TikTok Live. TikTok Live allows sellers to promote products through live video broadcasts while simultaneously engaging with viewers via comment features and instant feedback (Abadi & Ivoniasari, 2024). Previous studies indicate that live-streaming commerce enhances audience engagement and purchase intention because real-time interaction is perceived as more authentic and persuasive than pre-recorded advertising content (Barta et al., 2023; Hu & Chaudhry, 2020).

In TikTok Live shopping sessions, the host plays a crucial communicative role. The host is required not only to explain product information but also to respond to audience comments, manage topic shifts, and maintain continuous speech to prevent silence that may cause viewers to leave the session (Mubarok et al., 2024). These communicative demands often lead hosts to prioritize engagement and persuasion over strict adherence to conversational norms, resulting in strategic language use shaped by the live-commerce environment.

From a pragmatic perspective, such language use can be examined through Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, which proposes four conversational maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner. When speakers deliberately fail to observe these maxims while still expecting listeners to infer the intended meaning, they are said to flout the maxims, producing conversational implicatures (Grice, 1975; Cutting & Fordyce, 2020). In advertising discourse,

flouting maxims does not indicate communicative failure but rather serves as a persuasive strategy to attract attention, emphasize key messages, and guide audience interpretation.

Previous studies have demonstrated that flouting conversational maxims is common in advertising. Al Fajri (2017) found that English and Indonesian printed advertisements frequently flouted the maxims of Quantity and Relation to create suggestive meanings, while Maulida (2015) showed that beauty advertisements often flouted the maxim of Quality through exaggerated claims. However, these studies largely focus on printed and non-interactive media, leaving spoken and interactive advertising contexts, such as live-commerce platforms, underexplored.

To address this gap, the present study focuses on *Purbasari Indonesia*, a non-luxury local beauty brand that actively utilizes TikTok Live for product promotion and sales. Using Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle as the analytical framework, this study aims to identify the types of conversational maxims flouted by the host of *Purbasari Indonesia* during a TikTok Live shopping session and to explain how these floutings function within real-time advertising discourse. By extending pragmatic analysis to live, spoken, and interactive advertising, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of persuasive language use in contemporary digital commerce.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method to analyze how conversational maxims are flouted in live-commerce advertising. The data were taken from a TikTok Live shopping session by *Purbasari Indonesia* on September 13, 2025. The main data consists of the host's spoken utterances, because the host is the main speaker who promotes the products and interacts with viewers. The live session was observed and transcribed, and thirty utterances were selected as the data because the patterns of maxim flouting had begun to repeat with no new types of deviation emerging beyond this number. These utterances were chosen because they show possible flouting of conversational maxims, such as repetition, exaggeration, giving too much information, or changing topics suddenly.

The data were analyzed using Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, which includes the maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner, supported by the explanation of flouting maxims from Cutting and Fordyce (2020). Each utterance was analyzed to identify which maxim was flouted and to explain the implied meaning in the TikTok Live context. The analysis focused on how flouting maxims helps the host keep audience attention and persuade viewers to buy the products during the live session.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study analyzed thirty utterances produced by the host of *Purbasari Indonesia* during a TikTok Live shopping session. The analysis shows that the host flouted three conversational maxims: Quantity, Quality, and Relation. These floutings appeared repeatedly throughout the live session and functioned as persuasive strategies rather than communication failures. Although the maxim of Manner was not flouted, it played an important role in supporting effective and accessible communication. Overall, the findings suggest that flouting conversational maxims in TikTok Live is closely connected to the platform's real-time interaction, marketing goals, and the communicative demands placed on the host.

Maxim of Quantity

Customer 15: wajah et berapa k

[Customer 15: Which showcase is for the face, sis?]

Host: Wajah etalase berapa kak? Wajah eh... mencerahkan wajah? Kita kalau untuk mencerahkan wajah ada dua kakak, ada di serum sama ada di moist. Kalau moist nya itu dia tuh udah bisa melembabkan kak, mau buat moist ya? Kalau moist ini bisa untuk pakai daily. Jadi kalau kamu mau mencerahkan wajah bisa banget dicheck out moist-nya. Check out nya ini yang ini, yang Whitening Moisturizing with Cybright gitu ya, karena yang ini tuh udah 7x active whitening jadi sudah bisa untuk membantu mencerahkan. Jadi gak cuma bisa melembabkan aja, tapi sudah bisa membantu mencerahkan gitu ya. Dia tuh udah bisa untuk membantu meratakan warna kulit, menyamarkan flek-flek hitam, dia juga udah bisa untuk jadi.. mencerahkan. Jadi buat si moist yang warna ungu-nya ini, dia gak cuman bisa untuk melembabkan aja tapi sudah bisa mencerahkan, meratakan warna kulit, menyamarkan flek-flek hitam, dia juga udah non-alcohol, jadi bisa untuk semua jenis kulit dan dia bisa memberikan efek kulit cerah, kulit glowing. Bisa untuk pakai daily, bisa pakai siang malam, jadi kalau kamu mau mencerahkan wajah bisa banget ambil yang moisturizer yang ini.

[Host: Which showcase is for the face? For face brightening? We have two options for brightening the face: serum and moisturizer. The moisturizer can help moisturize the skin. Do you want the moisturizer? This moisturizer can be used daily. So, if you want to brighten your face, you can go ahead and check out this moisturizer. This one is the Whitening Moisturizing with Cybright. It already has 7x active whitening, so it can help brighten the skin. **So, it doesn't only moisturize but also helps to brighten. It can also help even out skin tone and reduce dark spots. So, this purple moisturizer doesn't just moisturize, but also brightens, evens out skin tone, and reduces dark spots. It is also non-alcohol, so it is suitable for all skin types and can give a brighter, glowing skin effect. It can be used daily, both day and night. So, if you want to brighten your face, you can choose this moisturizer.**]

In the excerpt above, a viewer asks a simple and direct question about which showcase contains facial products. Instead of answering briefly, the host focuses on one facial moisturizer and provides a long explanation. She repeatedly mentions similar benefits, such as *mencerahkan* (brightening), *melembabkan* (moisturizing), evening skin tone, and reducing dark spots. In addition, she repeatedly states that the product can be used daily, both in the morning and at night.

This response provides more information than required and therefore flouts the maxim of Quantity. According to Cutting and Fordyce (2020), this maxim is flouted when a speaker gives more information than necessary. Rather than simply guiding the viewer to the correct showcase, the host extends her explanation without adding new or essential details. The repetition makes the utterance over-informative and shifts the focus from answering the viewer's question to promoting a specific product. This suggests that the host's main goal is not only to inform but also to persuade viewers by reinforcing key product benefits.

In the context of TikTok Live selling, repetition plays an important persuasive role. Mubarok et al. (2024) explain that hosts often continue speaking to avoid silence, as silence may reduce engagement and cause viewers to leave the live session. Repeating product benefits helps maintain attention, ensures that late-joining viewers receive the information, and increases message recall.

This finding supports previous studies showing that advertisers frequently flout the maxim of Quantity to strengthen persuasion and emphasize product value (Al Fajri, 2017; Maulida, 2015). In *Purbasari Indonesia's* TikTok Live, over-information functions as a strategic tool to sustain interaction while continuously highlighting product advantages.

Maxim of Quality

*Host: Buat yang baru gabung selamat bergabung ya. Boleh banget ya dibantu follow, dibantu tap-tap layarnya. Kalau di cari apa-cari apa. Kalau kalian mau aku bantu spill-spill nya boleh banget ya tinggal di komen-komen aja **mumpung aku masih ada live nya ya jadi masih ada harga promo dan special price nya. Jangan sampai gak di check-out, gak di payment sebelum harganya kembali normal gitu ya.***

[Host: For those of you who just joined, welcome! Don't forget to follow and tap-tap the screen. If you're looking for something, just let me know. If you want me to spill the details, just comment, **while I'm still live, there are promo prices and special prices. Make sure you check out and pay before the price goes back to normal.**]

In the interaction presented above, the host states that the promo price is only available during the live session and urges viewers to check out before the price "returns to normal." This utterance flouts the maxim of Quality, which requires speakers to provide information that is true and supported by sufficient evidence (Grice, 1975).

Cutting and Fordyce (2020) explain that the maxim of Quality is flouted when speakers use exaggeration or statements that should not be interpreted literally. In this case, the host does not provide clear information about when the price will change or whether it will actually increase after the live session. The phrase "before the price goes back to normal" functions as hyperbole. In practice, the price remains the same after the live ends, indicating that the statement is not intended as factual information. Instead, it creates a sense of urgency and emotional pressure on viewers. Such exaggerated expressions are common in advertising discourse, similar to phrases like "last chance" or "limited time only" (Yang, 2019). The main purpose is not accuracy, but persuasion and encouraging immediate action.

In TikTok Live selling, urgency-driven language helps maintain audience attention and motivates quick purchasing decisions (Mubarak et al., 2024). This finding aligns with previous research showing that non-luxury beauty brands often flout the maxim of Quality through exaggeration to appeal to mass audiences (Maulida, 2015; Kapferer & Valette-Florence, 2018; Ko et al., 2019). For *Purbasari Indonesia*, such exaggeration supports its energetic, approachable, and sales-oriented communication style.

Maxim of Relation

The maxim of Relation is flouted when a speaker provides information that is not directly relevant to the current topic (Grice, 1975). In these situations, listeners are expected to infer the speaker's intention behind the seemingly unrelated utterance.

*Host: Buat yang baru gabung selamat bergabung ya. Boleh banget ya dibantu follow, dibantu tap-tap layarnya. Kalau di cari apa-cari apa. Kalau kalian mau aku bantu spill-spill nya boleh banget ya tinggal di komen-komen aja **mumpung aku masih ada live nya ya jadi masih ada harga promo dan special price nya. Jangan sampai gak di check-out, gak di payment sebelum harganya kembali normal gitu ya.***

[Host: For those of you who just joined, welcome! Don't forget to follow and tap-tap the screen. If you're looking for something, just let me know. If you want me to spill the details, just comment, **while I'm still live, there are promo prices and special prices. Make sure you check out and pay before the price goes back to normal.**]

The interaction shows that the host suddenly promotes a hair tonic while she was previously discussing a hair serum. This shift happens without a transition or a question from the audience, making the utterance appear unrelated to the ongoing topic. Because the host moves from one product to another without a clear connection, the utterance flouts the maxim of

Relation. From a conversational perspective, the response does not directly follow the previous discussion and may initially seem off-topic. However, this topic shift is intentional and strategic. In the TikTok Live environment, silence can reduce engagement and cause viewers to leave. By introducing another product, the host keeps the conversation active even when there are no new comments.

Mubarok et al. (2024) note that live-selling hosts often change topics or promote different products during quiet moments to maintain interaction. Therefore, in *Purbasari Indonesia's* TikTok Live, flouting the maxim of Relation functions as a strategy to sustain engagement, increase product exposure, and encourage viewers to continue watching and browsing available items.

Maxim of Manner

The maxim of Manner is flouted when a speaker's utterance is unclear, ambiguous, or difficult to understand (Grice, 1975). However, in *Purbasari Indonesia's* TikTok Live session, the host generally communicates in a clear and direct manner. The analysis shows no evidence of flouting this maxim, as the host's explanations are simple, structured, and easy to follow. The absence of flouting the maxim of Manner appears to be related to *Purbasari Indonesia's* positioning as a non-luxury brand. To reach a broad audience, the brand relies on friendly and straightforward language that avoids confusion. This allows viewers from different backgrounds to easily understand the product information, even if they join the live session late.

This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that advertisers tend to flout the maxims of Quantity or Quality for persuasive purposes, while maintaining the maxim of Manner to ensure clarity (Al Fajri, 2017; Maulida, 2015). In TikTok Live contexts, clear communication also helps build trust and supports viewers' purchasing decisions, as audiences primarily join live sessions to gain practical and understandable product information (Hwang & Yoon, 2023; Zhang, 2023).

CONCLUSION

This study examined the flouted conversational maxims used by the host of *Purbasari Indonesia* during a TikTok Live shopping session using Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle. The findings show that the host flouted the maxims of Quantity, Quality, and Relation, while generally observing the maxim of Manner to avoid confusion and ambiguity. These floutings were not accidental but functioned as strategic language choices shaped by the demands of live commerce and the brand's non-luxury positioning.

The maxim of Quantity was flouted through long and repetitive explanations that repeatedly emphasized product benefits and usage. The maxim of Quality was flouted through exaggerated claims about promotional prices, which created a sense of urgency and encouraged immediate purchasing. The maxim of Relation was flouted when the host shifted topics to promote other products without direct relevance to audience questions, mainly to avoid silence and keep the live session active. In contrast, the maxim of Manner was maintained, as the host consistently used clear and simple language to ensure that viewers could easily understand the information.

Overall, the findings indicate that flouting conversational maxims in *Purbasari Indonesia's* TikTok Live session serves persuasive and interactional purposes rather than causing communication failure. The host's language reflects a warm, energetic, and accessible communication style that supports close engagement with viewers and encourages real-time

purchasing. This study contributes to pragmatics research by showing how conversational maxims operate in interactive digital selling contexts and suggests that future studies could examine more live sessions or explore audience responses to gain deeper insight into language use in live-commerce environments.

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