



Sequence Organization of Tom Hanks and Indro Warkop in Comedy Podcast Conversations

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Abstract. This research explored how sequence organization is used to build humor in podcasts, specifically in the episodes of Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend with Tom Hanks and Raditya Dika's podcast with Indro Warkop. Using a descriptive qualitative method based on Conversation Analysis, the research utilized Schegloff's (2007) sequence organization framework as the main tool for analysis, while Norrick's (1993) conversational joking theory, Hay's (2001) humor response model, and Berger's (1993) linguistic techniques of humor were used as additional reference frameworks. Through analysis, nine instances of humor sequences were uncovered in Tom Hanks' talk and four in that of Indro Warkop. The research disclosed that humor in both podcasts was majorly structurally dependent on non-minimal post-expansion, yet their implementation of it was quite different. Whereas Tom Hanks' jokes were mainly derived from a variety of adjacency pair types and sequences initiated by himself with quite compact punchline delivery and operated mostly through irony, exaggeration, allusion, and infantilism. Indro's humor was mostly supported on question-answer pairs as structural points of entry and narratives in post-expansion that were gradually developing comic tension before punchline delivery through exaggeration, irony, and facetiousness. The study has brought to light that sequence organization was one of the major ways through which humor was engaged with in podcast talk collaboratively.

Keywords: *Adjacency pairs, comedy podcast, conversation analysis, sequence organization*

Abstrak. Penelitian ini mengkaji organisasi sekuens dalam percakapan podcast komedi dengan fokus pada bagaimana struktur sekuensial berfungsi dalam konstruksi humor. Data penelitian terdiri atas dua episode podcast yang tersedia untuk umum, yaitu penampilan Tom Hanks dalam podcast Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend dan wawancara Indro Warkop dalam podcast Raditya Dika. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif yang berlandaskan Analisis Percakapan, penelitian ini menerapkan kerangka organisasi sekuens dari Schegloff (2007), teori humor percakapan dari Norrick (1993), dan model respons humor dari Hay (2001), serta teknik linguistik humor dari Berger (1993) digunakan sebagai kerangka pendukung untuk mengklasifikasikan tipe humor yang terealisasi dalam punchline yang teridentifikasi. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa percakapan Tom Hanks membangun humor melalui pasangan ujaran tanya-jawab yang ringkas dengan penyampaian punchline yang cepat serta perluasan lanjutan yang singkat. Sebaliknya, percakapan Indro Warkop lebih mengandalkan rangkaian narasi dalam perluasan lanjutan yang lebih panjang, sehingga humor dibangun secara bertahap melalui beberapa giliran bicara. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa organisasi sekuens berperan sebagai mekanisme utama yang memungkinkan humor tercapai secara kolaboratif dalam wacana podcast.

Kata Kunci: *Pasangan berdekatan, analisis percakapan, organisasi sekuens, podcast komedi*

INTRODUCTION

With evolving media landscapes, comedy podcasts today stand as one of the most influential forms of digital entertainment that have radically altered the ways audiences obtain humor and interact with celebrities. Edison Research's "Infinite Dial" report (2025) reveals that the 2025 survey indicates that 70% of Americans listen to podcasts, comedy being among the top three most popular podcast genres. Besides the increased general popularity of comedy podcasts, the academic world has begun to show interest in them as well, and digital humor is now recognized by researchers as another form of interaction that, from a linguistic and pragmatic perspective, deserves detailed study (Chovanec & Dynel, 2021). The craze is certainly not just a Western phenomenon as the production of podcasts in Indonesia has quintupled more than 12 times over the last five years, matching the upward trend in audio and video content consumption (Angelica, 2025).

Therefore, comedy podcasts have become very popular globally. However, their conversational features are different in different cultures. These differences are not only in the comedic style but also go deeper communication-wise. For example, American comedy podcasts like "Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend" episode with Tom Hanks represent a comedy style where jokes are delivered very quickly, interruptions made on purpose are used as comedic devices, and immediate reactions come after funny moments. In contrast, Indonesian comedy podcasts depicted by Raditya Dika's episode with Indro Warkop, largely rely on long storytelling sequences and slow narrative buildups that span over several exchanges, with the funny parts coming from the detailed reminiscences of the Warkop DKI comedy era.

Humor itself, according to Berger (1993), is a feature that makes something funny or laughable and can be achieved through a variety of linguistic and cognitive means in interaction. These conversational techniques can be analyzed through sequence organization, which refers to the methodical ways in which speech turns are ordered (Schegloff, 2007). Since humor in interaction depends largely on the sequential positioning of talk (Schegloff, 2001), this study applied Norrick's (1993) conversational joke framework to analyze how humor sequences were arranged throughout turns in conversation. This study also incorporated Berger's (1993) classification of humor techniques, which provides detailed classification of the linguistic strategies used to produce comedic effects in punchlines, which are not further elaborated in Norrick's theory. Finally, Hay's (2001) humor response model was applied to examine how other participants demonstrated their recognition of humor in subsequent turns.

There are several studies that can be seen as similar ones with this research. By studying sequence organization in the Blackpink interview at the Zach Sang Show, Amalia and Hartanti (2021) found 17 adjacency pairs in six different categories, the majority being question-answer sequences which showed that FPPs control the flow of conversation and lead to topic development. Bimantoro and Himmawati (2021) studied insertion sequences in the American TV series *Young and Hungry*, and they demonstrated how power and relational asymmetry affected the use of insertion sequences. Fitri, Valiantien, and Setyowati (2024) carried out a study of adjacency pairs and insertion sequences in *Big Hero 6* and found that these conversational features helped to make the dialogues clearer even when one of the interlocutors was a robot.

In the case of humor, Purwati (2022) explored humor expressions in the Sarah Sechan talk show with frameworks of Norrick (1993) and Meyer (2000), and she found teasing and banter as the most frequent techniques. Adila, Djatmika, and Rizal (2024) analyzed humor through maxim violations in Plato and a Platypus Walk into a Bar and remarked that the joke pattern which consisted of premise, setup, and punchline was consistently followed three-stage. Haloho et al. (2023) used Berger's humor theory to analyze eleven language-based techniques in Indonesian Instagram comments. Shalihah (2022) looked into humor of the Asterix at the Olympic Games comic through speech act theory and Gricean maxims, thus revealing declarative locutionary acts and directive illocutionary acts as the main elements of humor production.

Despite these contributions, no study has specifically analyzed sequence organization in comedy podcast conversations and how sequential structures contribute to humor creation. Therefore, this study aims to bridge this gap by examining how sequence organization functions

in humor construction in comedy podcast conversations across American and Indonesian cultural contexts, specifically through the case studies of Tom Hanks' guest appearance on "Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend" and Indro Warkop's interview on Raditya Dika's podcast. To this end, this study addresses two research questions:

1. How is sequence organization constructed in the comedy podcast conversations of Tom Hanks on "Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend" and Indro Warkop On Raditya Dika's podcast?
2. How do sequence organization patterns differ in terms of humor construction between Tom Hanks and Indro Warkop in comedy podcast conversations?

The analysis is based on Schegloff's (2007) sequence organization framework, Norrick's (1993) conversational joking theory, and Hay's (2001) humor response model, with Berger's (1993) linguistic techniques of humor used as a supplementary lens to classify the types of humor realized in the identified punchlines.

The basic unit of sequence organization is the adjacency pair, two turns produced by different speakers, located next to each other, and relationally typed in such a way that a particular first pair part (FPP) makes a particular second pair part (SPP) conditionally relevant (Schegloff, 2007). The most frequent ones are question-answer pairs, where a question raised by one speaker is a condition to the relevance of an answer by the second. Real-life conversations often involve a lot more exchanges than the mere two-turn sequences discussed above, and these exchanges are usually extended by a variety of connective sequences. Schegloff (2007) identifies three most significant types of sequence expansions. Pre-expansion is made up of initial actions which are done before the base FPP is revealed, first of all the main chain of events that is to follow is explained. Insert expansion is put between the FPP and SPP so that one can take care of the unexpected ones that have to be solved before the base sequence can be ended. Post-expansion deepens the sequence even after the base SPP has been produced. Post-expansions can be minimal, such as single-turn acknowledgment tokens "Oh," "Okay," or "Right" that simply close the sequence, or non-minimal, which greatly elaborate or evaluate the prior sequence and may even initiate new ones.

Norrick (1993) argues that humor in spontaneous dialogue is not a matter of isolated jokes but a collaborative accomplishment that unfolds systematically across conversational turns. Joke sequences in ordinary conversation consist of three distinguishable parts. The first one is setting up the joke, which means preparing the setting and the context with which the funny part can be connected. The second one is the punchline delivery, the turn in which the twist or incongruity is revealed. To be worked as a joke, the punchline must be based on the speakers' shared knowledge, and the comic effect depends on how much the punchline supersedes or goes against the expectations that have been created in the setup phase. The third one is how participants respond, i.e., conversation partners show through their reactions whether the humor has been recognized and liked, which is how we realize if a humorous attempt is successful or not.

According to Hay (2001), humor is recognized in conversation through various kinds of responses. Laughter is the most common and immediate form of response to humor. Verbal appreciation arises when a person directly acknowledges the humor by saying things like "that's funny" or "good one". In a way, humor extension is a form of support when the recipient of humor comes up with a matched witty or funny remark or further develops the comic situation. Humor elaboration entails explaining or giving additional examples of the humorous topic. And lastly, playing along means that the recipient proceeds in the humorous manner implicitly without making a visible contribution.

Berger (1993) suggested that humor may be dissected according to a taxonomy of techniques that are divided into four broad categories: language, logic, identity, and action. The linguistic category is the one that most directly allows the examination of verbal humor in a conversational discourse among these categories. Berger (1993) went further and named a total of fifteen different techniques within the language category through which verbal humor is produced. For instance, allusion results in humor by way of indirect referencing a culturally shared person, event, or situation. Exaggeration works by highlighting the difference between a greatly enlarged statement and the actual situation.

Facetiousness uses language that is not serious, so the speaker's real meaning is hidden behind the surface statement and the listener has to figure it out. Infantilism consists of sound and word manipulations which remind childlike speech and humor is generated through playful

regression to simpler language use, whereas irony creates a gap between what is said and what is not, and the audience understands the humor only if they recognize that the speaker is saying the opposite of what is literally said. Technique classifications are still considered relevant because new humor studies reveal that different humor styles and linguistic strategies correspond to different social and interactional functions in various contexts (Ruch & Heintz, 2023).

METHODS

This research employed a descriptive qualitative design to investigate sequence organization in comedy podcast conversations. Creswell (2009) describes qualitative research as a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem, and this design was appropriate for the present study because it enabled detailed examination of naturally occurring talk-in-interaction without imposing predetermined categories. The data consisted of two publicly accessible comedy podcast episodes on YouTube. The first were from the “Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend” series featuring Tom Hanks on the Team Coco channel, with a total period of about 30 minutes, and the others were from Raditya Dika's podcast episode featuring Indro Warkop, with a total duration of approximately 42 minutes. These two sources illustrated the American and Indonesian comedy podcast conventions respectively, and because both Tom Hanks and Indro Warkop are culturally representative figures in the entertainment scenes of their nations.

Data collection and analysis were based on the rules applied in conversation analysis methodology. The researcher located and downloaded both podcast episodes from YouTube for the purpose of study. After that, the researcher transcribed the recordings through the help of YouTubeToTranscript.com. The resulting transcripts were cross-checked with the original audio-visual material. The transcript in the Indonesian language of the Indro Warkop episode was first translated into English by Google Translate and DeepL. Afterward, the researcher thoroughly checked it for accuracy.

Purposive sampling was used to pick out pieces of conversations that very clearly contained humorous interaction. Then each excerpt was looked at with the help of Schegloff's (2007) framework for sequence organization. Norrick's (1993) joke sequence model and Hay's (2001) humor response pattern were first used to classify humor phases and participant responses. Additionally, Berger's (1993) linguistic techniques of humor were employed to identify and classify the specific type of humor realized in each punchline identified across the data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Examining the two podcast dialogues can be used to distinguish different sequence organization patterns and their roles in humor creation. The data cited in this part are examples of the kind of data generally found in the podcasts of Tom Hanks on "Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend" and Indro Warkop on Raditya Dika's podcast, which were purposively sampled based on their clearly visible and analyzable humorous sequences.

1. Sequence Organization and Humor Construction in Tom Hanks' Conversation

Tom Hanks' talk had many different adjacency pair types. There was a great majority of non minimal post expansion as the main structural medium for humor and a very regular pattern of self-initiated humor sequences where Tom Hanks was the only one to be responsible for the setup, punchline delivery, and narrative control. The following sample gives an idea of the role of these sequential structures in the creation of humor throughout the conversation.

Excerpt 1.

Conan: Before we started the podcast, we were talking about the highs and lows in our careers. I know what you mean, Tom, but honestly, no one thinks that about you. People think you have the perfect career.

Tom: Well, I actually printed out my IMDb.

(Laughter)

Tom: I'm almost at a hundred films now. But looking at this list, I'd say maybe six of them are pretty damn good. The rest of them it's a pretty checkered career.

The conversation started with Conan's comment that Tom Hanks had a flawless career, like the FPP of the main sequence, and this made a reply from Tom Hanks conditionally relevant as an assessment-disagreement pair. Instead of answering straight away, Tom Hanks came up with a side comment "I actually printed out my IMDb" which was an FPP insert positioned between the FPP and the SPP that also performed the setup phase of the joke in Norrick's (1993) framework. The punchline was not given yet, and this insert was enough to open Conan to laughing out loud which meant that the funny frame was understood before the joke was completely revealed.

Tom Hanks ended the sequence by explaining that, of the nearly hundred films he appeared in, only six were "pretty damn good" while the rest were "a pretty checkered career," effectively closing the adjacency pair as a disagreement response to Conan's assessment but at the same time delivering the punchline. Integrating with Berger's (1993) linguistic techniques, the punchline worked by exaggeration since from the nearly one hundred film career only six films were worth watching. The laughter after the insert expansion was the humor response according to Hay's (2001) classification which recognized the sequence as a success.

Excerpt 2

Tom: We were shooting a very intense scene in Captain Phillips. We had never met the actors who played the pirates. Suddenly four of the scariest human beings I've ever seen came in screaming, pointing guns at us. It went on and on for minutes. When it was finally done, one of the actors looked at me and said, "I can't believe I'm working with Forrest Gump."

(Laughter)

Tom: Once that moment passed, we were just guys making a movie.

The sequence was a self-assessment by Tom Hanks, performed by the FPP of the base adjacency pair, which required that a response from the interlocutor be conditionally relevant. Instead of giving the punchline straightaway, Tom Hanks lengthened the sequence via a non-minimal post-expansion using an extended flashback, during which he narrated the series of events in the scene as they gradually escalated, i.e. the arrival of actors without prior announcement, the screaming and the pointing of guns. The tension slowly rising was the setup phase as per Norrick's (1993) scheme that laid the contextual and emotional basis for the punchline to have an effect.

The punchline came after one of the actors broke the spell of a dramatic situation by calling Tom Hanks not by his name, but by the name of his most famous role, "I can't believe I'm working with Forrest Gump." Tiptoeing around Berger's (1993) linguistic techniques, the punchline, made through allusion, as the humor was purely reliant on the viewers' common cultural knowledge of the character Forrest Gump and Tom Hanks as a cultural icon. The discrepancy between the life-threatening intensity of the scene and the actor's awe-struck reaction led to the comic effect, which was instantly recognized by the laughter as the humor response in Hay's (2001) classification.

Tom Hanks' final line "Once that moment passed, we were just guys making a movie" was a minimal post-expansion that ended the sequence by de-escalating the dramatic buildup, while concurrently emphasizing the self-deprecating register which characterizes his humor throughout the conversation.

The remaining excerpts from Tom Hanks' conversation displayed analogous sequential patterns, with variations in adjacency pair type and sequence expansion as summarized in Table below.

Table 1. Sequence Organization and Humor Construction in Tom Hanks' Conversation

Adjacency Pairs	Sequence Expansions	Humor Mechanism	Type of Humor	Humor Response
Assessment-Disagreement 1	Pre-expansion	1 Setup	9 Exaggeration	2 Laughter 9
Assessment-	Insert expansion	2 Punchline	9 Allusion	2

Laughter Assessment-	6	Non-minimal Post expansion	7	Infantilism	1
Response(n- verbal)	1			Irony	4
Question-Answer 2					

2. Sequence Organization and Humor Construction in Indro Warkop's Conversation

The interaction with Indro Warkop was mostly made of question/answer pairs as the main structural entry point of humorous sequences whereas Raditya Dika's questions were the necessary trigger for Indro's elaborated talk. Different from Tom Hanks' dialogue, the first part of humor in Indro Warkop's case was through nonminimal postexpansions which after a series of stages led to the punchline, therefore, reflecting a style of humor which was more deliberate and narratively elaborate. The following excerpt illustrates this pattern.

Excerpt 1

Raditya: But what's interesting is that the voice actor for Om Indro in the animation isn't actually Om Indro, right?

Indro: Yes, because my voice is now an old man's voice, while people still have the old image of me. Once, I was eating at a restaurant with my family. Behind us, a child said to his father, "Hey, that's Om Indro, the one in the videos you always watch." I just kept eating. After we finished eating, the child came over and said politely, "Sir, excuse me... Are you Om Indro's father?"

(Laughter)

Indro: I just burst out laughing.

Raditya's first pair part (FPP) evaluates that Indro did not voice his own animated character, making Indro's agreement conditionally relevant. Serving as Norrick's (1993) setup, Indro's second pair part (SPP) details the gap between his aged voice and public image. Indro then uses a non-minimal post-expansion narrative about a restaurant encounter, delivering the punchline when a child mistakes him for his own father.

According to Berger's (1993) linguistic techniques, the punchline was made through irony, because the child's misidentification completely reversed the expected result of celebrity recognition. The laughter was a confirmation of the sequence's success as a humor response in Hay's (2001) taxonomy. Indro's last post-expansion, "I just burst out laughing.", was a kind of humor elaboration that kept the joke going by showing that Indro's own laughter was his reaction to the incongruity.

Excerpt 2

Raditya: For that shampoo scene, how many takes did you do?

Indro: Wow, I forgot how many. We just kept shampooing. "Get this angle, that angle," over and over again. Maybe that's what made me go bald.

(Laughter)

The sequence started when Raditya Dika asked how many takes they did for the shampoo scene, thus the question in the first part was the leading part (FPP) of a question-answer adjacency pair that made Indro's answer conditionally relevant as the second part (SPP). This question-prompted entry point is in line with the main sequential pattern of Indro Warkop's conversation where Raditya's questions were the structural triggers for Indro's humorous stories. Indro's answer started with a short uncertainty acknowledgment, "Wow, I forgot how many", that also worked as the opening of the setup phase according to Norrick (1993) which indicated that the number of times was so high that even recalling it was impossible. The setup was then continued with a non-minimal post-expansion where Indro showed the repeated instructions of the film crew through the statements, "Get this angle, that angle, over and over again.", thereby, the sense of an exhausting and relentless process was accumulated over several reported speech turns.

The punchline came with the final comment, "Maybe that's what made me go bald," which humorously resolves the incongruity by suggesting that it was the endless shampooing in the film that

caused the speaker to go bald. As per Berger's (1993) linguistic techniques, the punchline employed exaggeration as its method since it highly magnifies the normal experience of a film shoot to the point of absurdity, i.e. hair loss as a result of repeatedly shampooing. The laughter that followed showed that the sequence was a success as a humor response in Hay's (2001) categorization because it was the only and immediate identification of the punchline's comic effect.

The remaining excerpts from Indro Warkop's conversation displayed consistent reliance on question answer pairs and extended postexpansion narratives as summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Sequence Organization and Humor Construction in Indro Warko's Conversation

Adjacency Pairs	Sequence Expansion	Humor Mechanism	Type of Humor	Humor Response
Assessment-Agreement	1 Pre- Expansion	1 Setup	4 Irony	1 Laughter
Question-Answer	3 Non-Minimal Post-Expansion	3 Punchline	4 Exaggeration	2 Elaboration
			Facetiousness	1

The data reveals distinct sequential and stylistic patterns in humor construction across both podcasts. Tom Hanks' episode featured nine humorous sequences characterized by structural independence and a wide range of adjacency pairs, primarily statement-laughter pairs (6 instances). This allows Hanks to create humor through self-initiated sequences that do not rely on the interlocutor's first pair part (FPP). Conversely, Indro Warkop's conversation relies structurally on Raditya Dika's questions as sequential entry points, with question-answer pairs comprising three of his four sequences.

Extension patterns also diverge despite non-minimal post-expansion being the most common type for both (7 for Hanks, 3 for Warkop). Hanks uses post-expansions as dramatized solo narratives to delay punchlines across multiple turns, while Warkop uses them to stretch and elaborate on already-delivered punchlines.

Linguistically, Hanks relies on irony (4), exaggeration (2), allusion (2), and infantilism (1) to create surprise and leverage a shared cultural repertoire. Warkop favors exaggeration (2), irony (1), and facetiousness (1) a technique unique to his data that understates language to normalize absurd situations. Humor responses remain identical across both datasets: laughter is the primary response, signaling that humor is received rather than co-constructed. Humor elaboration occurs only once (Warkop), while humor extension and verbal appreciation are entirely absent.

Ultimately, these structural variations reflect distinct interactional dynamics. Hanks takes full credit for the comic frame, transforming the conversation into performative storytelling where Conan O'Brien acts as a witness. In contrast, Warkop's comedy relies on Dika's prompts. This setup grants Warkop extended narrative authority while maintaining Dika's deferential stance, mirroring a hierarchical seniority structure where humor is consciously staged rather than spontaneous.

CONCLUSION

Applying Schegloff's sequence organization alongside Norrick, Hay, and Berger's humor frameworks, this paper examines comedy podcasts featuring Tom Hanks and Indro Warkop. While both conversations rely on adjacency pairs and non-minimal post-expansions, they construct humor differently. Hanks uses diverse adjacency pairs and compact punchlines (irony, exaggeration), reflecting an egalitarian dynamic. Conversely, Warkop utilizes question-answer pairs and narrative post-expansions (facetiousness), mirroring a seniority hierarchy. Ultimately, these findings demonstrate that sequence organization acts as a culturally grounded medium through which podcast humor is uniquely performed.

While these findings offer valuable insights, several limitations must be acknowledged. The results cannot be generalized to comedy podcast discourse at large due to the small sample size. Furthermore, focusing on only two individual speakers may capture their unique, long-standing media performance styles as much as broader cultural communicative norms. To address this, future research would benefit from analyzing larger spoken corpora spanning various speakers, episodes, and cultural contexts, which will provide a more robust foundation for generalizing sequential humor patterns across different cultures.

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