A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF HUMOR IN CONAN O'BRIEN'S MONOLOGUE AT OSCAR ACADEMY AWARDS 2025-2026

SKRIPSI

Diajukan sebagai salah satu syarat untuk memperoleh gelar Sarjana Sastra

IIN ANJELINA RAHMAWATI

41182003220032

PROGRAM STUDI SASTRA INGGRIS

FAKULTAS KOMUNIKASI, SASTRA DAN BAHASA

UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH INDONESIA

2026

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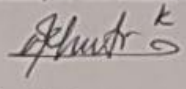

Iin Anjelina Rahmawati

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Nama : Iin Anjelina Rahmawati

NPM : 41182003220032

Tanda tangan



Tanggal : 12 November 2026

Halaman Pengesahan

Skripsi yang diajukan oleh:

Nama	: Iin Anjelina Rahmawati
NPM	: 41182003220032
Judul	: Analisis Paragmatik Humor di Monolog Conan O'Brien di Oscar Academy Awards 2025- 2026
Program Studi	: Sastra Inggris
Konsentrasi	: *English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (ELTA)

Ini telah berhasil dipertahankan di hadapan Dewan Penguji dan diterima sebagai bagian dari persyaratan yang diperlukan untuk memperoleh gelar Sarjana Sastra pada Program Studi Sastra Inggris. Fakultas Komunikasi, Sastra, dan Bahasa, Universitas Muhammadiyah Indonesia.

DEWAN PENGUJI

Ketua Penguji	: Sya'baningrum Prihartini M.Hum	( )
Penguji 1	: Muhammad Fakhran Al Ramadhan M.Hum.	( )
Penguji 2/Pembimbing	: Reza Anggriyashati Adara, M.A	( )
Ditetapkan di	: Bekasi	
Tanggal	: 13 Agustus 2026	
Oleh	:	

Dekan Fakultas Komunikasi, Sastra dan Bahasa

Universitas Muhammadiyah Indonesia

Suepudin, S.S., M.Soc.,Sc

NRP: 45.1.01.11.2011.031

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze humor from a pragmatic perspective in the monologues delivered by Conan O'Brien at the 2025 and 2026 Academy Awards. The analysis focuses on how this humor is constructed through floutes of Paul Grice's conversational maxims, as well as the politeness strategies described by Brown and Levinson. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using pragmatic analysis methods. The data used in this study consist of humorous utterances found in the opening monologues of the 2025 and 2026 Academy Awards, transcribed from television recordings of the events. The data were then analyzed by identifying fluotes of the four maxims proposed by Grice—namely, the maxims of quality, quantity, relevance, and manner and by examining the implicatures contained in the speaker's utterances. In addition, this study also analyzes how politeness strategies are used to convey humor without causing excessive face-threatening acts (FTAs) toward the target of the humor by employing four strategies: "bald on record," "off-record," "positive politeness," and "negative politeness."

INTRODUCTION

In pragmatic studies, humor is not only a means of entertainment, but also a linguistic phenomenon whose meaning depends on the context in which the language is used. With humor, speakers can convey criticism, opinions, or assessments indirectly, so that the meaning of their utterances often goes beyond the literal meaning. One form of humor that often utilizes implicit language is the opening monologue at international award ceremonies, which combines elements of entertainment with commentary on the world of film, public figures, and current issues. The Academy Awards (Oscars) is a film awards event that consistently features presenters with a background in comedy. In recent years, this role has been filled by a number of well-known comedians and presenters, such as Jimmy Kimmel, Chris Rock, Billy Crystal, and Ellen DeGeneres. Each has a distinct style of humor, ranging from satire to observational humor, aimed at entertaining the audience. At the 97th Academy Awards in 2025, Conan O'Brien was trusted to be the host for the first time, then was re-elected to host again at the 98th Academy Awards in 2026. Conan O'Brien is known as a comedian and host who has a distinctive humorous style, such as self-deprecating, humor, satire, absurdity, and language games that often bring up implicit meanings. In producing his humor, he not only entertains with jokes, but also contains criticism, satire and implicatures through fluoting of maxims and politeness strategies. These characteristics make Conan O'Brien's monologue a relevant object to study.

Humor is an important part of human communication that not only functions as entertainment, but also as a medium in expressing meaning, criticism and social reflection (Risty & Mustikawati, 2025). In a linguistic context, especially in the entertainment industry, humor can be a medium in creating closeness between the speaker and the audience (Setiawan & Lestari, 2025). In terms of pragmatics, humor has a meaning as a phenomenon of language use that is closely related to the context in a particular situation (Nasrullah et al., 2025). The main theory used

in analyzing humor in terms of pragmatics is the fluoting of conversational maxims proposed by Paul Grice (1975). In principle, there are 4 types of maxims, namely the maxim of quality (conveying the truth), the maxim of quantity (providing sufficient information), the maxim of relevance (information must be related to the topic or purpose being discussed), and the maxim of manner (delivered clearly and unambiguously). On the other hand, the use of humor in a public context is inseparable from the threat to the face *of* someone who is the object of humor. In this case, humor contains satire or social criticism that has the potential for Face Threatening Acts (FTA) or actions that threaten face or self-esteem. Therefore, speakers must have strategies to minimize the negative impact of their speech. Thus, the theory of politeness developed by Brown and Levinson (1987) explains that there are several strategies that can be used to maintain a balance between conveying intent and respect for the interlocutor, such as bald on record (delivering directly and clearly without small talk), positive politeness (focusing on the speaker wanting to be liked and respected by the interlocutor), negative politeness (focusing on avoiding freedom without being disturbed) and off record (the speaker conveys his intent indirectly).

This study uses theories in pragmatic studies, humor is understood as a strategy to convey satire, criticism, and social commentary in a subtle and indirect manner, both in the entertainment world, international award events, and everyday life (Juanda et al., 2025). Humor in comedy shows can be understood by the audience based on the context of the conversation because most of the meaning conveyed by the speaker is implicit (Ahmed & Abbas, 2023). Therefore, humor can be formed when there is a discrepancy between the literal meaning of the utterance and the meaning actually intended by the speaker. Humor becomes interesting because the audience not only understands the utterance based on its literal meaning but also interprets the hidden meaning behind the utterance (Mohamad et al., 2025). In addition to the conversational context, social and cultural backgrounds also influence the understanding of humor. Pauziah et al. (2022) explain that the success of humor in stand-up comedy is highly dependent on the audience's ability to understand the pragmatic context of the utterance delivered by the speaker. This shows that humor cannot be separated from the social and cultural context that helps the audience understand the intent of a speech. For example, when a speaker says, "The movie was so good I fell asleep in the middle," the utterance literally sounds like a compliment. However, based on the pragmatic context, the utterance contains a hint that suggests the movie was actually boring. Thus, humor is closely related to pragmatics because the audience not only hears the joke in the form of sarcasm but also interprets the implicit meaning behind the speaker's utterance. Humor can emerge due to the difference between the literal meaning and the implicit meaning understood by the audience through the context of the conversation (Diningsih et al., 2020).

In relation to the pragmatics study explained previously, the formation of humor involves not only the distinction between literal and implicit meanings, but also how the speaker maintains social relationships with the target audience. The politeness theory proposed by Brown and Levinson explains that every individual has a face or self-image that they wish to maintain in social interactions. This theory can be used to explain how threats to self-image arise and the strategies

speakers use to mitigate these threats so that humor remains acceptable to the audience. Brown and Levinson (1987) divide face into two: positive face and negative face. Positive face is a person's desire to be appreciated, liked, and accepted by others, while negative face is a person's desire to have the freedom to act without pressure from others. The use of politeness strategies can help speakers build and maintain good relationships with listeners and the general public (Sapitri et al., 2019).

In addition to using politeness strategies to reduce threats to the self-image of the target of humor, speakers can also create humor by violating conversational maxims. Paul Grice, in his theory, explains that speakers and their interlocutors can build good communication if they cooperate in a conversation. Although this study discusses monologues, not dialogues, the theory remains relevant because speakers build communication by assuming the presence and understanding of the audience. In this case, speakers can exploit or deliberately violate conversational maxims to produce implicatures that give rise to humor. Grice (1975) divides fluoting maxims into four types: maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. The maxim of quantity requires speakers to provide information in sufficient quantity and according to the needs of the conversation. The maxim of quality requires speakers to convey information that is believed to be true and supported by adequate evidence. The maxim of relevance requires speakers to provide information related to the topic of conversation, while the maxim of manner requires speakers to convey information clearly, orderly, unambiguously, and easily understood. These four maxims aim to create efficient, rational, and effective communication. Therefore , humor is relevant to be studied through maxim floutes because this theory can explain how deviations in language use contribute to the formation of humorous effects. Furthermore, humor often contains criticism or satire that has the potential to threaten the face of certain parties, so the way it is delivered needs to be analyzed through politeness strategies to understand how speakers convey criticism without eliminating the humor's function .

Similar findings were presented by Nguyen and Tran (2025) in their study of Jimmy O. Yang's stand-up comedy, which showed that comedians deliberately use exaggeration, irony, and irrelevant utterances to create humorous effects for the audience or interlocutor. Furthermore, Nafi et al. (2025) explained that violating maxims in entertainment media and talk shows can help the audience understand the hidden meaning behind an utterance, making the humor more engaging and less direct. Therefore, humor in pragmatic studies is not only related to the utterance itself, but also to the audience's ability to understand the implicature and context behind the utterance. In Conan O'Brien's comedic monologues at Oscar Academy Awards 2025-2026, fluoting maxims was used to convey satire, social criticism, and commentary on the entertainment industry. Therefore, Grice's theory is used in this study to explain how humor is formed through violating maxims by Conan O'Brien. This research is also important because pragmatic studies on humor in monologues at international award ceremonies are still relatively limited. Academically, the Oscars opening monologue is a relevant subject for study because it is delivered at an international film festival with a global audience. Furthermore, as part of a broadcast watched by millions of people from

various countries, humor analysis is crucial to understand how meaning is constructed through flouting maxims and how politeness strategies are employed to convey criticism or satire without diminishing the entertainment function.

Based on the explanation above, this study chose Conan O'Brien as the subject of the study. Conan O'Brien is known for his distinctive humorous style that combines sarcasm, absurdity, and language play. His humor is not always direct, but often emerges through deviations from conversational expectations. This humorous style makes Conan O'Brien's monologues at the 2025 and 2026 Academy Awards interesting to analyze using a pragmatic approach. Based on this background, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What types of flouting of conversational maxims and politeness strategies are found in Conan O'Brien's monologue at Oscar Academy Awards 2025-2026?
2. What are the meaning implicatures contained in the humor conveyed by the speaker?

Based on the research questions, this study aims to identify the types of conversational maxim floutes and analyze the politeness strategies used by Conan O'Brien in conveying humor to the parties who are the objects of humor and the audience. which are found in Conan O'Brien's monologues at Oscar Academy Awards 2025-2026. In addition, this study also aims to explain what the implicatures of meaning are conveyed by the speaker.

METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research method to analyze the pragmatic mechanisms that shape humor in the opening monologue of the 2026 Oscars Academy Awards delivered by Conan O'Brien. This study utilizes two main theories: Flouting Maxims proposed by Paul Grice (1975) and the politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1987).

Grice's theory is used to determine how humor is constructed through four maxims of flouting in the monologue, namely, the maxims of quality, quantity, relevance, and manner. Meanwhile, Brown and Levinson's theory is used to identify how *Face Threatening Acts* (FTAs) can be minimized using politeness theory in constructing Conan O'Brien's humor in his monologue. These two approaches are used to identify the meaning of humor in Conan O'Brien's award monologue at Oscar Academy Awards 2025-2026.

2.2 Data Collection Techniques

The data collection technique used for this study was documentation. The data consisted of humorous remarks from the 2026 Oscars ceremony, using video transcripts and official TV broadcasts on YouTube. The data collection steps were as follows:

1. Watching Conan O'Brien's monologue at the Oscars on repeat.
2. Downloading transcript of speech from google web, REV.
3. Identifying speech that contains humor.
4. Classifying data based on floutes of Grice's maxims and Brown & Levinson's politeness strategies.

The video source is taken from the TVLine YouTube channel with 201 thousand *subscribers.* The video can be accessed directly through the link below, Conan O'Brien's Oscar Monologue in 2025 with a duration of 2.13 minutes: https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=GuUUsmdPtvg&ra=m . The full 18-minute video of Conan O'Brien's 2025 Oscar monologue has been removed from all platforms. Therefore, this research is seen from several video clips and transcripts on the rev web, which can be accessed through the link listed here https://www - rev - com.translate.goog/transcripts/conan -o- brien - s oscars - 2025 - opening monologue?_x_tr_sl=en&_x_tr_tl=id&_x_tr_hl=id&_x_tr_pto=tc .

On the other hand, the ABC News YouTube channel with 19.7 million *subscribers* collaborated with Good Morning America with 5.48 million *subscribers* . The video can be accessed directly through the link below, Conan O'Brien's Oscar Monologue in 2026 with a duration of 10.42 minutes:

https://youtu.be/ZIcxwxMMjXg?si=cxRX2Rw1PjSgPzbM

2.3 Data Analysis

The data analysis of this study uses a pragmatic analysis approach by combining descriptive qualitative methodology and pragmatic interpretation. This approach aims to provide an understanding of how humor is formed through maxim floutings and how politeness strategies are used to maintain a balance between humor and criticism in communication at public events. The data analysis process is taken through several stages, namely:

1. Data transcription, reading the results of the monologue transcription in its entirety.
2. Identify humorous utterances, identify utterances that contain humor.
3. Identifying floutes of maxims according to Grice's theory, then determining the meaning implications resulting from these floutings.
4. Analyze the politeness strategies used based on Brown and Levinson's theory.

5. To conclude the relationship between the relationship of maxim floutings and humor strategies in the formation of humor.

Table 1 *Example Table Data analysis*

Type	Frequency	Presentation
flouting of Maxims		

TOTAL	20	100%

The table above shows that the *off-record strategy* is the most frequently used, with 12 occurrences (60%). This indicates that Conan primarily uses indirect expressions, allowing the audience to deduce the intended meaning of the humor. *Positive politeness* is the second most common occurrence, with 6 occurrences (30%), indicating that Conan often builds rapport with the audience through humor. On the other hand, the *bald on-record strategy* , which appears directly, only appears twice (10%), while negative *politeness* is absent (0%). Overall, these results indicate that the *off-record strategy* is the dominant strategy used by Conan to convey humor in his 2025 opening monologue.

Table 2 *Maxim flouting data in Conan O'Brien's 2025 monologue*

Type Flouting of Maxims	**Frequency**	**Presentation**
Maxim Quality	1 1	50 %
Maxim Quantity	1	40 %
Maxim manner	1	4.5 %
Maxim Relevance	9	4.5 %
TOTAL	2 2	100%

Table 2 shows the maxim floutings found in Conan O'Brien's monologue at the 2025 Academy Awards. The maxim of quality is the most frequently flouted type, namely 11 data (50%), while the maxim of relevance is 9 data (40.9%). Meanwhile, the maxim of quantity and the maxim of

manner are each found in 1 data (4.5%). These results indicate that Conan O'Brien's humor in the 2025 monologue is more often built through exaggerated or factual statements to create a humorous effect.

DATA 1 (02.02)

"Did Conan not have work done? Seriously, he looks his age. I should have done something."

Context:

Conan O'Brien made this remark after introducing himself as host of the 97th Oscars. He immediately opened the show by joking about his own appearance and Hollywood's appearance standards.

Analysis:

In the line "Seriously, he looks his age." , the audience initially expected praise for Conan's performance as an Oscar host. However, Conan instead stated that he looked his age, then added, "I should have done something .". This statement evoked humor because it contradicted the Hollywood image of facial treatments or plastic surgery to appear youthful. This statement contradicted the expectation that an Oscar host would look flawless.

This utterance falls under the **maxim of quality** in the phrase **"I should have done something"** because Conan does not actually intend to provide factual information, but instead uses an exaggerated statement. The politeness strategy used is **positive politeness**, as the indicator is found in the phrase **"I should have done something"** which makes himself the target of humor so as not to threaten the other person's face.

The implication of this statement is that Conan is criticizing the appearance standards in Hollywood which require celebrities to always look young, while also ensuring that there is no awkwardness between Conan and the audience.

DATA 2 (02.02-02.20)

"It's Hollywood's biggest night, but it starts at 4:00 in the afternoon. Everyone here is just having brunch."

Context:

Conan introduces the Academy Awards as the most prestigious night in Hollywood, then comments on the timing of the event.

Analysis:

In the sentence "Everyone here just had brunch", the sentence contrasts the title "Hollywood's biggest night" with the fact that the event begins in the afternoon. Conan imagines everyone here just finished *brunch* , creating humor.

This utterance floutes **the maxim of quality**, especially in the phrase **"Everyone here just had brunch",** because Conan doesn't really know whether everyone has just finished eating *brunch.* The statement is used as hyperbole to strengthen the joke. The politeness strategy used is **positive politeness,** indicated by **"Everyone here"**, because Conan invites the entire audience to share the same experience, thus creating closeness.

The implication of this statement is to criticize the Academy Awards schedule which is considered too early for an event that is considered Hollywood's biggest night.

DATA 3 (02.45)

"A complete unknown , A Real Pain, Nosferatu. These are just some of the names I was called on the red carpet."

Context:

Conan was mentioning some Academy Award nominated films before relating them to himself.

Analysis:

In the line "These are just some of the names I was called on the red carpet," the audience initially thought Conan was referring to the list of nominated films. However, he changed the meaning of the list to make it seem like the film titles were being mocked. This sudden shift in meaning is what creates the humor.

This utterance floutes the **maxim of relevance,** especially in the sentence **“These are just some of the names I was called on the red carpet.”,** because the relationship between the film title and himself does not match the listener’s expectations. The politeness strategy used is **positive politeness,** because in the phrase **“ I was called”** Conan makes himself the target of the joke.

The implication of this statement is that Conan wants to show that he doesn't mind being the butt of jokes, thus creating an atmosphere.

DATA 4 (03.00-03.12)

“Netflix leads all studios with an impressive 18, count them, 18 price increases.”

Context:

Conan discusses the success of the film industry before touching on Netflix.

Analysis:

With the phrase "18 price increases," viewers initially thought Conan was praising Netflix for leading the nominations or for an achievement. However, he instead cited the subscription price increase as an achievement. This change of direction created both humor and satire.

This utterance fluotes the **maxim of quality** because the word "impressive " is used ironically, not as a compliment. The politeness strategy used is **off-record,** namely in the word **"impressive ".** Conan doesn't directly mention that Netflix always raises prices, but conveys it through irony, leaving the audience to draw their own conclusions.

The implication of this statement is that Netflix is better known to the public for frequently raising the price of its services than for its artistic success.

DATA 5 (03.31)

"It's the perfect movie for anyone who's ever finished watching the Wizard of Oz and thought, 'Sue, but where do all the minor characters go to college?"

Context:

Conan discusses the film Wicked which received ten nominations.

Analysis:

In the line "Where did all the minor characters go to college?" no one in the audience actually questions the college lives of the supporting characters in The Wizard of Oz. Conan intentionally creates a nonsensical question to create humor.

This utterance fluotes the **maxim of quality,** especially in the phrase **"Where did all the minor characters go to college?".** The phrase is used ironically, not as a compliment, because the information about the supporting characters' colleges is unrelated to the main discussion of the film. The politeness strategy used is **off-record,** Conan does not directly criticize the film's storyline, but rather the satire towards *Wicked's* storyline is conveyed indirectly.

The implication of this statement is that *Wicked* is considered to explore too much of the background of characters who were previously not very important to the audience.

DATA 6 (05.24)

"Anora uses the F-word 479 times. That's three more than the record set by Sofia

Gascon's publicist."

Context:

Conan discusses the Academy Award-nominated film Anora before linking it to the Karla Sofia Gascon controversy.

Analysis:

When viewers first thought Conan was stating a fact about the film, they were asked, "That's three more than the record set by Sofia Gascon's publicist." However, they later attributed the rough figure to Sofia Gascon's publicist having to deal with the artist's social media controversies. This unexpected comparison created humor.

This utterance fluotes the **maxim of quality,** especially in the phrase **"That's three more than the record set by Sofia Gascon's publicist",** there is no evidence that the publicist actually said that many harsh words. Conan deliberately makes a non-factual comparison to produce humor. On the other hand, the politeness strategy used is **off record,** the indicator is in the comparison because of criticism of Karla Sofia Gascon as the cause of her publicist's frustration, but satirizing it through a comparison that must be interpreted by the audience.

The implication of this statement is that the Karla Sofia Gascon controversy is considered to have made things difficult for her public relations to the point that she had to say more harsh words than those in the film Anora.

Table 3 *Politeness strategies Brown & Levinson*

Monologue at the 2026 Academy Awards

Category	Frequency	Presentation
Bald On Record	1	4.1
Positive Politeness	4	16.7%
Negative Politeness	0	0%
Off Record	19	79.2%
TOTAL	24	100%

The table above shows that the *off-record strategy* is the most dominant, occurring 19 times (79.2%). This indicates that Conan primarily uses indirect expressions, allowing the audience to interpret the implied meaning through context. Meanwhile, *positive politeness* appears four times

(16.7%), indicating that Conan often builds rapport with the audience through humor. On the other hand, *the bald on-record strategy* , which is direct, only appears once (4.1%), while *negative politeness* is not found (0%). Overall, these findings indicate that the *off-record strategy* is the dominant strategy used by Conan, which is sensitive to *face* , in building humor throughout the opening monologue of 2026.

Table 4 *Data on maxim flouting in Conan O'Brien's 2026 monologue*

Type Fluoting of Maxims	**Frequency**	**Presentase**
Maxim Quality	15	62.5%
Maxim Quantity	1	4.2%
Maxim manner	1	4.2%
Maxim Relevance	7	29.2%
TOTAL	24	100%

Table 2 shows the maxim floutings found in Conan O'Brien's monologue at the 2026 Academy Awards. The maxim of quality was the most dominant type violated, with 15 instances (62.5%), while the maxim of relevance was violated in 7 instances (29.2%). On the other hand, the maxim of quantity and the maxim of manner were each found in 1 instance (4.2%). These results indicate that Conan O'Brien's humor in the 2026 monologue was mostly conveyed through exaggerated or unsubstantiated statements, especially to convey humorous criticism.

DATA 7 (00.15-00.28)

"I'm honored to be the last human host of the Academy Awards. Next year, it's going to be a Waymo in a tux"

Context:

Conan O'Brien made this remark at the opening ceremony of the 2026 Academy Awards after thanking the audience. He then introduced himself as the host before joking about the development of artificial intelligence technology.

Analysis:

With the line “Next year, it’s going to be a Waymo in a tux,” viewers initially assumed Conan was genuinely honored to host the Oscars. Conan then stated that next year’s host would be replaced by a driverless vehicle (Waymo) wearing a tuxedo, the improbability of the situation creating a humorous effect while also poking fun at the development of AI technology that is increasingly replacing human jobs.

This utterance violates the maxim of quality, especially in the phrase **"Waymo in a tux".** According to Grice (1975), **the maxim of quality** requires speakers to convey true information and have sufficient evidence. The statement is clearly not intended as a fact, but rather as hyperbole to produce humor. On the other hand, the politeness strategy used is **Off record,** an indicator of which is found in the sentence **"Next year, it's going to be a Waymo in a tux".** Conan does not directly say that AI has the potential to replace human jobs, but conveys the criticism through absurd images so that the audience must conclude the intended meaning themselves.

The implication of this statement is that Conan is criticizing the public's concern that technological developments, especially AI, could replace the role of humans, even in prestigious events like this.

DATA 8 (00.29-00.40)

"Last year, when I hosted, Los Angeles was on fire. But this year, everything's going great. Oh, you applaude that? That's weird"

Context:

Conan compared the conditions in Los Angeles when he hosted the Oscars the previous year to the conditions this year.

Analysis:

After saying that things are much better this year, the audience applauded in agreement. Conan then found the applause odd, creating humor .

This utterance fluotes the **maxim of quality** because the phrase **"Everything's going great"** is ironic, as the world and Los Angeles situation at that time were not entirely ideal. Conan

deliberately conveys exaggerated information to create humor. This statement is used as irony. The politeness strategy used is **Off record**. Conan does not directly criticize the actual situation, but instead uses irony so that the audience concludes for themselves that many problems still exist.

The implication of this statement is that Conan invites the audience to laugh at their own spontaneous reactions while reminding them that the situation is not yet completely ideal.

DATA 9 (00.56-01.11)

"I'm told there's concerns about attacks from both the opera and ballet communities. They're just mad you left out jazz"

Context:

Conan is discussing the tight security during an Oscar ceremony.

Analysis:

In the line "They're just mad you left out jazz," the audience initially thought Conan was talking about a serious security threat. Instead, he shifted the topic to the outrage of the performing arts community because the jazz genre wasn't mentioned. The sudden change in direction produced humor.

This utterance fluotes the **maxim of quality**, particularly in the phrase **"attacks from both the opera and ballet communities".** There is no evidence that the threat actually exists. Conan deliberately creates a fictional situation as a form of hyperbole. The politeness strategy used is **off record.** The indicator is found in the sentence **"They're just mad you left out jazz."** Conan does not actually criticize the arts community, but uses implicit satire so that the audience themselves understand the humorous intent.

The implication of this utterance is that Conan wants to lighten the mood by turning the security issue into a joke related to the world of art.

DATA 10 (01.19-01.25)

"If that makes you uncomfortable, there's an alternate Oscars being hosted by Kid

Rock. It's at the Dave & Buster's down the street"

Context:

Conan warned that his monologue might contain political elements that some viewers might find uncomfortable.

Analysis:

With the line "It's at the Dave & Buster's down the street," viewers expected Conan to offer an alternative to a real-life event. Instead, he depicted an "alternative Oscars" hosted by Kid Rock at a family entertainment venue, creating a nonsensical image.

This utterance fluotes the **maxim of quality,** particularly the phrase **"there's an alternate Oscars",** as the event doesn't actually exist and is merely used as a joke. The strategy employed is **off-record.** This is indicated by the phrase **"alternate Oscars,"** which serves as an indirect dig at viewers who dislike political humor. Conan doesn't explicitly criticize the show, but rather uses a fictional situation.

The implication of this utterance is that viewers who do not like politically nuanced humor are invited to imagine other programs that are more in line with their preferences.

DATA 11 (01.36)

"Netflix CEO Ted Sarandos is here. It's his first time in a theater"

Context:

Conan introduces some of the important guests attending the Academy Awards including the CEO of Netflix

Analysis:

In the sentence “It's his first time in a theater” the audience understands that Ted Sarandos is the CEO of Netflix, the ideal streaming service by watching a movie at home and then joking as if Sarandos has never visited a cinema before.

This utterance is categorized as a flouting of the **maxim of quality**, particularly in the phrase **"his first time in a theater".** The statement is clearly not literally true, so it is used humorously. The strategy used is **off record.** The indicator is found in the sentence **"It's his first time in a theater."** Conan doesn't directly say that Netflix is shifting people's moviegoing habits, but rather alludes to it through humor, allowing the audience to draw their own conclusions.

The implication of this statement is that Netflix is perceived as encouraging people to watch movies at home rather than in cinemas.

DATA 12 (01.50)

"Why are they all together enjoying themselves? They should be home alone where I can monetize it."

Context:

This statement is still related to the presence of the Netflix CEO at the Academy Awards.

Analysis:

In the sentence “They should be home alone where I can monetize it,” Conan viewers imagine the mind of the Netflix CEO who wants everyone to stay home watching movies so that the company can make a profit.

This utterance fluotes the **maxim of quality,** particularly the phrase **"where I can monetize it".** Conan certainly doesn't know what Ted Sarandos is thinking, so the statement is a deliberate assumption made for humor. This speech uses an **off record** strategy. The indicator is the phrase **"They should be home alone".** Conan doesn't directly criticize Netflix's business model, but conveys the criticism through implicit assumptions.

The implication of this statement is that Netflix's success depends on people's habit of enjoying entertainment from home through streaming services.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on this understanding, this study analyzes the formation of humor in Conan O'Brien's monologues at the 2025 and 2026 Academy Awards through floutings of Grice's (1967) conversational maxims and the use of Brown & Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies, especially when the literal meaning of an utterance differs from the meaning intended by the speaker and understood by the audience. The study shows that **fluoting of the maxim of quality** are the most dominant type of flouting. Conan often conveys information that is literally untrue. When Conan said that next year's Academy Awards would be hosted by a Waymo car wearing a tuxedo, or when he stated that the CEO of Netflix was coming to the cinema for the first time. These utterances were not intended to be believed, because there were implicatures of meaning to produce humor. This finding shows that Conan's humor is more constructed through deliberate untruths, so that the audience is required to understand the implicit meaning based on the context.

This finding aligns with research by Mardhatillah and Merrita (2024) that analyzed maxim flouting in *The Ellen Show,* which found the most dominant floutings of the maxim of quality, with 11 data points. On the other hand, **fluoting of the maxim of relevance** were also quite frequent. Conan several times abruptly shifted the topic of conversation in an unexpected direction. For example, after discussing the film *Wicked,* Conan said the film was suitable for viewers who were curious about where the supporting characters from *The Wizard of Oz* went to college. The inconsistency between the initial topic forced the audience to reinterpret it, resulting in humor. Meanwhile, **fluoting of the maxim of quantity** and **the maxim of manner** were found in fewer instances. This indicates that Conan relies more on deviations in the content of his speech than on providing too little or ambiguous information.

Similar findings were found in the study by Mulaiawan et al. (2021), which found that off-record strategies were the most dominant, with 20 data points. **Off record strategies** were the most dominant strategy in this study and allowed Conan to convey criticism of the film industry and celebrities without explicitly attacking the face *of* the interlocutor. On the other hand, **positive politeness strategies** were also used quite frequently, especially when Conan made himself the object of humor. This self-deprecating humor created an impression of humility while fostering a close relationship with the audience. In contrast, **bald on-record** only appeared in a few utterances that were satirical of specific characters. Meanwhile, **negative politeness** was almost non-existent because the characteristics of humorous monologues emphasize entertainment and spontaneity over formal politeness. Meanwhile, satire, absurd humor, and irony were also quite frequently used to create surprise through situations that were illogical or contrary to audience expectations.

The results of this study also strengthen previous studies that stated that humor in *the Academy Awards ceremony* and comedic monologues are often constructed through maxim floutings and the use of indirect politeness strategies. However, this study shows that in the context of the Academy Awards, floutings of the maxim of quality and *off-record strategies* are more dominant than other forms because they allow Conan to convey criticism of celebrities, the film industry, and social issues without losing the main function of the monologue as entertainment for international audiences.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study aims to analyze the floutings of Grice's maxims and Brown & Levinson's politeness strategies in Conan O'Brien's opening monologues at the 2025 and 2026 Academy Awards. The results show that the humor in both monologues is constructed through flouting of the four Grice's maxims, **floutings of the maxim of quality** as the most dominant type, followed by **the maxims of relevance, quantity,** and **manner.** These floutings are used to create implicatures that produce humorous effects as well as to create implicatures that produce humorous effects while conveying criticism, satire, and commentary on various issues in the film industry and social phenomena.

This study provides implications for pragmatics by demonstrating that maxim floutings can function as a communication strategy to create humor and convey implicit meaning. The use of politeness strategies also demonstrates how criticism can be conveyed implicitly in a comedic context. Furthermore, this study is limited to two monologues by Conan O'Brien at the 2025 and 2026 Academy Awards and relies on the researcher's interpretation of the context and implicit meaning. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to all forms of comedic monologues. Future research is recommended to expand data sources by analyzing monologues from different presenters or award shows and using other approaches, such as humor theory, critical discourse analysis, or audience responses to gain a broader understanding of the use of humor and politeness strategies in comedic discourse.

Overall, the results of the study indicate that maxim flouting and politeness strategies complement each other in constructing humor in the opening monologues of the 2025 and 2026 Academy Awards. Thus, Grice's and Brown & Levinson's theories can be used effectively to explain how humor is formed through implicit meanings, satire, and contextual language use in comedy performances.

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