Language reflects the thought and the behavioural pattern of the society. The study of language used in society and the context of the language used by the speakers, goes deep into the thought series of the speakers to draw out the intended or implied meaning. The primary study of language is meaning in the literal sense or the denotative meaning, which falls in the field of ‘Semantics’. But the way meaning of a sentence or an utterance changes from one society to another and from one context to another, made linguists consider the contextual concept into the analysis of meaning, which is the subject matter of a whole domain of language study called Pragmatics. Pragmatics is a very wide area concerned with the study of language use and different theories have been formulated to provide a better insight into a conversation.

The present study is an application of pragmatic theory, particularly the Theory of Cooperative Principle and the conversational maxims, put forward by Grice, to the data selected from the plays of Oscar Wilde and to analyze it taking into consideration the conversational maxims.

The first chapter of the dissertation is an introductory chapter. The chapter presents the rationale and significance of the study, along with stating the hypothesis, and the aims and objectives of the study. It also details the methodology used in the study to analyse the selected data against the background of conversational maxims. The chapter also lays the scope and limitation of the study.

The chapter has been also presented with a brief introduction of Oscar Wilde and his place in English Literature, and also the wit of Wilde of which he is so famous for. A section in the chapter is also devoted to
have a brief introduction to the plays selected for the purpose of study. The chapter also states the justification for selecting the plays for the purpose of the study.

The second chapter of the dissertation is entitled as ‘Theoretical Framework’. The chapter discusses the contribution of H. P. Grice to the study of language. It presents in detail the theory of cooperative principle and conversational maxims put forward by Grice. The chapter also discusses the various other theories of pragmatics that are important from the view of the study. The other theories that are discussed in the chapter are the relevance theory of Sperber and Wilson, Theory of Speech Acts, Indirect Speech Acts, The theory of Politeness Principle, and The theory of Conversational Implicatures. The chapter also discusses the vital issue of violation of Conversational Maxims in detail.

The third chapter of the dissertation is divided into two sections. The first section of the chapter analyses the violation of the maxim of Quality in the selected plays of Wilde. The second section of the chapter is devoted to an in-depth analysis of the violation of maxim of Quantity. Both the sections bring out the significance of violation of the maxims along with stating the various ways the maxims are violated.

The fourth chapter is devoted to an in-depth analysis of violation of conversational maxims. The chapter, like the third chapter, is also divided into two sections. The first section deals with the analysis of the violation of Relation maxim in the selected plays of Wilde; whereas the second section presents the analysis of the violation of manner maxim in the selected plays of Wilde.

The fifth chapter is the concluding chapter of the dissertation and it states the main findings of the research work undertaken. This chapter
also states the contributions of the present research, pedagogical implications along with suggestions for further research in this area. A list of bibliography has also been provided.