

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Human language is endlessly creative and flexible because of a property called *generativity*, which lets us build an infinite number of sentences from a limited toolkit. Generativity is the principle that a finite set of rules and components (like words and sounds) can be used to create a limitless number of new, meaningful sentences. Language begins with a small set of sounds that form the basic building blocks of meaning. By mixing a small number of sounds and symbols, humans can construct an infinite number of sentences. Among the many branches of linguistics, pragmatics is concerned with how meaning is shaped by the context. Yule (1996) defines pragmatics as "*The study of contextual meaning*," highlighting the significance of the speaker's purpose and the listener's perception in the communication process. This makes pragmatics an essential tool for analyzing communication that goes beyond literal meaning.

While Semantics focuses on meaning found within words and grammatical forms, Pragmatics emphasizes how language is shaped by context (Levinson, 1983). In everyday communication, pragmatics plays an important role because it allows speakers and listeners to handle indirect expressions, politeness strategies, as well as irony and humor (Thomas, 1995).

According to Salvatore Attardo (1994) "*Humor is a verbal or nonverbal stimulus that leads to a humorous effect commonly processed through incongruity and interpretation.*" Humor is not just about jokes; it is a cognitive and social phenomenon that invites the audience to interpret meaning beyond the surface. Similarly, Martin (2007) explains that humor is a complex process involving cognitive, emotional, and social elements. Humor functions as a social tool to relieve tension, strengthen relationships, or convey thoughts in an indirect way. Humor appears across diverse contexts, from daily conversation and workplace interaction to digital communication and popular media. A lot of humor can be found in situation comedies like *the office*, *Brooklyn Nine-nine*, and *Modern Family*. In online communication like on X, lots of memes that are full of humorous content. In workplaces and schools, humor can also reduce the tension in professional or

academic settings. Its effectiveness relies heavily on shared context, which is why humor is the best understood pragmatically.

Humor is deeply connected to culture, meaning what one group finds funny might not be humorous to another. According to Raskin (1985), jokes often rely on cultural “scripts” or shared references understood by the audience. Pragmatics explain how a joke’s success depends on this shared background knowledge. Moreover, pragmatic analysis goes beyond Grice’s Maxim to include concepts like deixis, presupposition, and politeness, which are all crucial for humor. For instance, successful irony often depends on shared presuppositions, while teasing plays with the established rules of politeness. For instance, from the movie *The Devil Wears Prada* (2006), the context is Miranda (the editor-in-chief) evaluating fresh fashion concepts for the upcoming spring issue alongside her team. And one of the editors suggests a floral-print theme. The line is “*Florals? For spring?...Groundbreaking*” the literal meaning from groundbreaking means new, innovative, and revolutionary. While pragmatic, she means the exact opposite, that using florals for spring is the most predictable, dull, and uninspired concept. The humor and irony are effective because both the people in the room and the audience already assume that florals for spring are a well-worn cliché rather than an innovative concept. Her remark becomes amusing precisely because it highlights the sharp contrast between what’s anticipated (something fresh) and what’s presented.

Historically, there have been three major theories that explain what makes something funny. The Superiority Theory, famously described by Hobbes (1651), suggests that laughter arises from a sudden sense of triumph or superiority over someone else’s mistakes or misfortunes. A different approach is the Relief Theory, associated with Freud (1905), which sees humor as a safety valve. From this perspective, laughter releases built-up nervous energy or tension, especially when dealing with topics that are stressful or taboo. Finally, the Incongruity Theory, linked to philosophers like Kant (1790), argues that humor comes from a cognitive surprise. Humor is perceived when there is an unexpected twist that violates expectations in a playful way. Together, these theories show that humor is a complex human experience, driven by our social feelings, our emotional needs, and the way our minds process the world.

Linguists study humor using pragmatic models of communication. One important is General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH) proposed by Attardo and Raskin (1991). Their theory explains that jokes are humorous because they create

surprises by playing with our expectations. It shows that both the joke's setup and the situation it's told in are important, which means humor can be analyzed as a smart language trick that breaks normal conversation rules to get a laugh.

Humor functions as a powerful social tool across different settings. In education, it can create a more relaxed atmosphere that supports learning, while in professional environments it helps us maintain teamwork and lessen stress. According to Holmes (2000), humor is often used to strengthen solidarity, and Meyer (2000) adds that it contributes to shape shared meaning and group identity.

In linguistic analysis, humor can be seen as a pragmatic strategy that relies on breaking conversational expectations. Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle provides a framework for understanding how communication works through four conversational Maxims, which are, Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner. Humor often arises when these Maxims are intentionally flouted. For example, Irony or sarcasm may flout the Maxim of Quality, while puns or ambiguity can flout the Maxim of Manner. The humorous effect is generated precisely because the speaker violates these norms, prompting the listener to search for an implied meaning. This makes humor a fertile site for pragmatic analysis.

Unlike humor in spontaneous conversation, humor in movies is written into the script and deliberately positioned to support the storyline. Chiaro (2010) points out that humor in audiovisual texts is designed to connect with varied audiences, demonstrating that cinematic humor is not only for entertainment but also serves as cultural commentary.

Humor in film is diverse, encompassing various forms. As noted by Kozloff (2000), these include slapstick, which use exaggerated physical comedy, satire which criticizes political and social institutions, parody, which comically imitates other works and wordplay, which relies on linguistic wit.

Humor is also central in movies. As filmmakers like Federico Fellini noted, film is a complex art form capable of evoking a wide range of emotions, with humor being a key component. This has been true since the earliest days of films, the timeless physical comedy of figures like Charlie Chaplin in the movie *Modern Times* (1936) proves that humor is fundamental to cinematic experience. In contemporary movies, this humor is often carried through witty dialogue, which serves crucial narrative functions like developing characters, offering social critique, and shaping the audience's connection to the story.

The present study focuses on humor in the *Wicked* movie (2024), the film adaptation of one of the most famous Broadway musicals of all time to the big screen in a huge way. The story is all about the surprising and complicated friendship between two young women in the magical land of Oz. The story is set before the events of L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful World of Oz* happens. The movie stars the incredibly talented Cynthia Erivo as Elphaba and the famous superstar Ariana Grande as Glinda. It tells their story from the beginning, showing how they met at school and become unlikely friends, long before the world knew them as the *Wicked* Witch of the West and Glinda the Good. The length of the movie is 141 minutes.

There are a lot of reasons behind the researcher choosing this movie. The first aspect is politic, this movie tells a story about how Elphaba become the villain that all Oz believe that she is wicked meanwhile the main villain is the Wizard, he is like the leader of the Oz, all the Ozians believe him and trust him. The aspect kind of relatable of the politic nowadays, the government tells a lie and there will be a person who become the scapegoat. Another aspect is psychology, this aspect focuses on how humor allows the main characters to vent their internal psychological states, such as frustration, vanity, or stress in a way that is entertaining rather than purely aggressive.

The main characters in this movie are Elphaba alongside Glinda, because their humor is not just a side effect of their personality, it is central to the entire purpose of the film. Their jokes and witty remarks are the primary tools the story uses to drive the plot, develop their characters, and deliver its main social critique. The contrast between Glinda's bubbly, often clueless humor and Elphaba's sharp, intelligent wit is the central conflict of ideas in the movie.

Glinda is defined by a performative blend of vanity and hyperbole. By always ignoring conversational rules like relevance and quality, she centers herself in every interaction, often using affected neologisms or made-up word like "*scandalicious*" mix up words between scandal and delicious. Ultimately, her humor stems from a total lack of self-awareness.

Elphaba's humor is characterized by sarcasm and irony, functioning as an intellectual and defensive tool. She turns her speech into a sharp form of social critique. She wields sarcasm to keep a judgmental world because she has been consistently rejected by society and her own family. Sarcasm becomes a shield to keep others at a distance and a weapon to expose the world around her. For

example, when nobody asks why she has green skin, she automatically explains that she is not seasick, did not eat grass as a child, and she has always been green. That's flouting maxim of quantity because she offers an excessive amount of detail that goes far beyond what the conversation requires.

Previous studies on humor in film have largely focused on humorous genres such as stand-up performances, sitcoms, or situational comedies, with less attention given to musical fantasy movies like *Wicked*. *Wicked* is significant because humor is central to its story, making it a valuable case for study. Furthermore, most research tends to analyze humor either through pragmatic theories or psychological perspective but rarely combines the two. To date, no study has applied either Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle and Searle's (1976) Speech Acts Theory to examine humorous utterances in the *Wicked* movie (2024). This creates a significant research gap.

This research is also timely. As the *Wicked* movie (2024) reaches global audiences, it illustrates how humor must function across cultures, especially since the film adapts an American Broadway musical for a worldwide market. Its popularity on platforms such as Letterboxd demonstrates its cultural resonance, particularly among younger audiences who actively discuss and share humorous dialogue online. Studying the *Wicked* movie (2024) thus allows researcher to explore not only how humor works pragmatically but also how cinematic humor contributes to cultural dialogue in the digital age.

The urgency of this research lies in the fact that humor in the *Wicked* movie (2024) is not merely a stylistic feature but a central narrative device. The film has attracted millions of viewers on popular platforms such as Letterboxd, indicating its cultural impact. The movie uses humor to comment on power, truth, and identity. Issues that resonate strongly in today's worlds of misinformation and "fake news." By analyzing how humorous utterances function pragmatically, this study contributes not only to linguistic scholarship but also to understanding how popular culture employs comedy to address broader social, political concerns, and also psychological states.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background above, this research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the types of Grice's Conversational Maxims flouted by the main characters in the *Wicked* movie (2024) to generate humorous utterances?

2. How are Searle's speech acts utilized by the main characters in the *Wicked movie (2024)* to create humorous utterances?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the research questions, this research focused on:

1. To elaborate the types of Grice's Conversational Maxim flouted by the main characters in the *Wicked movie (2024)* to generate humorous utterances.
2. To analyze Searle's Speech Acts utilized by the main characters in the *Wicked movie (2024)* to create humorous utterances.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The purpose of this study is to benefit readers in both theoretical and practical ways. Theoretically, this study extends the application of Grice's theory of Conversational Maxims and Searle's Illocutionary Theory to complex cinematic discourse. This demonstrates the continued relevance and analytical value of these theories in examining humor in contemporary cinema, thereby providing a framework for future research. While Grice's Cooperative Principle has been widely applied to natural conversations, this research demonstrates its relevance in movies, particularly in musical fantasy movies like *Wicked*. Furthermore, by incorporating Searle's classification of illocutionary acts, the study provides a multidimensional framework that bridges linguistic and social perspective.

Practically, this research can be used as an educational resource for students studying humorous analysis, screenwriting, or acting. This study also provides tools and vocabulary for film critics to offer more nuanced reviews of humor elements beyond simply stating whether something was "funny." Additionally, this study can encourage future researchers to explore interdisciplinary methods in studying film, combining linguistics, psychology, and media studies to uncover deeper meaning in characters.

1.5 Scope of the Research

This research focuses on analyzing the use of humor in the *Wicked movie (2024)* directed by Jon M. Chu. The analysis is limited to selected dialogues that contain humor elements delivered by main characters, especially those that show signs flouting the Conversational Maxims by Grice. The research does not focus on non-verbal humor such as facial expression. Furthermore, the researcher will investigate the communicative functions of these humorous utterances based on

Searle's classification of illocutionary acts. There are five classifications: Assertive, Directives, Commissive, Expressive, and Declaration.

Therefore, the study is restricted to examining the humor in the chosen film and its immediate surroundings, as well as how humor serves as a means of communication and amusement in the film. This study's scope is limited to humor arising from Gricean Maxim flouting by the main characters, excluding other humor forms, analysis of all the characters dialogue analysis, audience psychological reception, or cross-genre or cultural comparisons. The primary objective remains a rigorous linguistic analysis of the specified humorous phenomena confined to the chosen movie.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section is dedicated to previous studies, theoretical background, in which the researcher develops theories and provides a description of the study. The second section outlines the theoretical framework that guides this research.

2.1 Previous Studies

Several studies have investigated humor in different contexts, providing insight into its types, functions, and social roles. These studies serve as a foundation for analyzing humor in the *Wicked* movie (2024), highlighting gaps in pragmatic-level analysis within complex, multi-layered narrative.

Muhammad Maulidya Firjatullah, La Sunra, Riola Haya Nur (2021) investigated, "*Verbal Humor in Hololive English Selected Clips Best of Hololive En-October.*" This study focuses on Hololive's best-selected clips in October. The results were that jokes were the most common type of humor, and puns had the second highest appearance. The researcher utilized Shade's (1996) verbal humor classification and Attardo's (1994) GTVH framework to assess the complexity of humor within the selected clips. This article uses a qualitative method. This study begins with what humor is followed by the types of verbal humor, general theory of verbal humor, the research methodology, findings and discussions and the last one is the conclusion. By systematically analyzing each humorous utterance using GTVH, the study provides a hierarchical breakdown of verbal humor, demonstrating how different humor components interact to generate comedic effects. This study demonstrates how humor can be systematically dissected in verbal form, which directly informs the present research's pragmatic focus in humorous dialogue in the *Wicked* movie (2024)

Sahin (2021) explored "*Humor Use in School Settings: The Perceptions of Teachers.*" This study is identifying the teachers' humor types and aim of humor use together with their metaphorical perceptions. The researcher collected the data by conducting individual face-to face interviews at each participant's school, using a mobile phone to audio-record the conversations. The participants are eleven voluntary teachers working in seven different lower secondary schools in the central districts of the province of Antalya, Turkey. This qualitative study of eleven teachers found that positive humor, particularly affiliative and self-enhancing styles, enhanced managerial and pedagogical efficiency, with situational and some aggressive humor also noted. This study

highlights humor's social and functional significance in structured institutional contexts, providing parallels for analyzing character humor in educational settings depicted in the *Wicked* movie (2024).

Kismullah Abdul Muthalib et al., (2022) examined *"Holy Moly! Positive and Negative Connotations of Swear Words in A Popular Western Animated Movie"* The researcher uses descriptive qualitative method. The data collection technique in this study was carried out randomly. Considering the total number of available episodes is 728 episodes from 33 seasons, the researcher decided to take only seven episodes to be used as the data in this study. In this study, the researcher identified seven types of swear words, including anatomical insult, excrement, and religious oaths. This research also detailed four meanings and functions of swearing: abusive, auxiliary, expletive, and humorous. Findings revealed how humor can emerge through manipulation of language norms and social taboos, offering insights into how comedic effects are generated by subverting expectations, a concept applicable to the character humor in the *Wicked* movie (2024)

Stephen Taylor, Jane Simpson, and Claire Hardy (2022) conducted a systematic review entitled, *"The Use of Humor in Employee-to-Employee Workplace Communication: A Systematic Review with Thematic Synthesis"* by They discuss the use of humor by employees, especially in the workplace. By synthesizing various studies, this article highlights how humor functions as both a bonding mechanism and a tool for exerting influence. The authors use many theories, one of which is the relief theory by Shurcliff (1968), which discusses humor as a tension-release mechanism. This study uses a qualitative systematic review that provided a meta-perspective. This article started with lots of definitions of humor by lots of experts. One of them is Plester (2016), who suggests that, in general, "humor may be used to spice up the banal and tone down the terrifying" in workplace communication. He also explained the search strategy used PRISMA for the selection process. The study settings were varied from seven studies conducted in the US and five studies in the UK, and other studies in Romania, Australia, Japan, Italy, New Zealand, Sweden, Finland, Is****, Hong Kong, and the Philippines. The context of the workplace included construction, hospitality, finance, education, retail, manufacturing, funeral services, and emergency services. The result of this study is that humor was utilized during an employee's organizational transition. Also, this study described crossed organizational and cultural divides, where humor formed an essential part of work-based dialogue. This perspective supports the analysis of humor in the *Wicked* movie (2024), where the character interaction is shaped by social and hierarchical dynamics.

Samahendra (2023) conducted a study entitled "*Humor Used in Mark Water's Movie Mean Girls.*" In the research, he used Mark Waters's Mean Girls movie as source material. He discusses the use of humor by the characters in the movie "Mean Girls" and the use of humor in function. The study specifically examines the types and functions of humor the characters employ. To classify the types of humor, the researcher applies Martin's (2007) framework, while Attardo's (1994) theory is used to analyze the function of humor. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method. The study's findings indicate that the characters in Mean Girls use a variety of humor in 34 distinct scenes, including spontaneous humor that dominates the characters. In addition to this, the characters in the movie also have humorous roles. The study presents all the humor types identified by Martin and all the functional categories defined by Attardo. It notes that humor encourages laughter, which can dissipate stress. An examination of the movie "Mean Girls" humor showed that the characters used a lot of spontaneous conversational humor. Unintentional humor was rare, gaining purpose only through self-correction. The study also confirms that all four humor functions by Attardo are present, with social management being the most prevalent. This suggests that the humor in *Mean Girls* primarily serves to navigate social dynamics and strengthen relationships. Insult humor was included and observed as common. Humor served all the functions, notably managing interactions. This study provides a robust foundation for understanding humor in cinematic context, which informs the present analysis of verbal humor in the *Wicked's* movie (2024) dialogue.

Behery (2023) examined "*Equivalence in Audiovisual Translation of Selected Episodes from American Sitcom 'Brooklyn 99': A Cross-Linguistic Humor Discourse Analysis.*" They discuss the use of humor and AVT (audio-visual translation) in five episodes of Brooklyn 99, a sitcom on Netflix. The study also uses Molina and Albir's translation techniques to do the research of the Arabic AVT in the selected episodes, these techniques evaluate how humor is rendered across languages. For the humor typology, this article uses the scripts extracted by Juckel et al. (2016) from the selected episodes. This study provides a well-structured exploration of humor typology and AVT techniques in Brooklyn 99, contributing valuable insights into sitcom humor studies. By categorizing humor types and assessing translation strategies, the study enhances our understanding of humor's role in audiovisual media. According to this study's humor analysis, literal translation, language compression, and reduction were the most often employed humor categories. The study discovered that direct translation was the most efficient method for achieving humor and semantic equivalence. in the target text (TT). The study highlighted how humor in audiovisual media relies on both linguistic and cultural adaptation, offering valuable

insights for examining humor's cross-contextual effectiveness, which parallels the present study's interest in how humor in the *Wicked* movie (2024) functions across narrative and cultural layers.

Tshuma et al. (2024) investigated "*Laughing through the Stomach: Satire, Humor and Advertising in Sub-Saharan Africa.*" This study using qualitative study utilized social semiotic analysis to make sense of the adverts by the abovementioned fast-food outlets in Zimbabwe and South Africa. This study also analyzed adverts for the period between March 2019 and March 2020. The reason why the researcher chooses the period is because it is characterized by a plethora of socio-economic and political activities. This research explored how such humor reflects socio-political and economic issues, suggesting consumers engage with these broader themes alongside food consumption. This research emphasizes humor's capacity to communicate deeper meanings beyond surface-level amusement, directly relevant to analyzing humor in the *Wicked* movie (2024), where humorous utterances serve thematic, narrative and character-driven purposes.

Previous research highlights the pervasive nature of humor across various media, including sitcoms, workplaces, classroom, advertising, and film. Building upon this, the present study specifically investigates humor in musical and fantasy movies. This *Wicked* movie (2024) is particularly compelling for this analysis, given its long and intricate journey from L. Frank Baum's original 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz' through fan fiction, the highly successful 2003 musical, and ultimately its long anticipated cinematic adaptation, which itself faced numerous production and copyright challenges over the years. This rich history of reinterpretation presents a unique opportunity to explore how humor is strategically employed within a narrative that has already undergone significant evolution across different media and fan interpretations. By undertaking a detailed analysis of the distinct types of humor used by the main characters in the *Wicked* (2024) movie, and, crucially, exploring how these specific forms of humor serve narrative, character development, or thematic purposes, this research aims to contribute to our understanding of humor's role in complex, multi-layered adaptations and how comedic choices are shaped by a work's extensive cultural lineage.

Previous studies have effectively demonstrated the pervasive and functionally complex nature of humor across wide variety of contexts. For instance, Samahendra (2023) provided a foundational analysis of Mark Waters's film *Mean Girls*, he is categorizing the types and functions of humor employes by its characters. Utilizing Martin's (2007) framework for humor types and Attardo's (1994) theory for its functions. Similarly, Behery (2023) explored humor in the American sitcom *Brooklyn 99* but added a crucial cross-linguistic dimension by analyzing its audiovisual

translation into Arabic. In a related vein, Firjatullah, La Sunra, Riola Haya Nur (2021) examined verbal humor in the specific online media context of Hololive English Clips. Applying Shade's (1996) classification and Attardo's (1994) General Theory of Verbal Humor. The studies by Muthalib et al. (2022) on the Simpsons and Tshuma et al. (2024) on advertising in Sub-Saharan Africa have expert how humor can be used to handle taboo subjects like swearing or to embed socio-political satire.

Another significant branch of research has investigated humor's role in specific social environments. Taylor et al (2022) conducted a systematic review of humor in employee-to-employee communication. This aligns with the findings of Sahin (2021), whose qualitative study of teachers in Turkey found that positive humor styles, significantly enhanced both managerial efficiency and pedagogical effectiveness in the classroom. Together, these studies establish that humor is not merely an entertaining diversion but a critical tool for navigating social dynamics, managing relationships, and achieving specific goals in institutional settings.

While the existing body of research provides a robust understanding of what humor is and what it does socially, there remains a significant gap in analyzing how it functions at a deeper pragmatic level within a complex, multi-layered narrative. The previous studies have largely focused on classifying humor types (Martin, Shade) or identifying their social functions (Attardo, 1994). The present study seeks to build upon this foundation by investigating a different dimension, the mechanics of humorous utterances as specific speech acts.

This research will analyze the humor used by the main characters in the *Wicked movie (2024)* by Jon M. Chu. this movie is a particularly compelling object to study due to its extensive cultural lineage-evolving from L. Frank Baum's original novel, through Gregory Maguire's revisionist text fan fiction interpretations, the globally successful 2003 stage musical, and finally, a long-anticipated cinematic adaptation. This rich history of reinterpretation presents a unique opportunity to explore how humor has been strategically adapted across different mediums to suit different audiences.

This study aims to fill the research gap by applying pragmatic linguistic theories to the movie's humorous dialogue. To date, no research has analyzed the humorous utterances in *Wicked (2024)* by Jon M. Chu using a combined framework of Grice's (1975) cooperative principle and conversational Maxims and Searle's (1976) classification of illocutionary acts. This approach will move beyond simply categorizing a joke as a "sarcasm" or its function as "social management." Instead, it will analyze how a sarcastic utterance works by flouting the Maxim of Quality, and what the character is doing with that utterance, are they performing an act of criticizing, complaining, or teasing. By focusing on pragmatic mechanics, this research will contribute to a more nuanced

understanding of how Elphaba's and Glinda's specific comedic choices function as deliberate, meaning-making speech acts that drive characters development and thematic exploration within this culturally significant and highly evolved narrative.

2.2 Theoretical Background

Over the years, linguistic strategies have been widely employed to study humor in a significant manner. Various specialized approaches can be referenced in this field, including pragmatic, sociolinguistic, and semiotic methods. These approaches enable researcher to analyze humor from multiple perspectives, considering elements such as social context, language use, and the signs involved in humorous communication.

One branch of linguistics, namely pragmatics, is concerned with the study of meaning in context, including how context influences language interpretation. Although it involves aspects of sound (such as phonetics and phonology) as part of spoken language. Its primary focus is on how meaning is constructed and understood in communication, considering factors such as speaker intent, social context, and the relationship between speaker and listener. As stated by Levinson (1983:21), pragmatics is the analysis of the interaction between language and its context as a basis for understanding utterances. Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, which holds that participants in conversations often adhere to set of Maxims rules governing honesty (Maxim of Quality), quantity of the information (Maxim of Quantity), relevance of the conversation (Maxim of Relation), and clarity (Maxim of Manner) is fundamental to this interaction. When these principles are broken or are flouts, pragmatics gives us the means to understand exactly how humor operates.

While Grice's maxims focus on the "rules" of conversation, Relevance Theory, developed by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson dives into the cognitive mechanics of how humans can process information. It posits that human cognition is hardwired to ignore the irrelevant and zoom in on information that yields the greatest cognitive gain for the least mental effort. For example, when someone starts telling a joke, they are not just giving you information, they are purposefully taking your mind in a different direction. Our brain automatically interprets spoken words in the most apparent, conventional way because it is efficient. This is referred to as the optimum relevance principle. The cognitive pleasure or the laugh is not just about the content, it is a reward for our mind. There is specific satisfaction in resolving a communicative tension.

Charles Sanders Peirce coined the term "pragmatism" in the 1870s. Peirce also introduced the 'pragmatic Maxim,' which proposes that understanding a concept requires considering its real-world, practical effects. Pragmatics, as defined by George Yule, examines meaning in

communication. It's less about the exact words used and more about how a speaker or writer's message is conveyed and subsequently understood by an audience, delving into the actual intent behind their utterances.

Moreover, pragmatics is defined as the study of how linguistic forms interact with their users, according to Yule (1996). Yule (1996) states that this field encompasses various significant research areas. First, pragmatics is a discipline that investigates the meaning of words spoken by individuals. Second, Pragmatic considers context-based meaning, demonstrating its ability to analyze how speakers categorize words according to the situational context in which they communicate. Third, pragmatics examines how speakers do not always express their intended meaning directly. Finally, Pragmatic explores how the proximity between speakers and listeners can influence the way meaning is conveyed. The pragmatic approach helps users understand language, the assumptions that arise from language use, and communicative behavior in interactions between speakers and listeners.

Drawing on the framework established by Brown and Levinson (1987), this communicative behavior is analyzed through the lens of Politeness Theory, which identifies humor as a critical instrument for making the communication tense. By employing humor as a positive politeness strategy, speakers can effectively emphasize shared values and mutual solidarity between their college.

Raskin (1985:16) asserts that humor is often shaped through a non-bona fide communication process one that is not conducted with sincerity or good faith and may involve deception or manipulation. In this approach, the speaker is indicating to the audience that the normal norms of discourse have been temporarily ignored for the sake of joke, rather than attempting to express a literal fact. Humor serves as a rejection of pragmatic principles that support effective communication in both textual and interpersonal contexts.

The analysis of humor within linguistics is a multifaceted field employing a range of methodologies. While approaches from sociolinguistics and semiotics offer valuable insights into social and symbolic elements, this research grounded in pragmatic. This framework was chosen because the success of humor is fundamentally dependent on contextual factors and communicative intent, rather than solely on literal semantic meaning.

Analyzing verbal humor based on dictionary definitions alone often fails, as the humor is rarely literal. This context necessitates the use of pragmatics, the linguistic field dedicated to meaning in context. Pragmatics operates on the principle that a statement's true meaning is found in its practical, real-world effect. It allows us to decode a speaker's actual intent, understand

what's implied rather than said, and see how the situation and relationship between people shape the final message.

Humor is often generated by intentionally and openly violating, or "flouting," these Maxims. Irony and sarcasm, for example, work by flouting the Maxim of Quality. The listener knows the speaker does not literally mean what they say and must infer the true, humorous intention through a process of conversational implicature. To understand what speaker doing with a humorous utterance, Searle's Speech Acts Theory can be used. This theory proposes that when individuals speak, they are also performing an action. In humor, the "illocutionary force" of an utterance, the speaker's intent is often to amuse, tease, or subvert expectations, while the "perlocutionary effect" is the resulting laughter or cognitive shift in the audience.

The foundational theories of Victor Raskin (1985) and Salvatore Attardo (1994) are essential for analyzing humor within linguistics. They are credited with transforming the study of humor from a purely philosophical or psychological topic into a structured, scientific field. Their work provides a systematic method for dissecting the mechanics of a joke, much like a biologist would dissect an organism to understand its structure and function.

Raskin (1985) argued that for a text to be humorous utterance, it must satisfy two conditions. Which are, script overlap (The text must be compatible, either fully or in part, with two different scripts) and script opposition (these two scripts must be opposite in a specifically often binary way. Raskin (1985) identified common oppositions like real/unreal, normal/abnormal, good/bad, or life/death. This concept was later expanded by Attardo into the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH), which introduces six Knowledge Resource, such as "Logical Mechanism" and "Target," to explain how a joke is constructed from its abstract idea down to its specific wording.

The humor is generated at the punchline, which acts as a trigger. This trigger forced the listener to abruptly switch their interpretation from the first, more obvious script to the second, hidden script. This sudden cognitive shift creates the feeling of incongruity that is perceived as funny. This process is often referred to as "Incongruity-Resolution," where the punchline creates a puzzle that the listener's brain must quickly resolve by finding the second script.

For sociolinguists like Neal Norrick, what humor does in a conversation is more important than what it is. Instead of analyzing a joke's abstract formula, they study the practical role of spontaneous funny comments, stories, and teases in our daily lives. From his perspective, humor is not limited to formal, pre-planned jokes. Spontaneous humor often functions as a social lubricant that helps to build rapport or manage conflict within a group.

Humor is commonly defined as something "funny," "amusing," or "entertaining." However, providing a precise definition remains challenging. A simplistic definition of humor, which suggests that it is anything that makes listeners or an audience laugh or smile, appears highly debatable. This observation highlights the discrepancy between the internal cognitive experience of humor and its external physical manifestation. Because laughter is often an involuntary physiological reaction, it can be triggered by stimuli entirely unrelated to comedy or humor, such as autonomic arousal during moments of intense nervousness, physical stimulation like tickling or the social tension that is associated with embarrassment.

Humor is generally associated with entertainment (Jay, 2003, 306) and is intended to elicit laughter or amusement from listeners or readers. However, humor is not always immediately apparent (Attardo, 1994, 3). Scholars typically categorize humor into three foundational frameworks: Superiority Theory, Relief Theory, and Incongruity Theory. Superiority Theory adopts a sociological perspective, suggesting laughter arises from the sense of triumph or sudden glory over the perceived misfortunes of others. In contrast, Relief Theory, championed by Spencer and Freud, views humor as a physiological pressure valve for discharging pent-up nervous energy. Finally, Incongruity Theory serves as the primary cognitive model, focusing on the mental shift required to resolve a clash between two incompatible ideas of scripts. This third framework is particularly significant in linguistics, as it explains the structural mechanics behind wordplay, irony, and a lot of humor types.

Moreover, an individual's sense of humor can vary significantly; some may laugh or smile in response to humor, while others may do so simply because they find it enjoyable. Drawing on Noam Chomsky's linguistic theories, the concepts of Humor competence suggest that decoding a joke or humor requires like types of humor or humor grammar. Without this common ground, even a skillful delivery can result a failed humor, where the pragmatic intent is lost on the audience. Ultimately, because humor is a subjective and culturally bound experience, a joke's success depends heavily on the sociopragmatic context, as what one group finds entertaining, another may find in nonsensical or offensive.

2.2.1 Grice's Conversational Maxim

The British philosopher H. Paul Grice first proposed the idea of conversational Maxims in his seminal work *Logic and Conversation* (1975). Grice suggested that the Cooperative Principle, which assumes that speakers and listeners cooperate to reach mutual understanding, is essential to efficient communication. Grice outlined four conversational Maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner.

This study focuses on flouting, which is specific kind of Maxim violation where the speaker intentionally breaks the rule to create an implied meaning, often humorous. In linguistic and pragmatics, a violation occurs when a speaker intentionally breaks a conversational Maxim. So, a “*violation of Maxim*” means not doing what the Maxim requires.

Maxim of Quantity

The idea of this Maxim is efficiency, which dictates that a speaker’s contribution should be as informative as required for the current exchange. This guideline serves as a pragmatic anchor, ensuring that the flow of discourse remains focused and purposeful. When you give too little information, the listener tends to ask clarifying questions or make possibly wrong assumptions. This lack of detail forces the gap through increased cognitive effort that can lead to communicative breakdown. When you give too much information, you risk boredom with the audience, misunderstanding the essential point, or looking self-centered. This over-informativeness, or prolixity can obscure the speaker’s primary intent by burying relevant facts under a mountain of trivial data. Following this principle shows respect for the listener’s time and cognitive work. The Maxim will be flouted if you are giving too little or too much information, a maneuver often used to generate conversational implicatures where the “unsaid” carries the true weight of the conversation. For example,

- A: “*Was the GJLS: IBUKU IBU-IBU movie funny??*”
 B: “*Yes, it was hilarious. The whole theater was laughing, better than Agak Laen the movie.*” (Follow the Maxim.)
 B: “*It’s a comedy.*” (Flouting the Maxim, although the answer is accurate, that just identifies the genre of the movie. The subjective question of whether it was funny is not addressed. It offers much too little detail to be helpful.)

Maxim of Quality

This Maxim can be considered as the most fundamental Maxim. This Maxim is an injunction to be truthful, demanding that speakers do not say what they believe to be false or lack adequate evidence for. It relies on the idea that individuals do not actively attempt to mislead their listeners when they talk. Language would be useless without this common presumption as there would be no reason to trust anything that people say and the cooperative exchange of information would collapse entirely.

In his book *Logic and Conversation*, Grice gave example when the Maxim quality is flouted, meaning a speaker intentionally violates the rule in a way that the listener is meant to notice. These include irony, where one says the opposite of what is true to mock or emphasize a point. Metaphor, which describes something as a representation of another thing in order to create an engaging visual perception. Hyperbole, the use of severe exaggeration in order to express strong

feelings or impressions. And meiosis, a deliberate understatement used to downplay the seriousness of a situation. For example,

A: *"Is it raining outside?"*

B: *"Yeah, I just came in with a wet umbrella"* (Following the Maxim, the speaker gives a truthful answer based on direct evidence.)

B: *"No, I just like carrying a dripping umbrella for fun."* (Flouting the Maxim, the speaker doesn't mean what they say, the speaker being sarcastic.)

Maxim of Relation

Grice (1975) defines the Maxim of Relation as "Be relevant". Which essentially instructs participants, the listener and the speaker, to make their contributions pertinent to the immediate topic of discussion. The aim of this Maxim is to ensure that the conversation stays organized and easy to understand, allowing the listener to follow and interpret what is being said clearly and without misunderstanding by filtering out unnecessary or distracting information.

Some people may purposely break this Maxim by making statements that seem unrelated but are intended to reveal an implied or deeper meaning through a process of logical inference. This intentional flouting can produce implicature that often result in irony, sarcasm or humorous effects, such as when a person abruptly changes the subject to signal that the current topic is uncomfortable or inappropriate. For example,

A: *"Did you enjoy the movie last night?"*

B: *"Yes, it was really good"* (follow the Maxim, this response is directly relevant to the question)

B: *"Well, the staff was great"* (flouting the Maxim, this reply appears irrelevant)

Maxim of Manner

The Maxim of Manner focuses on how things are said, whereas the other Maxim (such as truth and relevance) concentrates on what we say, putting the message's delivery ahead of its content. According to Grice (1975), "Be perspicuous," a guideline that acts as a general framework for several smaller ideas aiming for decreasing conversational issues. The goal of this Maxim is to make sure that communication is well-structured, straightforward, and clear so that the listener can comprehend the speaker's point of view with ease, so avoiding the mental exhaustion that results from comprehending obscure or jumbled speech. It places an emphasis on language use that is clear and formal, directing speakers to be concise, orderly, prevent ambiguity, and avoid obscurity of speech. The speaker guarantees that the listener won't have to piece together the

chronology or message's purpose by adhering to a logical sequence, such as recounting events in the order they happened. For example,

A: "How do I use this coffee machine?"

B: "First, plug it. Then press the power button, add water, and finally press 'brew'." (Follow the Maxim, the step is clear, brief and in logical order)

B: "Well...sometimes when I used it, it makes weird noises, and last week it overflowed, but maybe if you figure out the buttons, something will happen." (Flouting the Maxim, because the response is disorganized, ambiguous, and not helpful)

2.2.2 Searle's Speech Act Theory

The conceptual journey begins with J.L Austin's pioneering work, *How to do Things with Words* (1962). Building upon Austin's foundational work, John R. Searle, in his 1976 article "A Classification of Illocutionary Acts," refined and systematized the categories of illocutionary acts. Searle proposed five general types of illocutionary acts, which capture the speaker's primary communicative intention:

Assertive (Representative)

When a speaker performs an assertive act, they are bound to the truth of the proposition they are expressing, taking on a communicative responsibility to provide accurate information. The fundamental purpose of such an act is to represent a state of affairs in the world, effectively mapping words onto reality to inform the listener about a specific situation. The speaker expresses a personal belief in the truth of the statement, thereby staking their credibility on the claim that the information provided is factually sound. This category includes common actions like stating, claiming, reporting, or describing, as well as more formal interactions such as testifying or concluding. Because these acts are measured by their truth value, they allow the listener to build a reliable mental model of the world based on the speaker's testimony.

For example, in the movie *Wicked*,

Glinda: "My dear father. Guess what? I can't hear your guesses because this is a letter"

In Searle's terms, Glinda's line, "I can't hear your guesses because this is a letter," is a clear assertive speech act. She is stating a factual proposition about the physical limitations of the medium she is using, letters cannot transmit auditory responses like spoken conversation. The assertion is undeniably true and meets the basic felicity conditions for stating a fact.

Directives

This directive speech acts where the speaker's goal is to influence the listener's behavior, acting as a verbal nudge or a forceful push to achieve a desired outcome. The illocutionary point is to get the listener to perform an action as expected to change to align with what speaker has said, shifting the burden of fulfillment onto the hearer. The speaker is not describing reality but attempting to create a new one by ensuring that the world matches their words through the listener's compliance. This type of Speech Acts includes command, requests, advice, and invitations, ranging from polite suggestions to non-negotiable orders.

For example, from the movie *Pulp Fiction* "Say 'what' again. I dare you. I double dare you, motherfucker, say 'what' one more Goddamn time." In the movie, the character Jules isn't just asking Vincent to repeat a word, but he is commanding to do so under extreme duress, while simultaneously issuing a threat that defines the consequences of non-compliance. The goal of this action is to provoke specific action or, in this case, a specific cessation of an annoying behavior, using power of a directive to dominate the social space and dictate the terms of the interaction. This illustrates how directives often carry a world to word direction of fit, where the speaker's intent is the blueprint that the listener is forced to follow.

Commissive

These acts commit the speaker to a future course of action, effectively binding their future behavior to the words they have just uttered. Their illocutionary goal is to fulfill responsibility while simultaneously demonstrating a world-to-word fit, meaning the speaker intends to change the world to match their words and articulate an objective. Promising, vowing, pledging, or guaranteeing is the example of this speech act, each carrying a different level of intensity and social obligation.

For example, from the movie *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* when Harry says "I promise I will not tell anyone" Harry is making a direct promise to Dobby. This is a clear commissive where he commits himself to the future action of keeping a secret, thereby establishing a moral and conversational contract between himself and the house-elf. By using the explicit performative verb "promise," Harry removes any ambiguity regarding his intent, ensuring Dobby to understand that Harry now carries the burden of silence. This illustrates the core of a commissive, the speaker creates an obligation for themselves, rather than trying to force an action upon someone else.

Expressive

This act expresses the speaker's sentiments or opinions toward a certain situation, serving as a social bridge that acknowledges the emotional weight of a shared experience. Their illocutionary objective is to convey a psychological state with no direction of fit, since they merely represent an

internal state without attempting to match or modify reality in a factual or literal sense and to express diverse emotions (e.g., regret, joy, appreciation). Unlike assertive which focuses on facts, or directive which focuses on actions, the expressive focuses entirely on the speaker's subjective alignment with an event. Examples include thanking, apologizing, celebrating, and grieving, each of which assumes that the state of affairs being reacted to is already a known or presupposed fact.

The speaker is basically stating this is how I feel about it when they do an expressive. When someone says "I'm sorry for being late" they are expressing a particular psychological feeling of remorse over that known reality rather than attempting to modify the fact that they were late or characterizing the tardiness as fresh information. Because it affirms the emotions of both the speaker and the listener, this function is essential for preserving societal peace and interpersonal relations.

For example, from movie *Wicked* (2024),

Glinda: *"You know, every other professor manages to pronouncify my name"*

Elphaba: ***"Maybe the pronouncifi-cation of your precious name is not the sole focus of Dr. Dillamond's life. Maybe Dr. Dillamond is not like every other professor. Maybe some of us are just different."***

The utterance is a powerful expressive speech act. While framed hypothetically ("maybe..."), Elphaba's clear intention is to express strong sarcasm, criticism, and contempt for Glinda's perceived self-absorption. She uses Glinda's own invented word ("pronouncifi-cation") mockingly and pairs it with "precious name" to highlight and ridicule the excessive importance Glinda places on the issue. The act serves to communicate Elphaba's negative judgement of Glinda's priorities, suggesting they are trivial compared to potentially larger issues, perhaps faced by Dr. Dillamond himself.

Declarations

This is a unique act that creates a new reality simply by being spoken, acting as a verbal bridge that instantly transforms a social or legal status. Known as declarations, they require a specific institutional context or the authority of the speaker to be successful, as the speaker must possess the recognized right within a system to make the statement valid. They have a dual direction of fit, meaning the words both describe and create the new state of affairs simultaneously, the world changes to match the words at the very moment the words represent that new world. Examples include declaring war, marrying, baptizing, or resigning from a position, all of which result in an immediate change in the participants' relationship with society.

For example, from Sitcom *“The Office”* from the episode *The Job, Part 2*: “I now officially declare Michael Scott...the new regional manager of Dunder Mifflin.” This is a declaration of a new role. When the CEO of Dunder Mifflin says these words, Michael is no longer just a candidate, he is the new regional manager, and his legal and professional identity is fundamentally altered the second the sentence is completed. Unlike an assertive which simply reports a promotion, this declaration is the very instrument that performs the promotion, proving that in the right context, saying something makes it so.

2.2.3 The Origin of Humor

Humor plays a crucial role in every culture across the world. According to Mayer (2019), the term "humor" is said to originate from the Latin word for "fluid" or "liquid" and refers to the four primary substances believed to flow through the bodies of the ancient Greeks: yellow bile, black bile, blood, and phlegm. These four bodily fluids were thought to influence an individual's character. Moreover, a person was considered to have "good humor" and be in good health if these elements remain in balance (Lew, 1996,10; Shade, 1996, 9; Suhadi, 1989,16).

According to the Accepted Theory of Humor, every joke begins by building tension through the establishment of an initial paradigm. When the punchline is delivered, the listener must shift their perspective to reconcile the discrepancy between the initial paradigm and the sudden influx of new information (Howe, 2002). Attardo (1994) references a rarely cited passage from *Rhetoric* to credit Aristotle as an inspiration for the incongruity theory of humor (1994, 20). Aristotle describes a form of humor in which *“a speaker says something unexpected, the truth of which is then recognized.”* While Plato often viewed humor with skepticism, associating it with a lack of seriousness, Aristotle recognized its rhetorical function.

Sharing a laugh creates a social bond, signaling a mutual understanding that eases tension and communicates, “we’re allies.” That is why a good sense of humor is so desirable in a partner. This function extends to mate selection, where a sense of humor is highly attractive because it serves as a reliable indicator of intelligence, creativity, and mental fitness.

Humor’s evolution happened in stages. This probably started as a personal ‘aha!’ moment. This skill was then repurposed for social life, becoming a way to show off your smarts, make friends, and build team spirit. Over time, it also became a tool for social correction. This journey shows how a seemingly silly trait is crucial to what makes us human.

There are numerous types of humor worldwide, each serving different purposes. These variations are expressed through humorous utterances that are intentionally designed to be funny. Each type of humor offers a unique approach to conveying human intentions and emotions.

Humor is often found in the contrast between expectation and reality, a concept known as irony. This can be expressed verbally through sarcasm, where someone's intended meaning is the opposite of their words, like saying *"Wow, you're early. I almost wasn't ready"* the situation is like you have been waiting for a friend who is 30 minutes late. And when they're arriving you do the sarcasm. The real meaning is, *"You're incredibly late, and I'm annoyed."* You have used sarcasm to make your point in a sharp, humorous way instead of saying "You're late."

Humor can be a powerful tool for criticism, especially in the form of satire and parody. Satire uses comedic exaggeration and ridicule to expose flaws and corruption, particularly in politics and society. Its main purpose is to make people think and push for social change, much like the sketches on the famous Saturday Night Live. Parody, on the other hand, focuses on imitation. Instead of aiming for social reform, it playfully mocks the style of a specific work, artist, or genre.

Slapstick is a simple and physical type of comedy that exaggerates clumsiness and mishaps. Although primarily visual, it often uses humorous sounds like "Ouch!" to amplify the effect of a physical gag. This combination results in a form of humor that is universally understood and creates immediate laughter.

Dark humor finds comedy in serious or taboo subjects like death or illness, often to cope with difficult realities. On the other hand, puns and other forms of wordplay create humor through linguistic cleverness, they work by using words with multiple meanings or similar sounds, resulting in a lighthearted joke like "I'm reading a book on anti-gravity, it's impossible to put down."

2.2.3.1 Types of humor

Sarcasm

Sarcasm is described as a harsh and forceful kind of verbal expression that conveys disrespect or hatred. Sarcasm functions as a language technique when the speaker intends to mock the target, for example to mock the person's behavior. Sarcasm directly contradicts the Maxim of Quality. The speaker makes a blatant false assertion to the audience, aiming for the listener to infer a key psychological condition. It often operates as a Searlean Expressive act disguised as an Assertive, allowing the speaker to deliver a social critique under the veil of a literal statement.

Example from the *Wicked* movie (2024) the conversation happens when Glinda wants to help Elphaba with her condition (green skin). Elphaba answering Glinda's offer with *"Offering to help someone you don't know with a skill you don't have. I'm sure everyone's duly impressed."* From this example, Elphaba utilizes sarcasm to attack Glinda's perceived competence. By stating that everyone is "impressed," she deliberately flouts the Maxim of Quality. The humor arises from

the biting irony of her statement, which exposes the gap between Glinda's performative helpfulness and the reality of her skill level.

Irony

Grice (1975) states that irony is a fundamental strategy for producing conversational implicature by flouting the Maxim of Quality. Irony is a language concept in which the intended meaning is opposed to the literal meaning. The speaker says something clearly incorrect, yet the context helps the listener to understand the reality.

Example from the *Wicked movie (2024)*. The conversation happens when Glinda asks Elphaba about the first party that Elphaba ever intended to, and Elphaba answer it with “*Do funerals counts?*” responding to a question about parties with a reference to funerals creates a stark ironical contract. This flouts the Maxim of Quality and Relevance to highlight the grim reality of Elphaba's social life. The humor is found in the dark irony of equating a solemn event with a celebration, which underscores her status as an outsider.

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a form of communication that uses exaggerated and purposeful overstatement to highlight a message or emotional state. It is not meant to be interpreted literally. Hence it is a transparent violation of the Maxim of Quality.

Example from the *Wicked movie (2024)*. The conversation happens when Glinda did not get her wish. Glinda says, “Something is very wrong, I did not get my way, I need to lay down.” Glinda uses hyperbole to transform a minor disappointment into a physical collapse. By equating “not getting her way” with a situation requiring her to “lay down,” she flouts the Maxim of Quality to express her dramatic and pampered personality. The humor derived from the comedic gap between the trivial cause and the massive emotional effect.

Vanity

Vanity humor is a sort of characterization-based comedy in which the audience laughs at a character's overinflated self-esteem and lack of understanding of their own social shortcomings.

The example from the *Wicked movie (2024)* when Glinda tries her gown for the party at the Ozdust ballroom. “*Am I not the most scandalocious little fish in the sea?*” the humor here is purely rooted in Glinda's vanity. Her demand for validation and her use of invented word “scandalicious” mixed-up word from scandal and delicious. The audience laughs at her blatant needed for attention and her belief that she is the “most” of everything.

Exaggeration

Exaggeration is a type of humor that includes inflating the amount frequency, or significance of information. Exaggeration, like hyperbole, frequently focuses on increasing the “size” of an actual circumstance for social advantage or to justify a certain behavior.

Example from *Wicked movie (2024)* the conversation happens when Glinda wants to give her ugly hat that her grandma made to Elphaba. The line is “*I mean, it goes with everything you own!*” Glinda exaggerates the versatility of an unattractive hat to justify her gift. By claiming it matches “everything,” she provides an-inflated assertion that flouts truthfulness. The humor comes from her transparent attempt to remain the fashion experts even when her advice is clearly flawed.

Absurdity

Absurdity is the result of a complete collapse of logical connection or common sense. It is the purest type of incongruity humor, where the speaker says something so unexpected that it defies conventional social logic.

Example from the *Wicked movie (2024)* the conversation happens when Elphaba trying to do sarcasm to Glinda, and Glinda replied with “*it seems the artichoke is steamed.*” Glinda’s comparison of anger to a “steamed artichoke” is logically absurd. There is no linguistic or cultural basis of this metaphor, making it flout of Manner and Relevance. The humor arises from the sheer nonsense of the comparison, which highlights Glinda’s quirky and unpredictable logic.

2.2.3.2 Characteristics of Humor

Unlike simple jokes or puns, this type of humor is deeply embedded in the mechanics of conversation. According to Attardo (1994) and Raskin (1985), the following characteristics define how maxim flouting produces a comedic effect.

Cognitive Incongruity

Humor happens when the speaker purposely misses the mark of a normal conversation. This “flouting” of expectations creates a mental jolt for the listener. When listener connects the dots and understands that the error was intentional and indirect, that sudden shift in logic becomes the catalyst for a laugh.

Calculability of Implicature

Humor is essentially a mental puzzle. If the listener can’t figure out the “secret message” or the hidden meaning behind a sarcastic comment, the joke fails and just feels like a misunderstanding. The funny is not actually the words themselves, it is the satisfaction of solving the puzzle in real-time. It is that tiny burst of clarity when you realize a comment about for example “funeral” like what Elphaba says about parties, that is actually a savage review of a boring party.

Intentionality and Transparency

Humor relies on the speaker getting caught in the act of rule breaking. If you break a conversational rule (like telling the truth) and the listener doesn't notice, you've simply lied to them. For a joke to work, the violation must be so blatant that it serves as a signal that you are playing. This transparency is what turns a statement from a potential mistake into a comedic performance.

Indirectness

This humor thrives on social camouflage. By flouting, a speaker can mask "risky" emotions like sarcasm or vanity behind a thin veil of conversational politeness. The laughter comes from the ironic gap between the "nice" way something is said and the "nasty" truth of what is actually meant.

Characterization and Social Persona

Flouting is a primary tool for character construction. Rather than being random, the "uncooperative" way a character speaks acts as a recognizable pattern. By consistently choosing which maxim to violate, a writer can signal deep-seated traits, like ignoring relevance suggests narcissism, while undermining truth through sarcasm suggests a witty, cynical outlook. Humor effectively acts as a personality reveal.

Contextual Dependency

The success of a flout depends entirely on situational awareness. Whether a comment is perceived as hilarious or just a "failure" is determined by the relationship between the speakers and the setting of conversation. Humor is effectively a social contract. If the audience does not share the speaker's context or timing, the attempt at comedy collapses. It requires a collective click where everyone understands exactly why the rules are being set.

2.2.4 *Wicked* movie (2024) dir. Jon M. Chu

The primary source of data for this research is the 2024 musical fantasy movie, *Wicked*, directed by Jon M. Chu. This movie has a runtime of approximately 2 hours and 40 minutes, almost 3 hours. This movie serves as a prequel to the classic tale of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900), written by L. Frank Baum. This is the first of a two-part cinematic treatment of the celebrated Broadway musical (2003), which itself was adapted from Gregory Maguire's 1995 novel *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*.

This movie tells a sympathetic backstory of a famous literary villain. Set in a troubled Oz long before Dorothy (the main characters in the original story by L. Frank Baum, *The Wonderful World of Oz*), the film introduces us to Elphaba (Cynthia Erivo), a smart and principled young woman who is an outcast because of her green skin. Burdened by a family that sees her as a curse and fiercely protective of her wheelchair-bound sister, Nessarose. As she starts at Shiz

University, she discovers her powerful magical talent and becomes determined to help the talking Animals of OZ who are being mysteriously silenced.

At the university, Elphaba is assigned to room with Glinda Upland (Ariana Grande), a woman who represents her complete opposite. Glinda is the embodiment of social perfection in Oz, popular, ambitious, beautiful, and seemingly concerned only with superficial matters.

Initially, their starkly different personalities and social statuses make them bitter rivals, and they share a mutual sense of “loathing.” However, this animosity begins to dissolve after they go through a series of shared experiences, culminating a moment of unexpected empathy that sparks an unlikely friendship.

As their bond deepens, they begin to positively influence one another. Glinda, in her way, attempts to help Elphaba navigate the university’s social scene with a “makeover” or as Fiyero says “Glindafied”. While Elphaba challenges Glinda to look beyond her surface-level ambitions and engage with the world more deeply. This dynamic forge their profound and transformative connection.

The story reaches a critical turning point when Elphaba’s immense magical talent is noticed by Madame Morrible, the headmistress of her university. Hopeful that her powers can be used for good, Elphaba sets out for Emerald City to meet the Wizard of Oz, with Glinda accompanying her in a show of support.

The truth about the Wizard forces an impossible choice on the two friends, creating the movie’s main conflict. Elphaba, led by her morals, openly rebels against the Wizard’s corrupt rule. This act forces her into hiding and allows the Wizard to paint her as a villain to the public, creating the persona of the “*Wicked* Witch of the West.” Meanwhile, Glinda, caught between her loyalty to Elphaba and her desire for acceptance, decides to side with the Wizard, becoming the celebrated face of his regime and starting her journey to be known as “Glinda the Good.”

The first film concludes with this dramatic split, leaving the two friends on opposite sides with their bond seemingly destroyed by their conflicting principles. Elphaba is now a hunted fugitive while Glinda is celebrated as a public figure. This critical turning point leaves the story poised for its second part, scheduled for release in November 2025.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

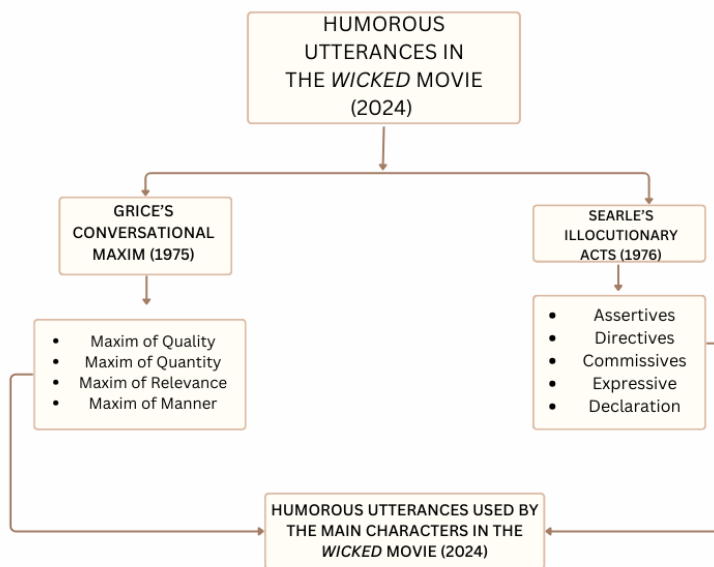


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework used in this study was created to methodically examine the significance and linguistic creation of humor in *Wicked* movie (2024). The approach uses a "category-to-characteristic" paradigm, in which the language methods employed to generate humorous utterances are analyzed after determining its psychological purpose.

The framework combines Grice's Conversational Maxim, the core of this analysis will focus on how characters flouting the Maxims of Quality, Maxim of Quantity, Maxim of Relation, and Maxim of Manner to create a humorous effect. Once a humorous instance is identified based on Maxim flouting, it is analyzed using Searle's taxonomy of illocutionary acts. Instead of focusing on why humor is created, this framework will analyze what humorous utterances accomplish.

This conceptual framework will be applied to analyze humorous dialogues and scenes within the *Wicked* movie (2024) directed by Jon M. Chu. The goal is to provide a multi-layered analysis that explains not only that moment is funny, but also what its psychosocial purposes are and how that purpose was achieved through specific linguistic choices.

2.4 Operational Definitions

This section presents the operational definitions of key terms used throughout this study. These definitions are derived from theoretical perspectives and are adapted to the context of humor and conversational Maxim analysis in movies.

Humor

According to Martin (2007) Humor is a complex process involving cognitive, emotional, and social elements. It is used to generate amusement, manage stress, and build social connections. For example, comes from aggressive humor, when someone arrives very late to a meeting, a colleague says, “*Ah, glad you could join us! We were just about to decide your new office location for next year.*” This is a sarcastic remark intended as a criticism.

Humorous Utterances

A humorous utterance is a remark that raises the listener’s expectations for a specific result or meaning before suddenly changing to a different, unexpected, but still reasonable conclusion. The cognitive “aha!” moment the listener has when resolved this incongruity is what creates the comedy.

Grice’s Maxim Conversational

This research identifies the flouting of Grice’s Maxims when an utterance creates humor by being too brief or wordy (Quantity), untrue or sarcastic (Quality), irrelevant (Relation), or deliberately unclear (Manner)

Searle’s Illocutionary Act

Searle’s illocutionary acts define the intended function of a humorous utterance. Each joke will be categorized as an Assertive (a sarcastic or ironic statement), a Directive (an absurd command or silly question), a Commissive (an insincere promise or exaggerated threat), an Expressive (an overly dramatic expression of feeling), or a Declaration (a comical official pronouncement).

Main characters

Main characters are those with the greatest narrative focus, measured by the dialogue frequency, screen time, and centrality to the story. In *Wicked* (2024), these are Elphaba and Glinda.

Elphaba

Elphaba the “*Wicked Witch of the West*” who green-colored skin that performs acts of powerful magic that frequently challenge or defy the established political authority of Oz. She always uses sarcasm, and her personality is always cynicism, making everything sound very serious.

Glinda

Glinda the “Good Witch of the North” is socially ambitious, charming, and often humorous through playful teasing, exaggeration, and witty commentary. Her personality is dramatic and makes everything sound theatrical.

The *Wicked* movie (2024)

Humor in the *Wicked* movie (2024) refers exclusively to verbal humor in dialogue, identified through pragmatic cues such as flouting Grice’s Maxims. These utterances are analyzed using Searle’s illocutionary acts to determine the communicative intent and social function of humor.