

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Review of Literature

1. Pragmatics

This section elaborates the theoretical foundations that frame this study, including pragmatics, implicature, conversational implicature, and their relevance in film dialogues. Pragmatics is a significant branch of linguistics that focuses on meaning derived from context and speaker intention rather than literal interpretation. As defined by Yule (1996), pragmatics concerns itself with meaning as communicated by a speaker and understood by a listener in specific contexts. Levinson (1983) emphasizes that pragmatics explores the connection between linguistic forms and their users, underlining the importance of context and shared background knowledge in interpreting utterances. Based on the theory above, it can be understood that pragmatics provides an essential framework for analyzing how speakers convey intended meanings beyond the literal interpretation of their words. In the context of movie dialogues, pragmatic analysis helps reveal the relationship between utterances, situational context, and speaker intentions, making it particularly relevant for examining conversational implicatures in *Before We Go*.

Recent studies further emphasize the importance of pragmatics as a foundational framework for analyzing meaning in communication. According to Huang (2014) argues that pragmatics is the systematic study of meaning in language use, emphasizing that speakers and hearers rely on contextual information, real-

world knowledge, and inference to communicate meanings that extend beyond the literal content of utterances. According to Taguchi (2020) highlights that pragmatic competence enables interlocutors to navigate implied meanings effectively in real-life interactions. Pragmatics provides analytical tools to explain how meaning is dynamically constructed through interaction rather than encoded solely in linguistic forms. These perspectives strengthen the position of pragmatics as the theoretical basis of this study. It can be concluded that pragmatics provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how meaning is communicated and interpreted through context, speaker intention, and shared knowledge. Therefore, pragmatic theory is highly relevant to this study as it enables the researcher to analyze conversational implicatures and uncover the implied meanings conveyed by the characters in the movie *Before We Go*.

2. The Concept of Implicature

Implicature plays a central role in explaining how speakers often convey meanings indirectly. Grice (1975) introduced the concept of implicature to explain that what speakers mean often extends beyond what is explicitly stated. This indirectness enriches conversation, making it more natural and contextually meaningful.

Contemporary research continues to support Grice's concept of implicature as a fundamental mechanism in indirect communication. According to Allan and Jaszczolt (2022), implicature remains central in explaining how listeners infer unstated meanings based on contextual assumptions. Studies by Haugh (2012) argues that the interpretation of implicature is shaped by shared knowledge,

sociocultural understanding, and common ground negotiated between participants during interaction. These studies confirm the continued relevance of implicature in pragmatic analysis. Therefore, the concept of implicature provides a valuable analytical framework for examining how characters in *Before We Go* convey meanings beyond their literal utterances during interpersonal interactions.

3. Conversational Implicature

Conversational implicature is a fundamental concept in pragmatics that explains how speakers convey meanings beyond the literal interpretation of their utterances. Grice (1975) defines conversational implicature as meaning implied by the speaker and inferred by the listener, even though it is not explicitly stated. This concept shows that communication is not always direct, as speakers often rely on indirect ways to express their intentions. In many situations, what is meant can differ from what is actually said, requiring listeners to interpret the intended message. Conversational implicature frequently occurs in both spoken and media discourse, emphasizing its relevance in real-life communication. Therefore, understanding how such implied meaning is interpreted becomes essential, which leads to the importance of the interpretative process in communication.

The interpretation of conversational implicature depends largely on shared assumptions and mutual background knowledge between speakers and listeners. Thomas (1995) states that successful communication occurs when both participants are able to recognize implied meanings based on context. Without this shared understanding, the intended meaning may not be fully grasped or may even lead to

misunderstanding. This indicates that meaning is not only contained in linguistic forms, but also shaped by contextual and cognitive factors. Studies by Sari (2022) and Hidayat (2020) found that learners often struggle to interpret implicatures due to limited contextual awareness and pragmatic competence. Building on this idea, conversational implicature becomes more apparent in natural interactions where context plays a central role, such as in dialogue-based discourse.

Conversational implicature is especially significant in dialogue-based discourse, such as in films, where characters frequently communicate indirectly. In film conversations, characters often express emotions, intentions, and attitudes without stating them explicitly. Research by Nugroho (2021) and Pratama (2019) demonstrates that film dialogues are rich sources of implicature, particularly in revealing character relationships and emotional tension. Considering this, it is important to understand the different types of implicature that emerge in such interactions.

There are two primary types of conversational implicature: generalized and particularized implicatures. Generalized conversational implicature refers to meanings that can be understood without requiring a highly specific context. These implicatures are usually based on general knowledge and commonly shared assumptions among speakers and listeners. For example, the statement “Some students passed the exam” typically implies that not all students passed (Grice, 1975). Research by Rahmawati (2020) indicates that generalized implicatures are more frequently found in casual conversations due to their ease of interpretation. In contrast to this more general form, another type of implicature requires deeper

contextual understanding. Particularized conversational implicature requires a specific context to derive the intended meaning accurately. The interpretation of this type depends heavily on situational factors and the shared understanding between participants. Yule (1996) provides an example in which the response “Well, the popcorn was good” to the question “Did you like the movie?” implies dissatisfaction, which can only be understood within that context. Studies by Wulandari (2021) and Saputra (2022) show that particularized implicatures are often used to convey subtle meanings such as irony or hidden criticism in conversations. In relation to this study, both generalized and particularized implicatures are analyzed within the interactions between the two main characters in *Before We Go*. This analysis aims to explore how each type of implicature is produced and interpreted in their conversations, as well as how these implicatures function in conveying implicit meanings and reflecting their interpersonal relationship.

4. Conversational Implicature in “*Before We Go*” Movie

Film dialogues serve as valuable data sources to explore conversational implicature because they mirror natural speech patterns. According to Dynel (2011), film dialogue often includes layered meanings and subtexts that reflect characters’ inner thoughts and social relationships. Conversational implicatures in films can reveal hidden emotions, sarcasm, and politeness strategies, thus adding depth to fictional conversations. Putriayu and Imperiani (2022) also argue that implicature enriches storytelling by making character interactions feel authentic and emotionally resonant.

The movie *Before We Go* (2014) provides an ideal context to study conversational implicature due to its narrative style that heavily depends on dialogue. The film follows two strangers, Nick and Brooke, whose story unfolds almost entirely through real-time conversation. This dialogue-driven narrative offers rich examples of indirectness, emotional nuance, and unspoken intentions. Analyzing such dialogue can uncover how characters subtly reveal their fears, desires, and vulnerabilities through implicature.

Understanding conversational implicature in film is essential to grasp how meaning is constructed beyond literal words. By analyzing how implicatures function in *Before We Go*, this study explores how characters negotiate closeness, reveal hidden feelings, and develop the story's emotional arc indirectly. This analysis contributes to a broader understanding of indirect communication in real-life inspired dialogue.

5. Communicative Function

The communicative functions of conversational implicature play a central role in understanding how meaning is conveyed indirectly in interaction. Grice (1975) explains that speakers often imply meanings beyond what is explicitly stated by observing or flouting conversational maxims. These implied meanings are then interpreted by listeners through contextual inference and shared knowledge. Yule (1996) further emphasizes that implicature is closely related to speaker intention and listener interpretation within a specific context. In this sense, communicative function refers to the purposes served by implicature in conveying meaning beyond

the literal level. Previous studies, such as Dynel (2011) highlight that implicature in film dialogue functions as a strategic tool to express meanings implicitly while maintaining natural interaction. Based on this understanding, it is important to examine how these functions are realized in different forms within conversational exchanges.

One major function of conversational implicature is delivering implicit information. Through implicature, speakers can communicate ideas without stating them directly, allowing conversations to remain efficient and natural. Grice (1975) notes that this occurs when speakers rely on shared assumptions to generate additional meaning. Yule (1996) adds that implied meanings help avoid unnecessary explicitness in communication. In film dialogue, this function allows characters to provide background information or hints without disrupting the flow of conversation. Supporting this view, research in pragmatic discourse shows that indirect information delivery enhances narrative subtlety and audience engagement. Building on this informational function, implicature also serves to convey more personal and affective meanings in interaction. Another important function is expressing emotions and attitudes indirectly. Speakers often use implicature to convey feelings such as disappointment, sarcasm, affection, or hesitation without stating them explicitly. According to Leech (1983), indirectness is closely related to politeness and interpersonal sensitivity in communication. Yule (1996) also argues that emotional nuances are frequently communicated through implicature rather than direct statements. In film interactions, this function helps reveal the emotional depth of characters and allows audiences to interpret underlying

feelings. Studies in film pragmatics further suggest that such implicit emotional expression strengthens character development and realism. Beyond expressing emotions, implicature also plays a role in managing relationships between speakers.

Conversational implicature also functions as a strategy to manage interpersonal relationships. Speakers may use indirect expressions to maintain harmony, avoid conflict, or soften potentially face-threatening acts. Brown and Levinson (1987) explain that indirectness is often used as a politeness strategy to protect both the speaker's and listener's face. Through implicature, speakers can imply criticism, refusal, or disagreement in a more acceptable and less confrontational way. In film dialogue, this function reflects the dynamics of relationships between characters and how they negotiate meaning socially. Research in pragmatic interaction confirms that such strategies are essential in maintaining relational balance communication. In addition to managing

In addition, conversational implicature functions to influence the listener's response. Speakers can indirectly suggest actions, give advice, or guide interpretation without making explicit statements. Grice (1975) explains that such implicatures rely on the listener's ability to infer the intended meaning from context. This function is particularly effective in persuasive or strategic communication where directness may not be appropriate. In film discourse, characters often use implicature to subtly direct the responses or decisions of others. Empirical studies in discourse analysis indicate that this function enhances interactional effectiveness and persuasive impact. Taken together, these various functions demonstrate the broader role of implicature in shaping communication.

Overall, communicative functions of conversational implicature demonstrate how speakers use indirectness to achieve various communicative goals. These functions include conveying information, expressing emotions, managing relationships, and influencing responses in interaction. Each function contributes to how meaning is constructed beyond the literal level of language. In film dialogue, such functions enrich narrative development, character interaction, and emotional complexity. Therefore, analyzing communicative functions provides deeper insight into how meaning is negotiated and interpreted between speakers, particularly within the interactions of the two main characters in this study.

B. Review of Relevant Research

This part highlights previous studies related to conversational implicature and identifies the research gap that this study aims to address. A number of studies have examined conversational implicature in film dialogue and emphasized its communicative functions in conveying implied meaning. Musdalifa et al. (2022) investigated conversational implicatures in the film *Lady Bird* and found that implicature is frequently used to express sarcasm, politeness, and subtle emotional cues. Their findings indicate that implicature functions as an effective communicative strategy to reveal characters' attitudes indirectly. Similarly, Putriayu and Imperiani (2022) demonstrated that conversational implicature contributes to the naturalness and emotional depth of film dialogue by allowing characters to convey feelings implicitly. Implicatures in movie conversations function communicatively to express interpersonal meanings, such as agreement,

disagreement, and emotional stance, without explicit statements.

Other researchers have focused on the communicative and psychological functions of conversational implicature in films. Rhamadani et al. (2022) analyzed conversational implicature in film dialogue and concluded that it reflects characters' psychological states and relational dynamics. More recently, these studies collectively confirm that conversational implicature serves important communicative functions in film discourse.

Several studies have also examined conversational implicature from the perspective of communicative function in media and cinematic contexts. Implicature in media discourse functions to guide interpretation, maintain politeness, and manage interpersonal relations. Taguchi (2020) further emphasized that implicature supports interactional coherence by relying on shared assumptions between speakers and listeners. These findings support the view that conversational implicature is not merely a linguistic phenomenon, but also a functional communicative strategy in narrative discourse such as film dialogue.

However, previous research has rarely focused on dialogue-driven films like *Before We Go*. Most existing studies analyze films with complex plots, multiple characters, or strong external conflicts, where dialogue functions primarily as a supporting narrative element. *Before We Go* presents a unique narrative structure, as the story unfolds almost entirely through spontaneous and intimate conversations between two main characters, Nick and Brooke.

Only a limited number of studies have specifically discussed *Before We Go*

in relation to pragmatic analysis. Based on this gap, the present study aims to identify the types and communicative functions of conversational implicature found in the film *Before We Go*. By focusing on a film that relies heavily on dialogue for narrative and emotional development, this study seeks to contribute to pragmatic studies by providing deeper insight into how implied meanings function as a central communicative device in cinematic discourse.

C. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is grounded in contemporary pragmatic theories that emphasize meaning construction through context and inference. Recent pragmatic studies argue that meaning in communication cannot be fully understood through linguistic forms alone but must be analyzed through speaker intention, contextual factors, and shared knowledge between interlocutors (Huang, 2007; Taguchi, 2020). Pragmatics provides an analytical foundation for examining how implied meanings emerge in interaction, especially in spoken discourse such as film dialogue. This perspective supports the analysis of conversational implicature as a key mechanism for uncovering meanings beyond literal expressions.

Conversational implicature serves as the central analytical concept within this theoretical framework. Modern pragmatic scholars continue to develop Grice's implicature theory by emphasizing its role in interpersonal communication and discourse interpretation. Allan and Jaszczolt (2022) state that implicature enables speakers to communicate efficiently while maintaining politeness and emotional

subtlety. Similarly, Haugh (2012) argue that conversational implicature is essential for interpreting indirect meanings that arise naturally in dialogic interaction, particularly when speakers intentionally rely on inference rather than explicit statements.

This framework is applied to film dialogue to explain how characters express emotions, relationships, and intentions indirectly. Recent studies in film pragmatics show that conversational implicature plays a significant role in constructing character development and emotional depth in dialogue-driven narratives (Dynel, 2011; Putriayu & Imperiani, 2022). In films that rely heavily on conversation, implicature functions as a narrative device that allows characters to reveal internal conflict, intimacy, and psychological states without direct exposition (Hidayat & Lestari, 2023). Therefore, this theoretical framework integrates pragmatic theory and conversational implicature to analyze how meaning is negotiated and constructed through dialogue in the movie *Before We Go*. This framework not only guides the data analysis but also positions the study within existing pragmatic theories. The relationship among these theoretical components is illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.



Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

The figure above shows the conceptual framework of the study, which begins with the film *Before We Go* as the object of study. This film was chosen because the storyline and character development are heavily dependent on dialogue, making it rich in implicit meaning in conversation.

The film analysis was conducted using a pragmatic approach, which focuses on the meaning of utterances based on context and inference. In the realm of pragmatics, this study focuses on two main aspects, namely conversational implicature and communicative function. Conversational implicature is used to identify implied meanings in dialogue, while communicative function aims to explain the communicative purpose of these implicatures.

The analysis of these two aspects produced the findings of the research, which include the types of implicatures that appear and their communicative functions in building emotions, relationships between characters, and the development of the narrative of the film *Before We Go*.