UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

FORMAL AND FUNCTIONAL QUESTIONS IN AN AMERICAN TALK SHOW *LATE NIGHT WITH CONAN O'BRIEN*

A pro gradu thesis in English

by

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2005

HUMANISTINEN TIEDEKUNTA
KIELTEN LAITOS

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FORMAL AND FUNCTIONAL QUESTIONS IN AMERICAN TALK
SHOW LATE *NIGHT WITH CONAN O'BRIEN*

Pro-gradu tutkielma
Englantilainen filologia
Elokuu 2005   103 sivua + 2 liitettä

Tutkielman tarkoituksena on selvittää 1) minkälaisia muodollisia ja funktionaalisia kysymyksiä esiintyy television keskusteluohjelmassa ja onko näiden kysymystyyppien välillä yhteyttä, 2) mitä diskurssifunktioita on funktionaalisilla kysymyksillä ja 3) onko ohjelman haastatteluissa tietynlainen rakenne, joka näkyy kysymysvalinnoissa.

Tutkimusmateriaali koostuu neljästä *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* keskusteluohjelman haastattelusta. Analysoidut haastattelut valittiin siten, että kaksi haastateltavaa oli naisia ja kaksi oli miehiä. Kysymysten luokittelu määriteltiin Greenbaum ja Quirkin, Penzin ja Ilien kysymysluokituksia apuna käyttäen. Keskusteluohjelman ilmiötä pyritään myös valaisemaan, sillä keskustelutilanne ja keskustelukumppaneiden väliset suhteet vaikuttavat merkittävästi tulkintojen tekemiseen. Keskusteluohjelman konteksti on puoli-institutionaalinen, koska sillä on piirteitä sekä institutionaalisesta kontekstista että vapaamuotoisesta keskustelusta.

Tutkimuksessa ilmeni, että haastatteluilla on tyypillinen rakenne. Ne koostuvat episodeista ja sekvensseistä (alaepisodeista). Jokaisen episodin sisällä on kysymyksiä, jotka ohjaavat keskustelua. Episodien aiheet eivät aina liity toisiinsa ja monesti vaihtuvat äkillisesti, kun haastattelija esittää uuden kysymyksen. Suoranaista riippuvuutta muodollisten ja funktionaalisten kysymysten välillä ei havaittu. Tarkastelua ja vertailua vaikeutti se, että funktionaalisilla kysymyksillä voi olla useita funktioita samanaikaisesti. Eniten haastatteluissa esiintyi vastauksia ja tietoa esiintuovia kysymyksiä (*answer-eliciting* ja *information-eliciting questions*), mutta myös kysymyksiä, joita seuraa vain mentaalinen vastaus (*mental response-eliciting questions*). Toimintaa esiintuovia kysymyksiä (*action-eliciting*) ei ollut kyseisessä aineistossa. Kaikki edellä mainitut kysymystyypit kuuluvat peruskysymyksiin, koska ne vaativat haastateltavalta jonkinlaista vastausta. Myös kaikki ei-perustyyppiin kuuluvia kysymyksiä, kuten selittäviä kysymyksiä (*expository questions*), retorisia ja kaikukysymyksiä (*echo questions*) löytyi aineistosta.

Asiasanat: conversation analysis, talk show, questions, semi-institutional discourse

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

In this thesis I will examine the questions in an American comedy talk show *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*. The purpose of my study is to find out what kinds of questions there are in the talk show, whether certain types of questions more preferable than others, what kind of formal and what kind of functional questions are present in the data, what are their functions, and how they affect the structure of the interviews. I am going to consider only questions presented by the show's host, Conan O'Brien. The data examined in this study consist of four talk show interviews with celebrity guests. The interviews were first recorded on video tape and then transcribed. The data were recorded form the Finnish cable channel Subtv. During the interviews, the host and the guests talk about different topics, such as the guests' work projects, personal life, free time, hobbies, funny situations that happened to them etc.

In the past years talk shows have became very popular. However, little scholarly attention has been paid to patterns of communication and interaction in them. The aim of talk shows is to deliver useful information to the viewers and entertain them at the same time (see e.g. Munson 1993). Questions are central to the structure of talk shows and are quite effective in exploring guests' professional and personal lives. Talk shows also reveal the hosts' personalities. Besides being institutionally rule-governed and topic-centered, talk show interaction displays features of conversational discourse, like spontaneous role-switching, and question-asking performed by the guests, as well as audience's shifting role as an addressee and an addresser (Ilie 1999:976). Therefore, the relations between the host and the guests are constructed and reconstructed and can involve new and unpredictable and even provoking forms of interaction. I will analyze the data with the methodology used in conversation analysis (CA) and attempt to describe mechanisms that the participants use in the talk show interviews. The mechanisms will be described as they emerge from data and not using pre-set categories.

I will start by identifying questions that were presented by the talk show's host. Then I will investigate the effect the questions have on the interview structure. After that, the questions will be studied according to their formal and functional categories. These data are particularly suitable because it contains various types of questions, formal and functional. Further, examples of each functional question type will be analysed in more detail. I will also talk about how questions that carry certain discourse functions relate to the formal categories of questions, in other words, do they belong to particular formal category of questions or not.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Talk show as a genre

Television provides viewers with a feeling of belonging to the society and the present moment. Hence viewers are highly attached to certain channels and programs such as family series and talk shows. Perhaps, they help them to answer the question: where is my place in society? Television thus offers the viewers a source of identification. It also helps to answer the important questions: who do I wish to be like and who is my role model? Further, we may assume that television plays an important role in structuring identity. While identity once primarily developed through social interaction within a person's environment, doubtlessly media interaction today is also an integral part of this process. Even though the reception of feature films, news items, talk shows, commercials, sport broadcasts and thrillers appears to be a passive process, activity does take place as an emotional identity building process.

Television is oftentimes taken for granted but it is actually a complex system. The resemblance of television discourse in general as well as in talk shows to everyday language explains our interest in the communicative role that is played by television in society. Fiske and Hartley (1978:16) note that television messages, as an extension of our spoken language, are themselves a subject to many of the rules that have been shown to apply to language

use. At the same time, television presents a continuous stream of images that influence the way in which we perceive reality itself. However, let's take a look what talk shows are like as a genre.

The idea of a talk show, if not exclusively American, has been cultivated in the American way for the last four decades. In the 1960's, the first popular show in this genre was *Donahue* (Carbaugh 1996:124). Airing at unworthy airtime it was aimed at housewives and the unemployed who were home watching during the morning or early afternoon. *Donahue* gave the viewers the opportunity to speak about the issues of the day. Even though the format of the show and the topics have changed over the years, it is the reaction of the audience, the guests and discussed topics that makes the talk show what it is.

2.2 Typical features of talk shows

Talk shows captivate huge audiences. As Carbaugh (1996:125) points out, talk shows generated ideational systems. One of these is that beliefs are demonstrated about public discourse itself. In other words, the "talk" that's being "shown" has itself assumed a public life of its own. As Carbaugh notices (1996:125), in the process of showing on television this kind of talk, the talk show has cultivated certain cultural beliefs about people that participate in a show. As earlier studies have shown, televised discourse has a basic theme – be honest and share feelings. And these acts of sharing and being honest should accentuate the endless flaws of society or institutions.

One of the talk show's noticeable attributes is its intertextuality (Munson 1993:17). Intertextuality refers to the various links in form and content, which bind texts to other texts. So, each text exists in relation to other texts. Although the debts of a text to other texts are seldom acknowledged, texts owe more to other texts than to their own makers (see e.g. Kristeva 1980:69). Also all communication is intertextual in some ways and it owes a lot of its fundamental material to other media texts. Talk shows are the most dependent on the spectator-participant's intertextual cognition. The guest

may be the author of a best-selling book or the star of the latest movie or recording or a much-publicized political figure. The talk show not only engages with but also intensifies image production.

A major aspect of today's talk shows seems to be that they are sensationalized, with a strong emphasis on personal and emotional expression. Research on how viewers perceive program topics revealed that generally, controversial topics were considered best. Topics that were considered relevant and emotionally involving were rated as interesting (Livingstone and Lunt 1994:81-82). According to Munson (1993) the purpose of a talk show is to give useful information as well as to entertain. Considering a celebrity talk show that is in focus on the present study, *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*, we can notice that sensations is not the main purpose of this show but the emphasis is rather on providing information and entertaining the viewers.

A central part of any talk show is the host. His or her persona is as important to the show as the guests'. Oftentimes he/she is the reason that people follow the program in the first place. But celebrity talk shows are also appealing to the audience because people can see how famous people deal with surprising and unexpected situations, criticism and even insults, as well as how they receive praise. Television and talk shows are also a major source of information for facts that are new or unavailable from the immediate environment (Nuolijärvi and Tiittula 2000:88-89). And of course, verbal battles are an appealing part of any talk show, including infotainment talk shows.

A talk show can be regarded as an entertainment program that is intended to be funny and easy-going (see e.g. Ilie 2001). At the same time, considering goal-oriented question-answer sequences, a talk show may be equally considered to belong to the category of news interviews, as it is expected to provide information about social, political or moral issues, or in a debate program, it encourages the exchange of and confrontation of opinions. Ilie (2001:211) points out that because of those many features, talk shows have

often been referred to as 'infotainment'. In addition, judging by the considerable time devoted to casual and spontaneous dialogue, a significant part of talk show could fit in the frame of conversation.

Tolson (1991:180) claims that there are at least three main identifying features of a broadcast speech genre, 'chat'. However, not all of these features may be operating at once. The first feature is that in chat there is often a topical shift towards the 'personal' in opposite to the institutional, or towards the 'private' as opposed to the public. The second feature is that the shift may be accompanied by displays of wit (e.g. lexical ambiguities) or humour (e.g. double tenders). And the third feature is that 'chat' always opens up the possibility of transgression. It is not only reproduces norms and conventions but rather flirts with them, for example, it gives to the interviewee the opportunity interviewee questions from the interviewer.

Tolson (1991:180-181) also suggests that 'chat' is a central feature of televised public discourse and that chat is ubiquitous and constant possibility in nearly all kind of televised studio talk. Analyzing a talk show *Wogan*, Tolson (1991:181) have noticed that talk show interview is dedicated to banter. The interview conventions of the show become a pretext for the development of clever and complex forms of verbal improvisations in which both parties participate more or less equally.

2.3 Different types of talk shows

Ilie (2001:216) distinguishes three major subcategories of talk shows on American television. They are categorized according to the time they are on the air. There are early morning talk shows, for example, the *Ricki Lake show*, daytime talk shows, e.g. the *Oprah Winfrey show* and the *Geraldo Rivera show*, and the late night talk shows, for example, *Late night with David Letterman show*. The topics discussed in daytime talk shows are very challenging, problematic and controversial. They deal mostly with concerns about current issues in the public and private sphere, such as social and professional conflicts, marginalization, feminism etc. (Ilie 2001:216). Late

night talk shows are, on the other hand, entertaining and have a relaxed atmosphere. The idea behind the show is to make the viewer feel comfortable and unwind him or her after the long day. The style and the contents of daytime talk show and late night talk show are, therefore, different. The show *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* definitely falls into the latter category, because it is a comedy talk show and does not deal with any serious social or political issues.

There are, however, also other classifications of talk shows. For example, Munson (1993:7) claims that the genre of talk show has become 'messy', i.e. there are many hybridised variations of talk shows. But Carbaugh (1988:2-3), in his work on North American patterns of communication classifies talk shows into personality-centered talk shows and issue-centered talk shows. The personality centered talk show interviews a popular figure in order to give the viewers some information about the guest and his or her work. Issue-centered talk shows, as the name suggests, are focused on social issues and proceed through audience discussion and comments. Personality-centered talk shows usually deal with topics that are more personal and less controversial, and the issue-type talk shows present more social and controversial issues. Using this classification, we can assume that *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* falls in to the category of personality-centered talk shows and can be regarded as a funny and easy-going entertainment program. *Late Night* revolves around famous people, most of them are well known and therefore the presence of their personality is very strong. Conan O'Brien does not discuss serious social or political issues, does not have a certain theme for the program, but rather presents viewers with something to laugh at and have a good time. Therefore, we cannot classify *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* as an issue-centered talk show. In other words, the show of the present study is a late night talk show, which is personality centered.

Because of the popularity, coherence and prominence of the show *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* not only in America but also in other countries, and because the show is designed and based on talk, it offers a great

opportunity to study questions presented in the show and their discourse functions.

2.4 Conversational interaction in talk shows

Television discourse presents us daily with a constantly updated version of social reality and modern culture. By watching TV, people also satisfy their psychological needs. This is seen quite apparently in issue-centered talk shows. As Ilie (2001:217) points out, they have been occasionally compared to a therapy session because the show gives some participants opportunities to express their personal, physical, mental or social problems and to be confronted with reactions and suggestions.

Television talk shows play a notable part in modern conversational culture. Even though television interaction differs from everyday conversation, they still share some common features. As Nuolijärvi and Tiittula (2000:9) suggest, conversations that take place on television influence the way in which people speak and interact with each other in daily life.

In analyzing the features of television conversation it is also important to take into consideration cultural aspects of interaction because they have an effect on interpretation of interaction. Ilie (2001:214) states, that there are no universal rules for conducting a conversation, i.e. different cultures have different speaking norms and ideals as well as different social groups within the same society may follow different rules of communication.

However, according to Nuolijärvi and Tiittula (2000:17) conversations (e.g. talk shows) broadcast on TV differ from every day life conversation in two main aspects. Firstly, on TV there is always a certain time reserved for the program. Therefore, it limits the duration of interaction. Secondly, talk shows are aimed at a "third party", i.e. the audience. The viewer is the third participant even though if he or she may be not an active participant of TV interaction. The conversation is meant to be presented to the viewers and that makes talk show interaction special.

As Nuolijärvi and Tiittula (2000:18) note, conversational interaction on television is connected to the outside world and therefore it is not separate from reality. The competition to gain more viewers put pressure on the makers of talk shows. One outcome of this has been that with time talk shows became more entertaining, revealing and personal (Fairclough, 1995). Keeping the viewers watching is the main goal of the makers of tv-program and they use all the possible ways to do that. In the case of a talk show, the program makers may vary the types of special guests, from film and music stars to people with special and unusual talents, stand-up comics and so on. Beside the interview part of the show, the format may include various other features. The topics may vary a lot and nowadays one topic is not discussed for a longer period of time (Nuolijärvi and Tiittula 2000:19-20). This is true of *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*, too. The show's interviews consist of certain episodes and each episode has a different topic. When a topic changes, the interview moves to the next episode.

A viewer, however, cannot experience interaction in a talk show in the same way as the show participants do. The viewer is not able to see everything that is happening between the host and the guest. For example, the conversation between the two may start before the show is on the air, there might be commercial breaks during which the viewer cannot hear the conversation between the host and the guest. Besides, if the show is video recorded, some parts of conversation may be cut out. Therefore, the product the viewer sees is a modified version of the conversation. And as Tolson (1991:185) points out, in a contemporary talk show the interview is explicitly and transparently a performance of 'chat'. The viewer, however, often does not realize that.

Kress and Fowler (1979:63) point out, in interviews participants are differentiated by their individual purposes, their difference in status, their roles, so the mode of conversation exhibits an asymmetry. And the asymmetry is also reflected in language. The host has the power as an interviewer. He or she controls the interview: s/he starts it, s/he has the right

to ask questions, and s/he has the privilege to terminate it. Through the choices of questions, s/he selects the topics and can even introduce such structurally designed questions that no new information can be introduced. But if the interviewee fails to answer questions, it is the worst thing that s/he can commit. By not being able to answer questions, the interviewee puts himself or herself in an awkward position, i.e. s/he is seen by others as not being competent to answer questions. In that case, the interviewee may lose his/her face.[1]

Considering the arguments presented by Kress and Fowler (1979:63-64), we can assume that the status of the powerful participant is typically ascribed to the interviewer and the status of the powerless to the interviewee. However, it seems possible that also the interviewee has some power in an interview. For example, the interviewee can show his/her power in answering very briefly, showing no cooperation or directing the course of conversation to a different direction. Kress and Fowler (1979:63) mention that in interviews, the interviewee only has the right to ask questions on very rare occasions and only in situations where he/she is explicit permission to do so. However, Tolson (1991:180) points out that televised chat flirts with norms and conventions and therefore it opens the possibility for the interviewee to put questions to the interviewer. Perhaps, generally speaking, in official interviews interviewees are not encouraged to ask questions, but in less formal, conversational type of interview the interviewee is definitely allowed to ask questions. Consider, for example, a comedy talk show *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* or *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*. Interaction in such shows does not necessary follow the rules of formal interviews or conversations. Oftentimes the comical effect of the shows is achieved through breaking the rules and norms of conversation.

'Face' is developed as a technical term in explaining ways of being polite. P. Brown and S.C. Levinson in the late 1970s defined face as a basic 'want' of individuals. They distinguished negative face (the want that one's freedom of action should not be impeded by others) and positive face (the want that one's wants should be desirable to others also). The basic strategy of politeness is to minimize the threat to an addressee's 'negative face' and enhance their 'positive face' as much as possible. (The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics 1997).

2.5 The structure of tv interviews

The interviewers as well as interviewees are well aware that interviews are highly structured. The same events are reproduced in each of them: an opening sequence in which the interviewee's identity is established, in which s/he is 'put at ease' and in which the institutional role of the interviewer is clarified (Kress and Fowler 1979:79). In the case of *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* there is first an introduction of the guest to the audience. The guest comes out and sits down on a chair close to the host. Then the host and the guest exchange greetings and formal questions such as 'how are you today?' are asked. After that there is some conversation and joking about general things. The aim of this is to put the guest at ease and make him or her more comfortable in the situation of a TV-interview.

Then there is a point at which participants get down to business and, make a transition to the core of the interview. For instance, the host of the show may ask about the celebrity's new projects. During this phase there are typically sequences of questions and responses. An interviewee may also want to ask a few questions, clarifying something or just having a chat with the host. And finally there is the dismissal sequence. That is where the interview is wrapped up (Kress and Fowler 1979:79). One of the ways that Conan O'Brien brings the interview to an end is that he (once again) promotes the guest's new project and specifies where and when a new project (e.g. a movie, a book or a music album) will be available to the general public.

In short, we can say that interviewee's and interviewer's roles are achieved through their patterns of linguistic behaviour which they have also encountered regularly in similar verbal interactions. Besides the linguistic format, there is a notable stereotyping of the social roles of the participants that are enacted through the tone of speech, dress, posture, eye-movement etc (Kress and Fowler 1979:79). By analysing talk show interviews, its linguistic format and discourse functions of questions asked from the guests,

we have the chance to see how the host uses different types of questions to conduct the interviews.

2.6 Patterns of communication in talk shows

Ilie (2001:210-211) points out that patterns of communicative and social behaviour in talk shows can be associated with more than one discourse type. For example, introductory and closing parts of a talk give the impression of entertaining program, designed to be funny and easy going. But the recurring goal-oriented question-answer sequences may be considered to belong to the category of news interviews, because they are expected to present information concerning social, political or moral issues and encourage the exchange and confrontation of opinions. Ilie (2001:211) suggests that this is why talk shows have often referred to as a subcategory of 'infotainment'. Judging by the time devoted to casual and spontaneous dialogue, a significant part of the talk show could well fit in the frame of conversation.

At the same time, talk show interaction has some unique features and differs, for instance, from news interviews in allowing the show guests to ask questions and make non-elicited comments. And as traditionally the show host generally supposes to have control over asking questions, this uniqueness gives an opportunity to challenge pre-established asymmetrical power relations. Therefore, Ilie (2001:211) notes, the relations between the host and the guests, and the host and the audience, are constructed and re-constructed and can involve new and unpredictable and even provoking forms of interaction.

In talk shows information is provided either directly, i.e. by breaking the news or advertising a product or an event, or indirectly, by means of the interviewing technique. Ilie notes (2001:214-215) that like news interviews, talk shows demonstrate more often than not, question-answer sequences. However, Ilie (2001:215-217) adds that unlike proper interviews talk shows are not just information-focused. They do not claim maximum objectivity,

because there is emotional involvement of both the interviewer and the interviewee. Furthermore, the questioning process is sometimes interrupted in talk shows by side-comments or evaluation of answers made by the show host or by the participants. In this respect, talk shows have a similar frame as debate programs.

2.7 Interactional goals of a talk show

Ilie (2001:217-218) states that talk shows also share several similarities with casual conversation. The dialogue of talk shows can be less topic-centered and more unpredictable, especially when it occurs between the participants that are well acquainted with each other, for example, friends, relatives etc. Talk shows are not strictly information-focused, they do not claim maximum objectivity, and they do not rule out personal and emotional involvement of both the questioner and the respondent. Therefore, this kind of dialogue can be regarded as conversational discourse. On the other hand, at the same time talk show conversation is rule-governed and limited by specific constraints. It follows more often than not a question-answer pattern, in which the participants of the show are ascribed certain roles: the host is the interviewer and the guest is an interviewee. So, talk show discourse can be equally regarded as a type of institutional discourse. On the basis of such arguments Ilie (2001:218) suggests, that it seems reasonable to consider the talk show discourse mixed discourse, calling it semi-institutional discourse, which integrates discourse's institutional and non-institutional features.

Ilie (2001:149-150) points out that institutional dialogue and conversational dialogue share the pursuit of interactional goals. At the same time, institutional dialogue also aims at achieving institutional goals. Regarding those institutional goals, talk shows are meant to accomplish a socializing and educational function, such as influencing, reinforcing or challenging opinions, address different social, professional and age groups and so on. Ilie (2001:150) also states that semi-institutional context of talk shows is manifested in less predictable topics and subtopics shifts, interruptions,

unprompted participant interventions, audience-oriented repetitions and audience-oriented questions.

In contrast to informal everyday conversation, the participants of a talk show do not usually know each other very well. However, talk show host knows the guests in most cases, as they are invited to a pre-interview (Penz, 1996:26). All talk shows have developed characteristic openings which are conveyed via verbal and non-verbal means (i.e. music, applause etc.). The opening sequences of the talk shows presented by Penz (1996:30) include the introduction of the topic, the introduction of the guests by providing personal description in relation to the topic, information about sequential structure and finally, the first question addressed to the guest(s).

2.8. Topics in talk shows

Tiittula and Nuolijärvi (2000) note that in personality-centered talk shows the topics are determined according to the guest. The questions of the host are centered on the personality of the guests, and s/he can bring up their topics of interest. In fact, any aspect mentioned by the guest can direct the route of conversation. When the guests break the question-answer pattern of conversation, the course of conversation becomes unpredictable. For example, the change of topic can become unpredictable or the tone of conversation can change from friendly to aggressive. According to Tiittula and Nuolijärvi (2000:123), that is what makes the program entertaining.

It is hardly possible to establish any generally valid and prototypical features of talk shows. Ilie (2001:241-249) points out that one of the reasons is that they represent endlessly and rapidly changing media phenomena. Another reason is that talk shows constantly reconstruct and redefine themselves by violating and transgressing their conventions. Depending on the personality of the show host, the nature of topic, the general background and views of participants, as well as the type of audience, talk shows can display deviations from conversational and institutional norms to varying degrees. For example, talk shows can combine spontaneous and purposeful talk, non-

institutional and institutional roles, non-controlled and host-controlled talk, interlocutor-oriented, message-oriented and multiple audience-oriented talk

Penz (1996:45) considers talk shows to have institutional nature. He states that in contrast to everyday conversation where the introduction of topics is managed locally, the topics of talk shows are planned ahead of time. The host is the one who is in charge of topic choice and topic progression. It is next to impossible for any of the other participants to introduce a new topic (Penz, 1996:64-65). However, I do not quite agree with this statement, but follow Ilie's (2001:244) view, who says that talk shows have a semi-institutional nature, which is manifested in less predictable topics and subtopics shifts. On the other hand, as there are different types of talk shows, it is possible that certain features and characteristics of talk shows described by Penz (1996) are more appropriate for a particular type of talk show but not for talk shows in general.

Talk shows are speech events whose main goal is to entertain. According to Penz (1996:65), the guests are invited to talk shows because they can make a specific contribution to the overall topic and therefore to entertain the viewers. The host is usually specific about what topics he/she wants to discuss with her/his guests. Therefore, due the time constraint of the show, he/she does not want to lose any time discussing aspects that he/she does not consider relevant to his/her goals. Questions are often employed very skilfully by the hosts as ways to develop topics and arguments. However, respondents may attempt to accomplish topic shifts in their answers as well (Penz, 1996:65-69). Perhaps, that is what also Ilie (2001:149-150) means when she talks about subtopic shifts. A topic shift is only possible if the host does not insist on his/her line of questioning by reformulating a question that he/she thinks was not answered properly (Penz 1996:69).

Shuy (1982:118) suggests that one of the characteristics of a conversation is that once a topic is introduced, it does not tend to be reintroduced or recycled over and over if it is resolved. If the listener does not respond to a certain topic, one does not bring up the same topic over and over again

(Shuy 1982:118). I think this observation also applies to personality-centered talk shows. If the guest does not respond to a topic brought up by the host, the host will not insist on discussing it. S/he does not bring up the same topic if the interviewee does not respond to it. Penz's (1996:69-73) observation of talk show material supports what Shuy (1982) argues about recycling topics. Because the focus of Penz's (1996) research is on issue-oriented talk shows, we can not at this point say how and if the same topic can be introduced over and over if the interviewee in a personality-centered talk show does not respond to it. However, it may be that the host of *Late Night* may, in fact, violate the characteristic of conversation mentioned above just to achieve the humorous effect that is one of the pillars of show.

2.9 Audience participation in talk shows

Penz (1996:73) who studied mainly issue-centered talk shows such as *Oprah, Geraldo, Donahue* etc., points out that the audience questions are only invited once the main aspects of a topic have already been dealt with. By the time members of the audience get a chance to ask questions, the host has already acquired the main information from the guests in the form of an interview. Different hosts vary in how much audience participation they allow in their shows. There is however, no doubt that the main topics of the show that are presented to the guests, are determined by the host and the production team. The audience is only allowed to bring subtopics by their questions. (Penz 1996:73-75.) Again, since *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* is not an issue-centered but a personality-centered talk show, and does not employ audience questions, this aspect is not relevant for this study.

Penz (1996:85-86) observes that, for example, Phil Donahue grants many turns to audience members but also frequently invites audience reactions such as laughter and applause. In order to provoke such reactions in people the host has to design the content, stress and intonation of utterances as well as the placing of pauses. This requires specific skills from the host. Despite the fact that this true of *Donahue*, an issue-centered talk show, I think that these characteristics of the host are quite relevant to the present study of the

personality-centered talk show as well. Laughter and applause are especially important to the show *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*, because they are the carrying forces of the show. Also pauses are an important part in overall talk show interaction. Conan O'Brien uses them to invoke reaction from the audience. Sometimes a pose is a signal to the audience that their reaction is expected, they should act in response to what is just said by laughing or applauding. In other times, a pause during an interview may function as an invitation for more information. Also, an interviewee may pause before responding to a question if s/he did not quite understand what the question was and needs more elaboration from the interviewer. The interviewer may use pauses as an asset to provoke opinions about certain things or to just let the interviewee time to express something else that s/he wants and considers appropriate at that time.

The role of guests and experts in talk shows is to present their stories and opinions. These are usually brought out through the questions of the host. However, as Penz (1996:87) points out, talk shows often consist of longer stretches of talk displaying the character of interviews, combined with passages that resemble conversation. And if we assume that the turn-taking system is least restricted in conversation, then the sequences of talk shows that are closest to everyday conversation, display most self-selection by the guests and experts. Penz (1996:87) also notes that self-selection in some cases will mean interrupting others because selecting oneself means taking a possible turn from another speaker.

2.10 Interruptions in talk shows

Interruptions are typical of conversational interaction and therefore are present in talk show interaction. They have been considered as major strategy to express power in discourse (see eg. Kress and Fowler 1979:34). However, Goldberg (1990:890) states that recent researchers have become aware of the fact that interruptions are not and do not need to be synonymous with power. She (Goldberg 1990:890) also differentiates between power and non-power interruptions. Power-oriented interruptions

are generally perceived as impolite, rude and intrusive. They express the interrupter's antipathy, aggression, dislike or hostility. These kinds of interruptions are usually treated as an act of conflict, competition or non-involvement. Non-power interruptions or rapport-oriented interruptions are, on the other hand, expressions of empathy, affection, solidarity, concern or interest. They are viewed as acts of collaboration, cooperation and mutual orientation.

In the context of talk shows power-oriented interruptions are used by the talk show hosts to control turn-taking, development and choice of topics as well as to pin down evasiveness of the speaker or to highlight certain aspects of the presented stories, as well as to accomplish speaker change (Penz 1996:94-96). Penz (1996:96) also states that only on very rare instances a guest in a talk show may interrupt the host and it usually occurs when the guest engages in a dispute with the host. This point of view about interruptions made by the guest in talk shows seems doubtful to me considering the talk show of the present study. I will come back to this in the analysis section. We must also keep in mind that it is not always clear whether the speaker had the chance to finish what s/he wanted to say before s/he is addressed with the next question (Penz 1996:97). Therefore, the identification of what really is an interruption is quite subjective.

The second type of interruptions distinguished by Penz (1996) are rapport-oriented interruptions. As Penz (1996:97) points out, the self-selection of speakers when a prior speaker has not completed a turn, has often been mistaken for a violation of sequencing rules. However, Tannen (1984:78) and Shciffrin (1984:54) claim that this kind of strategy can be interpreted as cooperative. In support of this point of view, also Ferrara (1992:215-216) states that in most cases joint production, i.e. self-selection, is not to be seen as an attempt to seize a speaker's turn or to change a topic.

Tolson (1991) suggests, that in all types of television interviews there is space for interviewees to negotiate their role. Therefore, to a greater or lesser extent we can observe interviewees challenging the presuppositions in

interviewers' questions. The interviewees display wit and verbal skills sometimes at the expense of the interviewer. And although in certain contexts such behaviour by interviewees would seem 'breaking the rules', it is by no means always edited out. (Tolson 1991:193-194.) In our case, as the focus of the study is on questions in *Late Night with Conan O'Brien,* this feature discussed by Tolson is relevant to us. We can observe whether the interviewee "follows the rules" and answers the questions or if s/he deviates from the expectations and challenges the presuppositions of a television interview.

Unlike everyday conversation, talk shows have time limits. Due to a particular time limit, the closing of talk shows differs from the pattern found in everyday conversation. The closing of a conversation in everyday life is normally interactively achieved. However, as Penz (1996:45) points out, in talk shows the host does not seem to negotiate the closing with the guests or the studio audience. In fact, the closings are exclusively initiated and brought to an end by the talk show host and the production team.

The features of talk shows that are presented in this chapter include some general and prototypical characteristics of interaction in talk shows. To summarize, talk shows can be associated with more than one discourse type, like an entertaining program, news interview and have similarities with casual conversation. Talk shows are considered to represent mixed discourse or semi-institutional discourse (see eg. Ilie 2001) and there is no sharp line between the conversational aspects and institutional aspects of talk shows. Previous research of conversation interaction in talk shows are presented as a starting point for further research on patterns of questions that is in focus of the present study.

2.11 Previous research on questions in talk shows

Questions are an important resource for managing broadcast talk. With the help of different questions and response invitations journalists make transitions from one topic to another. They can restrict the focus of topics,

set up expectations for appropriate next action or just select the speaker (eg. Heritage and Roth 1995). Although conversational analysis and discourse analysis have been applied to the examination of question-answers adjacency pairs[2] in many types of discourse of face-to-face interaction, such as courtroom interaction, classroom interaction, doctor-patient dialogue and news interviews, talk show discourse is relatively unexplored. As Ilie (1999:976) points out, unlike news interviews, which are information-oriented, talk shows have an informative as well as entertaining functions and apart from typically institutional dialogue have features of casual conversation. When we examine question-response sequences in talk shows it is important to take into account the institutional roles assigned to speakers, the interactional roles they assumed themselves, the relevance of the topic, the assumptions and the more or less controlling role of the show host, as well as the reaction of the audience.

As Clayman and Heritage (2002:191-192) note, news interview questions can express particular aspects of the public roles of the interviewer and interviewees. Questions can also express elements of the personal identities of both. They can be aimed at the concerns of the questioner, answerer, overhearing audience member or all three simultaneously. Questions can have complex grammatical and rhetorical constructions to support or undermine the positions of participants on current issues. The authors claim (Clayman and Heritage 2002:191-192) that the interviewer's questions have certain features. First, they establish particular agendas for interviewee responses. Second, they are likely to contain presuppositions and/or assert propositions on discussed topics. And third, questions can contain preferences. In other words, they are often designed as to invite certain type of response over another.

Since talk shows are organized in terms of questions and answers (see e.g. Penz 1996), a representative of the institution, the talk show host, direct the

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2 Adjacency pair is two successive utterances by different speakers, where the second is of a type required or expected by the first, for example, a question followed by an answer or a greeting followed by a greeting in return (Matthews, 1997:8).

questions while the guests are expected to answer them. According to Agar (as cited in Penz 1996:102) "questions are used by the institutional representative to control the flow of information". In my opinion, applying this information to talk shows, we can say that questions are not only used to control the flow of information, but also to elicit information and channel it in relation to the topic(s). Harris (as cited in Penz 1996:103) notes that besides controlling the interaction, questions may constrain the discourse, because the syntactic choices of the questioner may structure possible responses. In other words, the form of a question influences what will be regarded as an appropriate answer. Regarding the present study, it would be interesting to see if specific types of questions presented by the host correlate with the guests' answers. For example, if certain types of question initiate long and elaborative answers or, on the contrary, short ones or, just mental acknowledgments.

Questions are central to the structure of talk shows and quite effective in exploring the guests' professional and personal lives. At the same time questions reveal the show host's personality. As was argued above, besides being institutionally rule-governed and topic-centered, talk show interaction displays features of conversational discourse, such as spontaneous role-switching and question-asking done by the guests and the audience's shifting role as an addressee and addresser. Therefore, as Ilie (1999:976) notes, talk show interview does not every time follow a certain order noticeable, for instance, in TV interviews, where the interviewer's questions are regularly followed by interviewee's responses.

According to Piirainen-Marsh and Koskela (2000:248) question design in broadcast settings in general, provide the potential that questions carry particular agendas further. In other words, through addressing the participants and inviting certain types of responses, the interviewer proposes specific ways of treating the recipients. Through question design and by calling forth shared aspects of participants' identity, the questioner invites recipients to respond to the action and therefore s/he shapes the course of the following talk. Clayman and Heritage (2002:192-196) claim that the

prefaced question design, i.e. the one that contains one or more statement prior to the question, give interviewers room to maneuver, because they allow the interviewer to escape from the constraint of interviewee's last response. Using prefaced questions, the interviewer can, therefore, construct a context of his/her own choice for the question s/he is going to ask, where as simple questions leave the matters raised in the interviewee's last response as the context for next question.

As Penz (1996:69) points out, in talk shows questions are used by the host in a very skilful ways to develop topics and arguments, but that the respondents may accomplish the topic shifts in their answers as well. It is, however, possible only if the host does not reformulate a question that was perceived as not being answered appropriately (Penz 1996:69).

Clayman (2001:428) points out that agenda shifts in TV-interviews can be obscured in other ways, too. Before answering a question, the interviewee can first refer to, characterize or paraphrase a given question. Those operations can modify the question in a way that facilitates and conceals the shift of the agenda. Therefore, not only can the interviewee change the surface form of the response to fit the question, but s/he can also adjust the question to fit the response that they plan to give. (Clayman 2001:428.)

Due to its semi-institutional nature, question-response adjacency pairs in talk shows are less predictable and less norm-regulated than in institutional context of TV interviews, but they contain a larger range of questioning patterns. What we loosely call questions, in other words, utterances that are syntactically interrogative, are perceived by language users as answer-eliciting. Requiring or expecting an answer is often interpreted as requiring or expecting information. Ilie (1999:978-979) regards answer-eliciting and information-eliciting questions as standard questions. However, not all interrogatives fulfil this standard question function. She point out (Ilie 1999:979) that apart from informative answers, questions can bring out also other types of responses, such as answers of confirmation, permission-granting, suggestion acceptance and so on, or no answer at all but rather a

meaningful gesture. Those kinds of questions are regarded as non-standard questions.

In talk shows the host's use of questions is subordinated to the institutional settings and purpose of interaction, which is to challenge, evaluate, express, accept or reject ideas, opinions and points of view, to handle controversies and to benefit the audience. This is one of the reasons why not all questions are meant to elicit answers. Sometimes the same question is generated with different motivations and has different goals in different contexts. Applying this principle, Ilie (1999:980-981) classifies standard questions in terms of response elicitation. There are answer-eliciting questions (the ones that require a verbalized answers, e.g. *What's the lowest moment in your life? You tell me. How low did you get?*)[3], information-eliciting questions (require information but not necessary a verbalized answer, e.g. *How many of you have heard the charges against Jennifer Levin? Just raise your hands.*), action-eliciting questions (require the performance of an action by the addressee, e.g. *You guys, can you stand up?*) and mental response-eliciting questions (do not require a verbalized nor a non-verbalized answer, but rather a silent acknowledgment and preferably agreement with interlocutor's message, e.g. *Now, isn't this almost a continuation of the insult that Jennifer Levin has been receiving? I mean, the fact that she's not here, she's dead, he killed her.*). (Ilie 1999:980-981.)

However, Ilie (1999:982) points out, that questions cannot be regarded as discrete linguistic units. Information-eliciting, answer-eliciting and action-eliciting questions are not separate categories, but rather certain points on a continuum. For example, standard questions are usually both, information-eliciting and answer-eliciting. But in general, it is noticeable, that the stronger the action elicitation, the weaker the information elicitation and vice versa, says Ilie (1999:978-979). In talk shows most of the information-eliciting and answer-eliciting questions are asked by the host, who also adds

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[3] The examples of this paragraph are taken from Ilie (1999:980-981).

institutional authority to them. Those types of questions represent and emphasize host's controlling and monitoring role in the interaction.

Apart from institutionally functioning questions, the show host and the guests use a number of non-standard questions. Non-standard questions are those, that do not exhibit a primarily answer eliciting or information eliciting functions. Just like in conversational interaction, talk show dialogue contains mixed types of questions that fulfil several functions simultaneously. Ilie (1999:996-997) suggests that such questions are expository questions, rhetorical questions and echo questions, which can, however, co-occur or overlap with each other. Rhetorical questions are perceived as more argumentative, expository questions tend to be more argument prefacing, and echo questions are more argument eliciting. Also, the author notes that the less the question is perceived as a request of information or for an answer, the more it tends to express his/her personal views and to elicit the interviewee's acknowledgment and/or agreement.

One of the reasons that talk shows have such a wide range of question types is because talk shows display one-to-many and many-to-one interaction plus a dialogue based on unpredictable question-response sequences like contributions of the host, of the guests or members of the audience. Ilie (1999:982) explains the phenomenon by common conventions of talk shows that are appropriate for casual conversation and which are normally conformed by talk show participants. (Ilie 1999:982.)

In short, question design has a significant impact on the conduct on interviews. In comparison to question patterns in news interviews, the occurrence of question-response adjacency pairs in talk shows is less predictable and less conventionalized. However, talk show host introducing most of information-eliciting and answer-eliciting questions ensures his/her controlling and monitoring role in the talk show interaction.

3. FUNCTIONS OF QUESTIONS

Quirk et al. (1985:804) define questions as a semantic class which is mainly used to seek information on a specific point. This function of information seeking reflexes in complexity of sentences, length of utterances and use of paraphrase. Along with turn-taking, interruptions, topic choice, use of pronouns, indirectedness and amount of talk questions are among strategies that have been registered to reflect the relationships between speakers. Quite a lot of research has been made on a relationship of power between speakers. For example, Foucault (as cited in Penz 1996:14) points out power does not have to be reserved to one individual only, the power may shift from one to another, from the one below to the one above. In the context of talk shows that would mean that the power shifts form the interviewer to the interviewee. Berens (as cited in Penz 1996:11) claims that on television different roles such as interviewer and interviewee and their asymmetrical relationship is manifested, for example, in syntax. That can be seen in complexity of sentences, length of utterances and use of paraphrase. The relationship between the interviewer and the interviewees will be discussed in more detail in the analysis part of the study.

Levinson (1979:89) claims that questions and especially question sequences are used to display authority. In other words, a question can have an impact on what will be regarded as an appropriate answer. Further, Linke (as cited Penz 1996:103) has found that questions reflect the roles that the speakers have in the show. However, Philips (1985:226) states that status, power and authority are also reflected in the answers. Connor-Linton (as cited in Penz 1996:103-104) stresses the fact that questions are a way of introducing new topics and in order to be cooperative, the interviewee needs to deal with topics in question. Furthermore, Levinson (1979:91) states that questions are also a useful way of expressing an argument.

As Greenbaum and Quirk (1990:465) points out that we choose to talk about things that we think our hearer does not know but wants to know. Even such conversations where a participant keenly wishes to talk and inform, rather

than listen and be informed, often begin with a question. For example, consider the question *Have you heard about her new movie?* The questioner will be attentive to the reply in two respects: whether his or her listener has heard about somebody (referred by '*her*' in the example), and whether he or she seems to want to hear. Only if the questioner is satisfied on both counts, he/she will go on.

If a listener does not present a question, a speaker may insert questions for himself/herself. The function of the inserted question is maybe to enliven and dramatize the narrative by making a query that the speaker thinks is on the listener's mind. (Greenbaum and Quirk 1990:466.) In the context of a talk show this type of question function seems to be appropriate, because a talk show is supposed to be dynamic and attention-grabbing.

Basing on the arguments presented above we can assume that in talk show questions have a variety of functions. It would be interesting to see what types of questions are used in the talk show and what discourse functions they have. Are certain types of questions used to stream the conversation in a certain direction, to request information, to specify certain things, to get a mental response etc.

4. THE CLASSIFICATION OF QUESTIONS

Questions asked during the interviews are part of the interaction and therefore cannot be interpreted apart from the analysis of the interview itself. Questions in a context of talk shows are not restricted to interrogative forms only (see eg. Penz 1996, Ilie 1999).

For investigating the roles of questions in talk show interaction I am going to introduce a classification, which is based on Greenbaum and Quirk's (1990), Penz's (1996) and Ilie's (1999) classifications of questions. This classification includes formal categories of questions, complex questions and functional categories of questions.

4.1 Formal categories of questions

Formal categories of questions consist of yes-no questions, declarative questions, tag questions and wh-questions. Let's take a closer look at them.

4.1.1 Yes-No questions

According to Schiffrin (1987:104), yes-no questions provide respondents with a choice between two possibilities – positive or negative. In other words, it is sufficient for the respondent to either confirm or deny the proposition in question. Harris (as cited in Penz 1996:112) states that this type of questions limits the appropriate answer. She also notes that the questions that can receive a minimal answer 'yes' or 'no' tend to receive this kind of answers in asymmetrical discourse situations (Penz 1996:112). In other words, if one of the participants of the conversation has more power than the other, the answer often tends to be just 'yes' or 'no'.

Connor-Linton (as cited in Penz 1996:112-114) claims that a yes-no question gives a complete, ready-made proposition and that it expresses a view of the world of the questioner that the addressee did not help to construct. A yes-no question puts the addressee in a subordinate role in the discourse, terms of which are defined by the questioner. This type of question also allows topical control.

However, Penz (1996:115-120) notes that posing a yes-no question can also produce a very elaborate answer. It can give the addressee the chance to produce a long turn or an extensive narrative. He also found that minimal responses 'yes' and 'no' rarely occur after this type of questions, which are usually followed by some kind of explanation. The interviewee may also interpret the question as an invitation to tell a story and since one of the goals of a talk show is to produce talk, the presentation of stories is a very important communicative goal.

Greenbaum and Quirk (1973:192) note that by placing stress on a particular part of yes-no question, the speaker can stress the interrogation of certain information, which is assumed to be unknown. For example, *Was this your idea? vs. Was this your idea?*

4.1.2 Declarative questions

Declarative questions restrict the respondent to either confirm or deny the proposition. Greenbaum and Quirk (1990:235-236) state that declarative questions have the form of a declarative, except they have a final rising intonation, for example, *You'll be there?* Declarative questions also invite the hearer's verification. Penz (1996:120), however, disagrees with Greenbaum and Quirk and claims that in the context of talk shows propositions do not need to have final rising intonation. Statements with falling intonation can also be interpreted as questions. Jucker (as cited in Penz 1996:120) who studied news interviews also shares this view that a declarative question does not need to have a rising intonation because "the activity type of news interview ensures that the turns of the interviewers are automatically interpreted as questions". Relying on Penz's and Jucker's (as cited in Penz 1996:120) arguments, I am going to consider the possibility of declarative questions to have a rising as well as a falling intonation. Here is an example taken from my data:

> C: *=I know you are no longer on MTV, you've moved on to bigger and better things.*
> B: *yes, si:r* ((nods))

A large number of affirmative questions lead to affirmative answers. One of the reasons why declaratives are answered affirmatively is because the host wants to confirm information or a fact he or she already knows. According to Penz's (1996:121) research, more than half of the confirmations are not just minimal responses but provide extensive elaborations. Declarative questions can also be used to stress certain points to the audience (Penz 1996:121-122). For instance, in the previous example the host emphasizes

the fact that the guest is '*no longer on MTV*' and has '*moved on to bigger and better things*'.

4.1.3 Tag questions

Tag questions are declarative statements with postponed tags through which speakers seek agreement with the content of the statement (Schiffrin 1987:105). Tag questions suggest that the speaker has certain assumptions and inclines towards a certain answer. That means that tag questions are always conductive and never neutral (Tsui 1992:92). Penz (1996:124) suggests that tag questions are the most predictable among other types of questions because they direct the answer towards 'yes'. This characteristic of tag questions suggests that it controls the direction of answers in interaction.

This contradicts the widely held belief that tag questions are a feature of powerless speech (see Lakoff 1975). Spender (1985:9), however, argues that tag questions can be either tentative of forceful. Their function depends on the context of interaction. In general, in his study of American talk shows Penz (1996:124-126) found that tag questions are the most conductive and with a strong tendency towards short and affirmative answers.

Here is an example of a tag question taken from the present data:

> B: *everybody's crying at the end of the concert, right?*
> C: *right*

In this example, the tag question conducts the statement '*everybody's crying at the end of the concert*' toward an affirmative answer and makes sure the statement is short, see the answer (*C: right*).

4.1.4 Wh-questions

There is no strict distinction between wh-questions and polarity[4] type questions. In talk shows, wh-questions often function as story openers. They allow the guests to present their stories and opinions according to their own views. (Penz 1996:127.) An example of a question of this type: *What else do you do?*

Penz (1996:126) claims that wh-questions control discourse in asymmetrical speech because they are used to request the information from respondents at the lower hierarchical end. Other researchers (Harris 1984, Kress & Fowler 1979, Bennett 1985, as cited in Penz 1996:126-127) found that in asymmetrical discourse wh-questions are less controlling than polarity types questions such as Yes-No questions, declarative questions and tag questions because they do not set the respondent's answer to a high degree.

As it was mentioned before, wh-questions often play a role of story openers in talk shows. By replying to such questions the respondents can present their own story or opinion. Even if the topic is restricted by the host, the guest can reply in a way that is the most favourable to him/her (Penz 1996:126-127). In his study of talk shows, Penz (1996:127) found that wh-questions occurred when the host wanted to get a narrative, description or arguments from the guests. Wh-questions were also used a lot in combination with more restrictive types of questions, which channel respondent's possible answer.

In terms of answering options the most restrictive type of wh-questions is the one that asks for specific facts, for example, *How old are your children?* Wh-questions can also be a combination of different syntactic forms with wh-element at the end. In this type of wh-question the information is presented first and the question at the end. For example, *And you used to do what?* (Penz 1996:128-129)

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[4] Polarity means the opposition between positive (e.g. Will you come?) and negative (e.g. Won't you come?) (Matthews, 1997:285).

4.2 Complex questions

4.2.1 Multiple questions

Complex questions include multiple questions and alternative questions. Let's take a closer look at these types of questions. Multiple questions consist of two or more questions in a sequence. Linke (as cited in Penz 1996:132-133) distinguishes two types of multiple questions. The first type addresses the same topic but refers to its different aspects and therefore requires different topical focuses in the answer. An example of this is *Why are you out of jail now, and how did you get caught?* In the second type, the questions may be related in terms of content but the first question is more open-ended and general and the following question is more restricting. An example of this type of question is *How do you see it? Were you looking for a free ride?*

Linke (as cited in Penz 1996:132-133) argues that multiple questions are restricting because it makes possible to narrow down the possible range of answers. Therefore, multiple questions are an important tool of topic control and conversation channelling in talk shows. However, Penz (1996:134) notes that the addressee may avoid giving specific information asked in the second question and stress, for example another aspect of the second question or just concentrate on the first part of the question. This strategy gives a choice of answers to the respondent.

4.2.2 Alternative questions

Greenbaum and Quirk (1990: 232) also distinguish so-called alternative questions. They define them as questions that expect a reply from one or two or more options presented in the question, as in *Would you like to go out or stay at home?*

According to Greenbaum and Quirk (1990: 238) there are two types of alternative questions. The first one resembles a yes-no question, e.g. *Would you like to watch BBC, CNN or MTV?* The second type of an alternative question resembles a wh-question, e.g. *Which channel are you watching, BBC, CNN or MTV?*

The first type of alternative question differs from a yes-no question because of its different intonation. Greenbaum and Quirk (1990:238-239) point out that instead of final rising tone of a yes-no question, alternative question contains a separate nucleus[5] for each alternative. A rise occurs on each item on the list, except the last one, where there is a fall of intonation indicating that the list is complete. Ignoring the difference in intonation between a yes-no question and alternative question can lead to misunderstanding. For example:

alternative: A: Shall we go by BUS ´ or TRAIN `?

                    B: By BUS `.

yes-no: A: Shall we go by bus or TRAIN ´?

                    B: No, let's take the CAR `.

(examples from Greenbaum and Quirk, 1990:239)

The second type of alternative question, the one that resembles a wh-question, according to Greenbaum and Quirk (1990:239) is a compound of two separate questions: a wh-question followed by an elliptical alternative question. Therefore, a question like *Which channel are you watching, BBC, CNN or MTV?* can be a reduced version of *Which channel would you like to watch? Would you like to watch BBC, CNN or MTV?* An alternative question spells out the negative possibility. In other words a speaker assumes that the person does want to watch TV and that the answer would include one of the presented alternatives, in our case either BBC, CNN or MTV. Therefore this type of alternative question can introduce a petulant tone to the speaker who asks the question.

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[5] Nucleus is the vowel or vowel-like element in a syllable. (Curtiss et al., 2000:589)

4.3. Functional categories of questions

This categorization of questions is based on questions' functions in interaction. Such functions can be to elicit information, an answer, an action or a mental response, to achieve an opinion manipulation, to elicit a repetition or invite a clarification etc. In this study questions are analyzed in terms of message orientation, interlocutor orientation and audience orientation.

4.3.1 Standard questions

Functional categories of questions can be categorized into standard questions and non-standard questions. Standard questions are those that expect an answer. As mentioned in earlier on page 26, standard questions are divided into answer-eliciting questions, information-eliciting questions, action-eliciting questions and mental response-eliciting questions.

4.3.1.1 Answer-eliciting questions

Answer-eliciting questions are those that require a verbalized answer (Ilie 1999:980). For example, *What can you do to relax, how do you relax?* This example is taken from the data and contains two answer-eliciting questions that are separated by a comma. Answer-eliciting questions trigger various kinds of responses from the addressee, as long as it is verbalized (Ilie 1999:981).

4.3.1.2 Information-eliciting questions

Information-eliciting questions require information, but not necessarily a verbalized answer. Here is an example of information-eliciting questions taken from the data: *I'm told you're just travelling, you were in Canada pretty recently.* This question is primarily meant to get certain information,

verbalized or not. The guest can either verbally respond or answer the question by just nodding or shaking her head. Therefore verbalized answer is not obligatory.

4.3.1.3 Action-eliciting questions

Action-eliciting questions require the performance of action by the addressee (Ilie 1999:981). For example, *you guys, can you stand up?* (The example is taken from Ilie 1999:981). This question has action-eliciting function and is intended to make the addressees act in a certain way. In other words, this question is a request to perform an action and stand up.

4.3.1.4 Mental response-eliciting questions

Mental response-eliciting questions require neither a verbalized nor a non-verbalized answer, but a silent acknowledgement of, and preferably agreement with, the speaker's message (Ilie 1999:981). Here is an example taken from the data: *se:e, can I just say this about Europe, and I know this is gonna sound very ignorant (0.6) but (.) every time I hear about the way they celebrate something in (.) in like Europe, it always sounds (.) sa:d (.) compared to what we've got. you know?* This question functions rhetorically and elicits no response at all but rather is meant to reinforce some kind of awareness in the addressee.

4.3.2 Non-standard questions

Non-standard questions do not exhibit a primarily answer-eliciting or information eliciting functions (Ilie 1999:979). Non-standard questions include expository questions, rhetorical questions and echo questions.

4.3.2.1 Expository questions

Expository questions tend to occur in the introductory utterances of the show host at the beginning of the interview and in connection with topic shifts. Expository questions do not elicit a verbalized response because their function is to address the audience and foreshadow information about the topic do be discussed. Expository questions occur in initial positions and there are usually no preceding utterances that they hint at. (Ilie 1999:980.) For example (taken from the data), *I know you are no longer on MTV, you've moved on to bigger and better things. but you are still passionate about the music scene.* Here the expository question does not only address the interviewee but also the audience by informing it about the guest. At the same time the question also foreshadows information about the topic to be discussed, i.e. guest's passion for music. This question occurs in the beginning of an episode and therefore is not prompted by any preceding utterances.

4.3.2.2 Rhetorical questions

According to Greenbaum and Quirk (1990:240) a rhetorical question is interrogative in structure but has a force of strong assertion. The speaker does not expect an answer to it. Ilie (1999) states that rhetorical questions in cross-examinations are used to achieve opinion manipulation, power manipulation when used by counsels and power challenging when used by witnesses. However, rhetorical questions in talk shows are usually used to shape arguments and influence public opinion. This can happen by defending or attacking particular points of view or by reaching a shared agreement, rather than just winning a debate by imposing a particular viewpoint. (Ilie 1999:979-980.) Here is an example taken from the data: *you are kidding?* This rhetorical question is used to shape public opinion by

reaching an agreement with the audience and the guest and does not expect an answer.

4.3.2.3 Echo questions

Greenbaum and Quirk (1990:240) claim that echo questions repeat part or all of what has been said. The authors divide echo questions according to their functions into replicatory echo questions and explicatory echo questions. Replicatory echo questions do so as a way of confirming their content. For example:

> A: *The Browns are emigrating.*   B: *Emigrating?*
> A: *I'll pay for it.*   B: *You'll WHAT?*

(examples from Greenbaum and Quirk 1990:240)

Explicatory echo questions (which are always wh-questions) request clarification and have a falling tone on the wh-word.

For example, A: *Take a look at this!*   B: *Take a look at WHAT?*

> A: *He's missed the bus again.* B: *WHO's missed the bus?*

(Greenbaum and Quirk 1990:241).

Echo questions may also convey an attitude of surprise and disbelief with regard to the interlocutor's preceding utterance as well as emphasize the speaker's challenging attitude (Ilie 1999:980). Let's take a look at the echo question from the data.

> 135 J: we don't know, ((laughs))   136 C: you don't know?

From the additional context of the conversation (see interview 3. for more details) we can claim that by introducing the echo question the host shows disbelief and surprise.

In this chapter I have discussed different types and categories of questions. Formal categories of questions, complex questions and functional questions as well as their subcategories were reviewed. This classification will be the basis for my further analysis of questions in the talk show and will be applied in the analysis part of the study.

5. RESEARCH DESIGN

5.1 Aims and methods

The goal of this study is to identify the formal and functional categories of questions used in the talk show under investigation on the basis of the classification of questions presented earlier in the study. First, the formal categories of questions will be identified and then the questions will be analyzed regarding what kind of discourse functions they play in the interviews. It would be interesting to see if there are any relation between the formal types of questions and functional types of questions, if particular formal types of questions are used for specific discourse functions. Are questions used to request information, to get permission, a confirmation, an acceptance or agreement, to request an action, to get the guest into an argument or just to elicit a mental response. Is there a relation between questions and the interview structure and what functions the questions have as parts of the interviews, i.e. opening, developing the topic of the interviews, closing and how does the host use the questions to direct the course of the interviews.

The method of the analysis follows the principle of conversation analysis (CA). In 1960s and 1970s Harvey Sacks in collaboration with Gail Jefferson and Emanuel Schegloff developed conversation analysis in attempt to describe the social organization on talk-in-interaction from the perspective of the participants themselves (Ohara and Scott 2003:153). Conversation analysis studies conversations of all kinds. Conversation, as naturally occurring talk, has been analyzed not only empirically through formal description but also with regard to the speakers' commonly shared knowledge that underlies beneath conversational competence through linguistic and social rules and conventions (see e.g. Ilie 2001). As Ilie (2001:213-214) points out, the tracking how the participants display their understanding of the talk to each other, conversation analysts can become aware of how participants manage turns at talk. Conversation analysis has

been concerned with the various ways in which talk is structured and socially organized thorough the interactants' joint coordination. Through various details of language use, participants orient to the roles and tasks, which are also relevant for their talk (Ilie 2001:213-214).

CA analyses the structure of the interaction. It is assumed that conversation is a highly structured activity (Clayman and Maynard 1995:14). CA tries to describe the mechanisms that the participants use in conversation to make it orderly and understandable. Besides linguistic characteristics of interaction, also such features as laughter, pauses, repair etc. must not be ignored. In CA actions are described as they emerge from data.

Conversational analysts see conversation an event that is jointly constructed by the participants, therefore co-operation of the speakers is stressed in CA studies. The meaning of an utterance is seen as according to the speakers interpretations and the context. The recipient's interpretation is the key factor, he/she makes the interpretation and understanding of the ongoing talk.

In the present study with the help of CA we are going to explore formal and discourse functions of questions in the American comedy talk show *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*. Goodwin and Heritage (1990:288) state that CA uses naturally occurring conversation as data and, therefore, describes talk-in-interaction from the perspective of the participants and uses descriptive mechanisms to make the conversation understandable. The method of CA offers us a possibility to analyze the questions of the talk show from the point of view of the participants, i.e. how they interpret the questions of the show and what is achieved by these questions. Since CA is inductive (Levinson 1983:295) the conversation in my data is described as it emerges.

5.2 Data

For the present study I videorecorded four episodes of the American TV talk show *Late Night with Conan O'Brien.* This is one of the most popular comedy talk show in the United States as well as in Europe. The episodes of the show were recorded during the fall of 2002 from a Finnish TV channel Subtv.

The selection of the data was dictated by the reasons of availability as well as personal interests. At the time of the collecting of data there were no other comedy talk shows broadcast on TV. It also seemed to me that *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* corresponds to a generally held notion about what an average personality-centered talk show is like.

Generally, an episode of *Late Night* consists of the host's stand-up monologue and a couple of interviews with special guests, i.e. movie actors/actresses, musicians, people possessing special talents as well as other famous people. The interviews with special guests last for about 7 to 11 minutes with no commercials in between the interview. During the interviews, among other things, the guests also promote their new projects such as movies, TV-series or various public appearances. However, the interviews are not only concentrated on the new projects of the guest but also include more or less 'regular chat'. However, the topics of the interviews are carefully planned in advance. The audience, on the other hand, may not fully realize that and perceive the show as natural talk happening between two people.

From the four episodes of the talk show, four interviews were transcribed. One interview was taken from each episode. To ensure reliability, the interviews were chosen so that two of the interviewees are men and two are women and all of them are native speakers of English. The age of the interviewees varies between young middle age to middle age. In order not to be effected to my own previous knowledge about the guests of the talk show, at least one male guest and one female guest chosen were not familiar to me beforehand. In other words, even though they were obviously

celebrities, at least in the United States, I had no previous knowledge or impressions about them.

The transcriptions of the interviews were conducted according to the transcription conventions developed by Jefferson (McIlvenny 2002:ix). Since the interpretation of interaction is quite subjective, potential over- or under-interpretations cannot be excluded. Besides, even the most elaborate transcription conventions can sometimes show less than perfect reproduction of particular features, such as tone of the voice, hesitations, mispronunciations etc. Consequently, the transcriptions of the interviews do not claim to be perfectly comprehensive, but rather the ones of several possible ones. I am also aware that my data collection is a very limited sample of talk show discourse.

6. QUESTIONS OF THE TALK SHOW AND INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

First, let's take a look at the interview structure of the show and observe if there is a certain question pattern(s) in the interviews. Generally speaking each interview of *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* consists of several episodes and each episode has its own theme or a storyline. Each episode starts with an introduction of a topic. An introduction can take the form of a statement, an explanation or a question posed to the guest. In other words, from the very beginning of the interview the host of the show channels the conversation in a certain direction and the interviewee cooperates with the host, reacts to questions and statements, i.e. the host and the guest have a conversation. Each episode of the interview consists of smaller units, or sequences. Each episode has a different topic but sequences within one episode have the same topic. Sequences are so-called sub-episodes. Each sequence consists of a question, a response and a possible follow-up. Follow-up can be an evaluation or an addition to a question-response adjacency pair. According to Ilie (1999:995), question-response adjacency pairs are less predictable and less conventionalised in talk shows than for instance in news interviews or in courtroom interrogation. For example, the

follow-up in a context of talk shows can be either repetitive or evaluative, and while repetitive follow-ups are present in institutional dialogue too, evaluated follow-ups are not, because they are too subjective and biased (Ilie 1999: 996). Let's take a look at the example (1).

Example 1.

C = Conan O'Brien
A: female guest

33 C: it's funny I've always pictured you (.) as a kid you must have been (.) <u>different</u>
34 than the other kids,
35 A: ((nods))
36 C: cause you've got a <u>very</u> unique sense of humour.
37 A: .hhh yeah well (.) you know (.) wh (.) you know how you used to play like house
38 or Secretary when you were a little kid, [I used to
39 C: [yes (.) I did
40 A: ((laughs))
41 A: You used to all the time hahahah
42 C: I live to play [secretary
43 A: [hahaha ((laughs))
44 A: You get out your pencils ((gestures type-writing))
45 C: = yeah
46 A: ehm (.) I used to always kind (.) I was always kind of attracted to the (.) to the
47 trashy (.) cocky and wrong side of the things (.)
48 A: = so I used to always like be like "oh, y'know, I'll play (.) I'll play house, but I
49 wanna be the, you kno, the (.) the unwed mother", you know.
50 C: = hahahah the unwed [mother game ex…
51 A: [I yeah I'll play secretary but, but my secretary has a
52 drug problem [and that
53 C: [right, right
54 A: = and well, you know, people would be like "we are nine"
55 C: hahahah ((laughs))
56 C: let's not
57 A: = let's not go there
58 C: = let's not play this anymore
59 A: ((laughs))

This example consists of one episode, whose theme is A and her unique sense of humour. The sequences inside the episode are its subtopics. For example, the first sequence is on lines 33-37 (A is being different than the other kids), the second sequence is on lines 37-59 when A takes the floor in the story and tells about playing secretary and playing house. In other words, in example (1), there is one episode, which consists of two sequences.

Let's analyse those sequences in terms of the question-response-follow-up sequence. The first sequence (see example 2 below) starts with a declarative

question posed by the host. The declarative question starts on lines 33-34 *'it's funny I've always pictured you (.) as a kid you must have been (.) different than the other kids'* and continues on line 36 *'cause you've got a very unique sense of humour.'* On line 35 the guest nods in order to confirm the information and then responds to the second part of declarative question *'.hhh yeah'* (line 37). Here, the question-response adjacency pair (or pairs, depending if you consider the declarative question as one question or two questions) is very clear. There is a question (lines 33-34, which continues on line 36) and a response (lines 35 and 37). This sequence does not have a follow-up.

Example 2.

→33 C: it's funny I've always pictured you (.) as a kid you must have been (.) different
→34 than the other kids,
35 A: ((nods))
→36 C: cause you've got a very unique sense of humour.
37 A: .hhh yeah

In the second sequence (see example 3 below) A starts to explain what she was like as a kid. This sequence is dependent on the previous sequence and would not make sense without it, i.e. it would be difficult to follow the conversation if A suddenly started telling about herself being a child and playing secretary. We can interpret A's statement in lines 37-38 *'well (.) you know (.) wh (.) you know how you used to play like house or secretary when you were a little kid, [I used to'* as a declarative question to which Conan responds *'[yes (.) I did'* (line 39). After that there is an evaluative follow-up uttered by A, lines 40-41, *'((A laughs)) you used to all the time hahahah'*, another repetitive follow-up by Conan (line 42) *'I live to play [secretary'* and then another follow-up (lines 44-45) *'A: you get out your pencils ((gestures type-writing)). C: =yeah'*. On the other hand, A's statement in line 37-38 can be interpreted not as a declarative question but as a rhetorical question, which does not need an answer. A most likely does not expect an answer because she continues to tell about herself but gets interrupted but Conan (lines 38-39). Without that interruption (line 39, *'[yes (.) I did'* A would most likely carry on the story. However, due to this interruption A continues to tell about her childhood only in line 46. We can consider lines

46-55 as a second part of the sequence because the purpose and the main idea is still the same, i.e. A talks about herself as a child. So, the initiation of the second part of the second sequence is on lines 46-49 and line 51. In line 50, Conan comments on the initiative lines 46-49. Since there is no question in lines 46-49, we cannot expect a response. Instead we get a comment from the host (line 50) *'=hahahah the unwed [mother game ex...'*. Then there is another initiate-comment pair, in lines 51-52 and 54 there is the initiation of the story and in line 53 there are Conan's comments. We assume that the initiation in lines 51-52 and 54 is one initiate, because Conan's comment in line 53 and A's initiate in line 52 happen simultaneously. And finally, on line 55 Conan laughs and that can be interpreted as a follow-up of the sequence. He finds A's story funny. Another Conan's follow-up is in line 58 *'=let's not play this anymore'*. This follow-up uttered at the same time as A continues her story (initiation) in line 57 *'=let's not go there'*. Conan's follow-up is a repetitive follow-up, because he repeats A's idea about 'let's not go there vs. let's not play this anymore' (lines 57-58).

Example 3.

37 A: well (.) you know (.) wh (.) you know how you used to play like house
38 or Secretary when you were a little kid, [I used to
39 C: [yes (.) I did
40 A: ((laughs))
41 A: You used to all the time hahahah
42 C: I live to play [secretary
43 A: [hahaha ((laughs))
44 A: You get out your pencils ((gestures type-writing))
45 C: = yeah
46 A: ehm (.) I used to always kind (.) I was always kind of attracted to the (.) to the
47 trashy (.) cocky and wrong side of the things (.)
48 A: = so I used to always like be like "oh, y'know, I'll play (.) I'll play house, but I
49 wanna be the, you kno, the (.) the unwed mother", you know.
50 C: = hahahah the unwed [mother game ex…
51 A: [I yeah I'll play secretary but, but my secretary has a
52 drug problem [and that
53 C: [right, right
54 A: = and well, you know, people would be like "we are nine"
55 C: hahahah ((laughs))
56 C: let's not
57 A: = let's not go there
58 C: = let's not play this anymore
59 A: ((laughs))

So here, in the episode of Example 1, each sequence starts with a question. The first sequence starts with a question posed by the host *'it's funny I've always pictured you (.) as a kid you must have been (.) different than the other kids, ... cause you've got a very unique sense of humour.'* (lines 33-34 and 36). The second sequence starts with a question posed by the guest of the show *'well (.) you know (.) wh (.) you know how you used to play like house or secretary when you were a little kid'* (lines 37-38). Therefore the episode may consist of one or more questions and sequences of each episode start with a question or some kind of initiation.

In talk shows the majority of questions are uttered by the show host. As it was mentioned above By uttering information-eliciting and answer-eliciting questions the host ensures his/her controlling and monitoring role of the interaction (Ilie 1999:996). However, sometimes the interviewee takes the floor during the interview. He/she carries on the story and does most of the talking, but when the topic of the episode is somehow familiar to the host, he also participates in developing story quite a lot. The host's participation does not always consist of presenting questions but of adding information or commentating. As Ilie (1999:995) point out, he acts as a talk-monitor but also as a co-participant in the discussion.

7. QUESTIONS AND TOPIC DEVELOPMENT IN *LATE NIGHT WITH CONAN O'BRIEN*

Several topics are discussed during the interviews of the present data. The topics reflect the goals and the purpose of the program. The host, as a representative of the TV institution is responsible for choosing the topics. The majority of topic invitations are done by the host. By asking questions the host manages the interview and keeps it going. Questions restrict the conversation and give it a certain direction. Guests usually talk about the topics that are introduced by the host. On some occasions, however, the guest may introduce or carry on with the topics that do not reflect the actual question of the interviewer. In the content of this type of comedy talk show this is not sanctioned because the conversation of late night talk show is

quite informal or semi-institutional (see e.g. Ilie 1999). The semi-institutional context does not restrict the conversation to obey strict rules, where departure from the norm is often followed by overt sanctions (Drew and Heritage 1992:27). The semi-institutional context of this program can be seen in how participants orient to the rules of everyday conversation as well as to the rules of formal interaction. Interaction in the talk show is spontaneous and purposeful at the same time. The turn-taking system of the interviews does not always follow the pre-established order.

The special guests are usually professionals in their own fields. Therefore, professional skills of the guests cannot be questioned by the host. Conan usually talks to the celebrities acknowledging their professional abilities. He might joke about the life of a star but he rarely questions or doubts the professional skills of the people appearing on his show. The guests usually talk about their experiences in the movie or music business and sometimes also about their private lives. Those kinds of the things are considered to be the most interesting to the audience. The consumers are the audience to whom movies and music are a part of entertainment and, accordingly, they expect the talk show to be entertaining.

Even though the roles of the questioner and the respondent are distributed in a way that the host is primarily in a role of questioner and the guests in the roles of respondents, the roles sometimes switch during the conversation. Question-asking may be initiated by the guest. And while in everyday conversation question-asking coming from both participants is a typical feature, it is quite atypical of formal TV programs such as news interviews (see. e.g. Ilie 1999).

In the talk show *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* the guest do not usually initiate the topical lines but rather content shift in topics and therefore introduce different points of view or a new story or information to the host and the audience. For example, in interview with J (see example 4 below), Conan asks her about working with Mick Jagger (line 210): '*What's that like (.) working with someone like (.) Mick Jagger? That's gotta be [very-]*'.

J interrupts his last question and tells something about working with Jagger (see lines 211-217). Then Conan asks: '*what's he look like in person? I haven't actually got any good-, I saw him once, and I wanna ask (.) he seemed like he was smaller than I [though]...*' (lines 221-222). J responds to Conan's question by talking about Jagger's appearance (lines 223-253). Conan does small interventions during J's response but judging from his comments he does not want to change the subject. So, in example 4 the host initiates the topical lines and the guest just responses to the questions posed to her.

Example 4.

→210 C: what's that like (.) working with someone like (.) Mick Jagger? That's gotta be [very-]
211 J: [yeah] I I so
212 wish I had actually a scene with him, (.) there is only one moment when he sees me and Andy
213 Garcia walk away. But he is fantastic in the movie. And I did get (.) to sit in a make-up trailer with
214 him (.) for an hour. <I had my make-up done when he was having his make-up done>, and (.) we
215 were just chit-chatting about acting. And then al- and then he left to go and do a scene, and I just
216 started screaming. (0.5) "It's a rock-and-roll lege:nd! <I was just talking to a rock-and-roll le->"It
217 (.) was so (.) beyond me that I was in a room with (.) the Rolling (.) Stone himself.
218
219 C: right. now=
220 J: =eh,
→ 221 C: what's he look like in person? I haven't actually got any good-, I saw him once, and I wanna ask
222 (.) he seemed like he was smaller than I [thought]
223 J: [he's tiny]
224 C: and then he has a g<u>ia</u>nt like parade flowed he:ad. ((showing, imitating the head))
225 ((audience laughs))
226 (1.0)
227 C: he really does, he's got like a big giant Mick Jagger head that looks like he's putting over his other
228 he:ad. ((imitating how one is putting the other head on))
229 ((audience laughs))
230 (1.2)
231
232 C: and then he walks around like this kind of ((imitating Mick Jagger's walking style)) (1.0) okay, I
233 made that up too, but I'm just-
234 ((audience laughs))
235 (0.9)
236 C: [is he-]
237 J: [he's] tiny, he's very sma:ll. I mean [he's (.) small ((laughs))
238   [hahaha]
239 J: I was surprised [just how-
240 C: [he's a wee little man.
241 J: he's wee. he's wee thing (.) but he's a (.) he's [lovely

242 C: [hahaha
243 J: an' an' [an']
244 C: [I bet] he loves hearing tha:t, he's gotta check this out.
245 J: but=
246 C: =he is a <u>weed</u> little ma:n
247 J: no [no (.) I mean
248 C: [he lives]   [under a leaf in a forest.]
249 ((audience laughs))
250 J: [he's- he's very (xx)]
251 ((audience laughs))
252
253 J: it's (.) you know, he's very (.) he eats very (xx). It's (.) he d- spends a lot of energy up on stage.
254 C: right. right.
→ 255 J: so:, I'm gonna go and actually I got invited to a stones party. (.) on Sun[day
256 C: [you're kidding?
257 J: so I'm going to my very first rock-and-roll party. yeah. I'm very [excited
258 C: [you've never been to a rock-and-roll- [I mean I know like
259   I've [been to
260 J: [no ((shrugs))   [oh, I-
261 C: oh, <u>Abba</u> threw a party once [that I've been to.
262   [((J laughs, audience laughs.))
263 (0.8)
264 C: we really rocked, we had some fondue and then right to bed
265 ((audience and J laugh))
266 (1.8)
267
268 C: what? ((laughs)) what is it?
269 J: that's good! ((points to Conan))
270 C: yeah. was it was it ((laughs))
271 ((audience laughs, J laughs))
272 (1.0)
273 C: I got one ((laughs))
274 ((J laughs))
275 (1.5)
276 C: was it, was it, but that's co:ol. a Rolling Stones [party
277 J: [I know, I don't know what to expect but we are hoping they are going
278 to suddenly play. I think they are starting a tour in LA now. so, it's (.) I'm running home too

However, after talking about Mick Jagger (line 253) '*it's (.) you know, he's very (.) he eats very (xx). It's (.) he d- spends a lot of energy up on stage*', J changes the subject and starts telling that she has got invited to the Stones party (see line 255). This is an example of a content shift within the topic. First, the host and the guest talk about working with Mick Jagger, then about his appearance (both of these subtopics are introduced by the host) but then the guest starts talking about being invited to a Stones party. The main topic of a conversation is still related to Mick Jagger but there is a content shift within a topic from Jagger himself to the party that his rock group is organising.

In everyday conversation the change of topic may be gradual and without specific markers (see e.g. Drew and Heritage 1992), and it is difficult to say where one topic ends and another begins. However, here in my data, in a context of talk show interaction, the topics of the interview do not always evolve gradually. For example, in the interview with A (see appendix 2, interview 1.) even though the host poses some specifying questions to the guest, the majority of questions result in the change of topic. The host of the show has his own agenda and due to the limited amount of time he needs to ask certain questions from his agenda for the benefit of the program and the audience. For example, the interview with A (Interview 1) consists of several not really related episodes. Each episode has its own topic and starts with a question. Sometimes there is more than one question in each episode but the change of episode is always marked by a question. In channelling the conversation and changing the topics the host follows his agenda and covers all the topics that he planned to cover and questions play a role of channelling the conversation in the wanted direction. For example, in the interview with A (see interview 1) the topics of conversation go from greetings of the guest (A), talking about A when she was a kid, talking about her getting recognised on the street for being famous, the fact that she recently travelled to Canada, asking A what does she do to relax and then, finally, talking about how A used to do little performing bits on the show. After the final topic or the final interview episode, Conan just cuts off to advertising *Saturday Night Live*, the show where A is a regular cast member and the interview ends at that. In that interview questions help to make transitions from one topic to another and from one episode to another.

However, in other interviews from my data, questions do not only play the role of topic change. Questions may also appear inside episodes and then they play a specifying role. The longer the interview, the more specifying questions the host asks. That can be explained by the fact that there is more airtime and therefore time to discuss a certain topic in more detail. The longest interviews of my data are the interview with J (interview 3) and the interview with B (interview 2). Both interviews consist of episodes with several questions in each episode. The shorter interviews, interview with A

(interview 1) and interview with S (interview 4) consist of several episodes but generally only with one or two, rarely three questions in each episode.

If we take a look at longer interviews (interview 2 and interview 3), we will notice that each episode in the interview contains several questions but there is no specific question pattern for each episode. Different types of functional questions are posed to the guests, for example answer-eliciting, information-eliciting, mental response-eliciting questions, expository and rhetorical questions. The same thing can be said about the formal types of questions, i.e. there are declarative questions, yes-no questions, wh-questions, multiple questions and so on. The interaction and context of each episode is so unique that question choices are not possible to predict. I will talk about this in the later part of my analysis. However, the questions that are asked within one episode channel the conversation within an episode and help to expose and uncover different aspects of a theme. The host may ask specifying questions if he considers that something mentioned by the guest is not quite clear to the audience or to himself or he may just comment on presented information. Let's take a look at the part of one episode from the interview 3.

Example 5.

→89 C: now you, eh (.) grew up, this is (.) you know it's almost Halloween here.
90 J: tomorrow is
→91 C: tomorrow's Halloween and (.) yo:u grew up in England. (.)
92 J: right.
→93 C: and (.) I just (xx) like they don't <u>have</u> (.) Halloween¿ [(xx)]
94 J: [they] didn't use to when I was growing up there. (.) ehm (0.6) it's
95 just gotten (.) trendy. I mean (.) because our cultures are (.) intermingling I think now (.) Halloween is
96 (.) eh- sort of universal,
→97 C: so they're just starting to get it [over there¿
98 J: [they're just starting to get it. My girlfriends who have kids now have to dress up
99 their kids <and go trick or treating> but when I was a kid, they didn't have
100 Halloween then. (.) Guy Fawkes' day which is November fifth. (0.5) a:nd,
101
→102 C: = wh- what do people do on Guy Fawkes' day?
103 J: you (.) have a big bonfire, that's where they burn all the <u>witches</u>. (1.0) [and
→104 C: [se:e, can I just say this about Europe, and I know this is
→105 gonna sound very <u>ignorant</u> (0.6) but (.) <u>every</u> time I hear about the
→106 way they <u>celebrate</u> something in (.) in like Europe, it always sounds (.) sa:d (.) compared to what
→107 we've got. you know?
108 J: eheheh ((laughs))

109 ((audience laughs))
110 C: and I I- (.) please spare me out for a second. we have like (.) we have like Christmas. wow, Christmas
→111 is great. we get (.) presents and (xxx) and you talk to someone (.) you know, in England and when
→112 you go you get Christmas? They are like (.) well we just have a little warm bun and then
→113 we go to sleep. ((looks confused))
114 ((J laughs, audience laughs))
115 (2.0)
116
→117 C: okay, what about Easter? what are you doing on Easter? you know we have a big meal and they
→118 are like "oh, we just have a little spot tea and then go to bed, you know¿
119 ((J laughs, audience laughs))
120 (1.4)
→121 C: (then) you talk to him, what about Halloween? <"oh no, we don't do that. we just have a little cold
122 beef and then <u>right</u> to bed (xx).">
123 ((J laughs, audience laughs))
124 (1.2)
125 J: we celebrate Christmas
126 C: okay, I made that part up. but-
127 ((J laughs, audience laughs))
128 (1.2)
129
130 C: the important thing is (.) [bad Europe, (.) good America
131   [((J laughs))
132 J: [oh that's (xx)
133 C: [that's where I am trying to get to.
134 J: oh okay, (.) that's it.
135 (0.5)

We can say that the theme of example 5 is how Brits celebrate Halloween and other holidays. The whole episode on Halloween is not presented here due to its length. Only a part of it is shown in example 5 but that is enough to demonstrate the case. The episode starts with four declarative questions (see lines 89, 91, 93 and 97). The first two questions '*you know it's almost Halloween here*' and '*tomorrow is Halloween and (.) yo:u grew up in England (.)*' are a confirmation of something that the host already knows and those questions are answered by J very briefly (i.e. line 90: '*tomorrow is*' and line 92: '*right*'). The third declarative question (line 93: '*and (.) I just (xx) like they don't <u>have</u> (.) Halloween¿ [(xx)]*') requests a confirmation. Conan says that he has heard that they don't have Halloween in England and J interprets the question as a prompt to provide the clarification (see lines 94-96). This time J's answer is more elaborate than in the previous two responses. This is due to the fact that this time Conan's question acts not only as a way to confirm or deny something. There is also some uncertainty

in the question and therefore the respondent interprets it as a need for clarification. The same thing happens in the next question (line 97: '*so they're just starting to get [over there¿*'). This question has a slightly raising intonation and also needs clarification. The respondent elaborates on the answer (lines 98-101). In this elaborate answer J mentions Guy Fawkes' day and that brings up the host's next question (see line 102: '*=wh- what do people do on Guy Fawkes' day?*'). This is a wh-question and functions as a way to request information on. Since it is quite unfamiliar holiday to the American public, the host wants to clarify what happens on this day. However, instead of letting the guest tell in length about Guy Fawkes day, the host interrupts her (line 104) and presents a rhetorical question:

> →104[se:e, can I just say this about Europe, and I know this is
> →105 gonna sound very <u>ignorant</u> (0.6) but (.) <u>every</u> time I hear about the way they <u>cele</u>brate something in
> →106 (.) in like Europe, it always sounds (.) sa:d (.) compared to what
> →107 we've got. you know?).

This question does not expect an answer and its function is to make fun of Europe by stating that all celebration in Europe "sound sad" compared to what they have got in America. The guest and the audience react to this rhetorical question by laughing.

Another interesting feature that we can see in the example 5 is that the host asks questions and then answers them himself. For example, consider lines 110-113:

> 110 C: and I I- (.) please spare me out for a second. we have like (.) we have like Christmas. wow, Christmas
> →111 is great. we get (.) presents and (xxx) and you talk to someone (.) you know, in England and when
> →112 you go you get Christmas? They are like (.) well we just have a little warm bun and then
> →113 we go to sleep. ((looks confused))).

Here, Conan tells a story and pretends to speak in British people's voice. He portrays himself as a questioner, asking e.g. '*and you talk to someone (.) you know, in England and when you go you get Christmas?*', and then replies to his own question imitating the respondent and using indirect speech, e.g.

'*they are like (.) well we just have a little warm bun and then we go to sleep*'. In this case, the question posed by the host is not directed at the guest of the show but is a part of the story the host tells. And as a part of the story, the host presents and answers the questions himself. We can observe the same phenomenon in lines 117-118:

> →*117 C: okay, what about Easter? what are you doing on Easter? you know we have a big meal and they*
>
> →*118 are like "oh, we just have a little pot tea and then go to bed, you know¿.*

In those lines Conan tells a story and he asks a question as a participant of this *story 'okay, what about Easter? what are you doing on Easter?*' and then he also presents the response of the conversational partner, e.g. '*oh, we just have a little pot tea and then go to bed*'. Another example can be seen in lines 121-122:

> *121 C: (then) you talk to him, what about Halloween? <"oh no, we don't do that. we just have a little cold*
>
> *122 beef and then right to bed (xx).">.*

So, as a storyteller Conan presents questions and responds to them and in this way he portrays a dialogue.

Let's take a look at the other interviews and see what kinds of question patterns there are. In the interview with A, a female guest (interview 1), the host uses quite a lot yes-no questions to introduce new topics. For example, the episode that deals with getting recognition on the street is introduced by a yes-no question (lines 60-61 and 63). This questions starts a new episode of the interview and we notice that the host introduces the subject for discussion, i.e. '*I mean you, you've done eh eh upright citizen's (xxx) and you've been on... a lot, but now you are on Saturday Night Live (.) regular cast'* (lines 60-61) in order to clarify the situation and therefore his question. A confirms the statement by nodding (line 62). And then, in line 63, the host presents the actual yes-no question as he meant to ask in the very beginning (line 60), '*Do you get recog (.)*' but then interrupted himself to make further clarification, i.e. ' *I mean you, you've done…*' etc.

Example 6.

→60 C: Do you get recog (.) I mean you, you've done eh eh upright citizen's (xxx) and
→61 you've been on … a lot, but now you are on Saturday Night Live (.) regular cast
62 A: ((nods))
→63 C: = Are you getting (.) recognised a lot now when you walk on the street
64 A: = you know I don't get recognised that much but I actually got a great remark the
65 other day.
66 A: = I don't think it was because somebody recognised me
67 A: = There was a one hand (?) street and there were these (.) these two guys unloading
68 a truck (0.6) and a..
→69 C: = Were you alone or?
70 A: I was, I was among a sea of many different women, ah and, and one guy turns to
71 the other guy and says like "hey Bobby, why don't you ask these girls why they left
72 their asses at home"
73
74 ((audience laughs))
75
76 A: and and I was like "Thank you! [I did leave my ass at home, hahaha!"
77 C: [((laughs))
78 C: [Uhuh

The second question of this episode part of which is presented in example 6

is also a yes-no question, see line 69 *'=Where you alone?'*. It is a specifying

question and requests more information about the story. The guest responses

to this question by telling that she was alone (line 70) and continues to tell

the story, see lines 70-76.

Another interesting feature that is present in the data is that sometimes, the

host misinterprets the answer of the guest on purpose and asks "dumb"

questions in order to be funny. Let's take a look at example 7.

Example 7.

→184 C: what- eh (.) so you're not gonna dress as anything or?
185 J: I'm gonna get by wi- I gotta do something cause my seven-year-old niece said to me (.) eh, "you
186 can't come (.) if you're not gonna dress up". (.) So I have to find something [(xx)
187 C: [that's a nice seven-
188 year-old.
189 ((audience laughs))
190 J: so maybe I'll borrow your outfit and (.) go and (.) be you.
191 C: oh that'd be a big hit, at the [party
192 J: [hahaha ((laughs))
193 ((audience laughs))
194 (0.6)
195
196 C: yes, this oversized (.) suit from Sears, is me being [Conan O'Brien

197 J: [I don't know what to go as. I truly- I've been-
198 I I'm gonna go and buy a wig and a mask or something.
199 C: right.
200 J: =I'll do something=
201 C: =you'll do it the last minute.
202 J: there was a Rock mask actually, you know the Rock? (0.8) the Rock?
203 C: yeah, the wrestler the Rock=
204 J: =yeah
→205 C: I thought you were just gonna go as a rock ((spreading hands))
206 J: no ((laughs))
207 ((audience laughs))
208 (0.8)
209
210 C: I'm like you are here to do that ((laughs))
211 ((audience laughs))
212 C: let's <u>do</u> [it.
213 J: [it was in the window, when think maybe I thought it's the ro:ck.
214 C: I'm a chunk of co:arse.
215 J: hahahaha
216 ((Julianna laughs, audience laughs))
217 (1.7)
218 C: what a great idea! ((laughs))
219 J: that too.

Here, Conan and J talk about Halloween and dressing up for it. The host asks J if she is going to dress as anything for Halloween (line 184). Among other things, J considers to use a Rock mask for the party she is going to (line 202). She is not sure if Conan knows what she means and she asks him '*you know the Rock? (0.8) the Rock?*' (line 202). Obviously Conan does not realize straight away what J means, because J repeats 'the Rock' twice with raising intonation and there is a small pause (0.8) between the repetitions. The host, however, finally understands what J means, see line 203. But in line 205 he presents a declarative question '*I though you were just gonna go as a rock ((spreading hands))*'. If we watch the video clip of this episode, we notice that uttering his declarative question Conan looks serious but his gestures, i.e. spreading hands, is his way to show that yes, I am that stupid that would think that you would go to the party as a rock, as *a chunk of coarse* as he specifies in line 214. By presenting his declarative question (line 205) he is playing dumb and tries this way to entertain the audience. He succeeds in that, as J and the audience laugh (lines 206-208). By specifying his joke '*I'm a chunk of co:arse*' (line 214) and the audience and J laugh once again (lines 215-217). Thus the host sometimes pretends to be dumb, asks "stupid" questions and that way entertains the audience by making fun of himself.

The questions presented above are typical to the talk show of the study, however, there are no specific question patterns for interviews. In other words, different types of questions are asked during the interviews and there is no specific question pattern that is followed in each interview. The host usually initiates the topical line and the guests initiate the content shifts within the topic. Different types of questions are used by the host during the interviews. Questions in talk show interaction have two functions. The first function of questions is to change the topic of conversation, to move from one episode to another in order to cover many different topics during the short time given for each interview. The topics of conversations do not always change gradually. Sometimes the change on topic invited by a question from the host may change quite abruptly. The second function of questions in talk show interviews is to channel the conversation within episode, i.e. the host may confirm information, ask for clarification, specification, invite more collaborative answers from the guest or use questions to make fun of himself or the guest. The longer the interview the more specifying questions there are within one episode.

We also noted that not only the host but the guest may also present questions. It is quite atypical for the TV-interviews but is possible in the present talk show because of its semi-institutional context. But since the topic of this research is only on questions presented by the host of the show, we will not pay further attention to the questions asked by the guests.

8. DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS OF QUESTIONS IN THE TALK SHOW

Questions in talk shows are generally related to the purpose of interaction, which can be to challenge, comment, accept, reject or evaluate ideas and opinions and to entertain the audience. The basis of this classification according to their function in interaction is presented on pp. 23-27 (see also Ilie 1999). In this part of the analysis we are going to look at questions according to their functions in the talk show interviews with the help of Ilie's (1999) categories of questions.

8.1 Standard questions

According to Ilie (1999:980) not all questions are meant to elicit informative answers. Ilie (1999:979) classifies questions according to their functions, into standard and non-standard questions (see above, pp. 23-27). Standard questions are those which require and expect an answer, and non-standard questions do not exhibit an answer-eliciting or information eliciting functions. As it was mentioned above (pp. 22-27) standard questions are divided into answer-eliciting questions, information-eliciting questions, action-eliciting questions and mental response-eliciting questions. Non-standard questions are expository, rhetorical and echo questions.

Now, using Ilie's (1999) classification, let's take a closer look at what types of questions are present in the interviews of our data. We must, however, consider the fact that question categories are not disjunctive. For example, information-eliciting, answer-eliciting and action-eliciting questions represent different degrees of elicitation on a continuum (Ilie 1999:982).

8.1.1 Answer-eliciting questions

Answer-eliciting questions are those which require a verbalized answer (Ilie 1999:980). For example, *What can you do to relax, how do you relax?* In this example, there are two answer-eliciting questions are separated by a comma. Answer-eliciting questions trigger various kinds of responses from the addressee, as long as it is verbalized (Ilie 1999:981). The talk show interviews of the present data contain quite a lot of answer-eliciting questions. This is not surprising, since the basic characteristic of the talk show is its question-answer pattern. However, some interviews contain obviously more answer-eliciting questions than others. This is not related to the length of the interviews: longer interviews can have fewer answer-eliciting questions than shorter interviews. Compare, for example, a long

interview with B and a short interview with S. The interview with S contains at least twice as much answer-eliciting questions than interview with B.

Let's take a closer look at the questions that require a verbalized response. The first thing that we notice when looking at answer-eliciting questions in the data is that the majority of them are wh-questions. Wh-questions often function as story openers, they request information, ask for specific facts, and are less controlling than, for example, yes-no questions.

Example 8.

→113 C: Now ehm is that (.) eh-y-you. What can you do to relax, how do you relax?
→114 C: Do you ever do anything to just calm down?
115 A: ((nods)) Well, the schedule is pretty rough (.) ehm eh on the show, so I decided to
116 eh (.) take a friend's advice and check out this Chinese ↑herbalist ((trying to make an
117 eye contact with Conan))
118 C: uhuh
119 A: The Japanese guy and that's Chinese medicine
120 A: = he is this really amazing guy in New York (.)
121 ((audience laughs))
122 C: That's confusing all [right ((nods))
123 A: ((laughs))   [hahahaha   ((audience laughs))
124 C: There's should be a law against [that
125 A: [=yeah
126 A: and (.) he was an amazing healer, but he grabs your wrist ((imitates that)) and
127 this is just like (.) you know, he's grabbing and he's just like "oh! Your spleen is very
128 happy!" (.) ((holds Conan's hand imitating the herbalist))
129 ((audience laughs))
130 C: [(   )
131 A: ["Oh you your kidney says "I'm very ti:red" (.)
132 A: stuff like that.
133 ((audience laughs))

Here, the new episode starts with multiple questions. There are as many as three questions in a row (lines 113-114). The first two questions in line 113 '*What can you do to relax, how do you relax?*' are both general questions and do not require any particular information from the guest. A can decide herself how she is going to answer them. However, the third question '*Do you ever do anything to just calm down?*' (line 114) restricts the possible answer. The question presupposes that relaxation among other things includes calming down. Sometimes some parts of multiple questions are left unanswered but in this case A answers all of them. She gives verbal answer to the questions in line 113 and nods in response to the question in line 144

(see below for more details). The first two questions in line 113 '*What can you do to relax, how do you relax?*' are both wh-questions and they function as story openers. The host initiates a new topic and asks the guest how she relaxes. By presenting answer-eliciting questions, he expects an answer. The respondent is free to answer the question however she likes. The questions '*What can you do to relax, how do you relax?*' are not restricting. The next question in line 114 '*Do you ever do anything to just calm down?*' is not an answer-eliciting question but an information-eliciting question. This question does not require a verbalized response. The guest answers it by nodding (line 115) and then she starts telling what she does to relax. In other words, after answering the information-eliciting question in line 114, she starts answering answer-eliciting questions in line 113. A produces quite a long answer and tells a story about a Chinese herbalist. The host does not interrupt her story but rather makes small comments.

Later in the same interview (example 9), we find another answer-eliciting question that relates to the episode presented in example 8.

Example 9.

→157 C: [Where did you meet this guy?
158 A: [it was
159 C: [= "At a party:"
160 A: [it as at the (xxx   ) [(band)
161 C: [hahaha
162 A: ((laughs))
163 A: I'm gonna
164 C: it time for the fingers scan. yeah (0.5)
165 A: yeah and the he gave me all these herbs and all these pills to like help me with my
166 anxiety, cause I get a little anxious.
167 C: [right

In line 157, there is another answer-eliciting wh-question, which functions as specifying question. It is restrictive and asks for specific facts about where A met the Chinese herbalist (vs. answer-eliciting questions in the example 1.). A answers the question quite briefly and then moves on with her story (lines 165-166). Therefore, answer-eliciting questions may elicit either long stories or just short answers.

Let's take a look at another interesting example from the data.

Example 10.

28 C: Now, (1.0) when you started doing the show, they
29 cause you were on once and you talked about they had you wear <u>fat suit.</u> (0.8) Now
30 they don't make you to wear a fat suit anymore.
31 ((audience laughs))
32 (1.5)
33 S: I guess they think I'm fat enough
34 ((audience laughs))
35 (1.5)
36 C: [(xxx)
37 S: [at le- at least I've got my hair, Conan ((pointing to his head))
38 ((audience laughs))
39 (1.0)
40
41 ((S turns to T))
42 S: no offence, T
43 ((audience buzzes))
→44 C: what the hell? ((Conan looks puzzled))
45 ((S kisses T's hand))
46 S: no offence, no offence
47 (2.0)
48 C: ((laughs silently)) I like he (xxx) make up to the guys and kiss 'em ((imitates
49 S kissing T's hand))
50 S: =wh- what do you want me to do? ((spreads his hands))
51 C: all right,
52 ((laughs from the audience))

This is an exceptional situation considering the present data because there are simultaneously two guests and a host involved in a conversation. The question in line 44 '*What the hell?*' is not clearly an answer-eliciting question but one can interpret it as one. 'What the hell?' could mean what are you talking about or what (the hell) are you saying, what do you mean, why are you saying that or have you lost your mind. S, to whom this question is posed, interprets it as answer-eliciting and answers it (lines 45-46). His verbal response is '*no offence, no offence*', in other words, he did not want to offend T. S's action, line 45, confirms his good intentions. However, this answer in line 46 is an explanation of his previous replica (line 37) and can also function as an apology in itself and not necessarily as an answer to Conan's question. That means that the question in line 44 is left unanswered. However, since S already explained himself once (see line 42) '*no offence, Ted*', we can interpret S's response in line 46 as an answer to Conan's question '*What the hell?*' (line 44), i.e. why are you saying this.

Here is another example from the same interview.

Example 11.

→202 C: do you, (.) you have a tipping story about David Copperfield, cause you worked in
→203 Vegas, and you had an experience with David Copperfield, befamed illusionist.
204 S: =well that's before he wa-, he was famous but not that famous. This was like
205 nineteen eighty-two. I was a bouncer in Paul Anka's club. (.) and eh you know a lot of
206 guys would give you, I mean I was young, guys would come over to me and give a
207 hundred dollars, (.) "bring girls around my table", you know give me two hundred
208 dollars, give twenty dollars, you know "introduce me to any girls", (0.4) he gave me
209 three dollars, David.
210 ((a little laugh from the audience. Conan smiles))
211
212 S: he gave me three singles and he said "if you can meet any girls, you know, (.) bring
213 them over to me." (1.0) He was alone [(xxx) night.
214   [((Conan laughs, audience laughs))
215 (1.2)
216 S: I'm a pimp but not for that cheap, you know what I mean Conan¿
217 ((audience laughs, Conan laughs))

In this example, the question in lines 202-203 is a yes-no question and it can also be interpreted as a declarative question, depending where we draw the line, i.e. where the question begins and where it ends. If we consider the question to be *'do you have a tipping story about David Copperfield'*, then it is a yes-no question. It can be answered either yes or no or just by nodding or shaking head. In this case it would be an information-eliciting question. If we consider the question to be '*you have a tipping story about David Copperfield, cause you worked in Vegas, and you had an experience with David Copperfield, befamed illusionist*', then it is a declarative question. Declarative question can be answered briefly, 'yes' or 'no', but here it functions as a prompt for a story. Therefore, it acts like an answer-eliciting question and the guest interprets is as an invitation for a story. The story or an answer to the question follows in lines 204-216.

Let's take a look at another example.

Example 12.

167 J: (having) fun (.) to (have) a haunting house and yeah, I'm supposed to dress up, I still don't know
168 what to go as, cause I've never (.) dressed up-
169 C: I can't go to those. I ca:nno:t dress, I can't go to parties where you have to <u>dress</u> [up]
170 J: [no], I can't
171 either
172 C: =and I've realised recently it's because (.) I make an ass of myself for a <u>living</u>, (.) that I don't
173 want to go to something dressed up as like a bunny, you- you know what I mean?
174 ((Julianna laughs))
175 C: it's like (.) that's what I do every da:y (.) pretty [much ((nods))
176 J: [you're a bunny [every day
177 C: [<u>ye:ah,</u> I just wanna (.)
178 ((shrugs)) j- go, an- and chill [and hang out,]
179 J: [you just wanna] be you.
180 C: I wanna be me. [the ultimate (.) Halloween [costume
181 J: [(xx)   [hahahaha ((laughs))
182
183
→184 C: what- eh (.) so you're not gonna dress as anything or?
185 J: I'm gonna get by wi- I gotta do something cause my seven-year-old niece said to me (.) eh, "you
186 can't come (.) if you're not gonna dress up". (.) So I have to find something [(xx)
187 C: [that's a nice seven-
188 year-old.
189 ((audience laughs))
190 J: so maybe I'll borrow your outfit and (.) go and (.) be you.
191 C: oh that'd be a big hit, at the [party
192 J: [hahaha ((laughs))
193 ((audience laughs))
194 (0.6)
195
196 C: yes, this oversized (.) suit from Sears, is me being [Conan O'Brien

In example 12 there is another answer-eliciting question (line 184). First, Conan wants to ask a wh-question, probably 'What are you going to dress up as?' but then he changes his mind and asks a declarative question. This question '*so you're not gonna dress as anything or?*' could have functioned as an information-eliciting question if it was asked without the conjunction '*or*' at the end of the sentence. In other words, 'You are not gonna dress up as anything?' can be simply answered by shaking one's head or nodding, or just saying yes or no. But in our case the question in line 184 with the conjunction '*or*' at the end functions as answer-eliciting question. The conjunction '*or*' forces the interviewee to elaborate in answering the question. J answers the host's question in lines 185-186 and continues her answer in line 190. This happens because Conan interrupts J with his

comment in line 187-188, and the audience reacts to Conan's comment in line 189. As it was noted by Penz (1996:121-122), declarative questions can be used to stress certain points in the conversation. In the example 12, in lines 167-168, J points out that she does not know how to dress up for a Halloween party because she has never dressed up before. So, Conan's question in line 184 is related to the previous conversation between the guest and the host, and is triggered by J's reflections about dressing up for Halloween (lines 167-168).

Next, let's take a look at another example of an answer-eliciting question.

Example 13.

268 J: so:, I'm gonna go and actually I got invited to a stones party. (.) on Sun[day
269 C: [you're kidding?
270 J: so I'm going to my very first rock-and-roll party. yeah. I'm very [excited
271 C: [you've never been to a rock-
272 and-roll- [I mean I know like I've [been to
273 J: [no ((shrugs))   [oh, I-
274 C: oh, <u>Abba</u> threw a party once [that I've been to.
275   [((J laughs, audience laughs.))
276 (0.8)
277 C: we really rocked, we had some fondue and then right to bed
278 ((audience and J laugh))
279 (1.8)
280
→281 C: what? ((laughs)) what is it?
282 J: that's good! ((points to Conan))
283 C: yeah. was it was it ((laughs))
284 ((audience laughs, J laughs))
285 (1.0)
286 C: I got one ((laughs))
287 ((J laughs))
288 (1.5)

This is an interesting case, because the question in line 281 does not function as traditional talk show question where the host asks something from the guest in order to get a story or request information about the guest's projects etc. Here, the host needs explanation to J's behaviour. J is laughing for quite a while, almost two seconds. This is a quite a long time in the format of a talk show. Even though it is obvious that J is laughing at Conan's joke (lines 274-277), Conan is not sure of that. He asks J '*what? what is it?*' (line 281), in other words, he asks her what are you laughing at,

what is it that makes you laugh. The confirmation that J is laughing at Conan's joke follows in line 282 '*that's good!*', meaning that was a good joke. We must also notice that the context plays a very important role in this example. There is an assumption that by laughing (lines 275-276 and 278-279) J is reacting to Conan's comments in lines 274 and 277. And Conan's question in line 281 is another assumption. We assume that the question is related to J's laughing. In fact, the guest most likely assumes that too because there is no other way to interpret her answer '*that's good!*' (line 282).

According to formal categories of questions, the question in line 281 is a wh-question or multiple wh-question, depending if we interpret '*what? what is it?*' as one or two questions in row. I would say that this is one question and the repetition of 'what' is just a feature of a casual speech. Functionally the question in line 281 is an answer-eliciting question. It requests an answer from the interviewee. If the guest follows the conversation she has no other options, but to produce the verbal response to this question as she does (see line 282).

Different types of formal questions function as answer-eliciting questions in the data. The majority of answer-eliciting questions in the data are wh-questions, as in example 8, where we have two wh-questions in a row '*What can you do to relax, how do you relax?*'. However, among other types of answer-eliciting questions there are also declarative questions. For example, in the example 11, the question '*you have a tipping story about David Copperfield, cause you worked in Vegas, and you had an experience with David Copperfield, befamed illusionist*'. This question prompts a story and functions as answer-eliciting question. Another example of declarative question with answer-eliciting function is '*so you are not gonna dress as anything or?*' (example 12). Here, the question is specifying and quite restrictive, regarding the possible answer.

8.1.2 Information-eliciting questions

Information-eliciting questions are those that require information but not necessarily a verbalized answer. We must, however, notice that information-eliciting and answer-eliciting questions are intersecting categories and the distinction between them is not always clear. (Ilie 1999:981-982.) In the present data the majority of questions posed by the host are either information-eliciting or answer-eliciting. This seems natural if we think about the purpose and the format of a personality-centred comedy talk show. Guests appear on the show to promote their work. One of the subjects that is present in each (of four) interviews of my data is the guest's work, i.e. a film, a book, a show or TV-series that one has made. When the host asks the guest about his/her work, it is natural to ask questions that elicit information or an answer. It would not seem reasonable if the host would ask a lot of mental response-eliciting or action-eliciting questions. In that case, there still would be communication between the host and the guest but it would not quite serve the purpose of the show.

If we take a closer look at the data, we notice that there are a lot of information-eliciting questions in each interview. One can say that it is the most frequent functional category of questions. Formal question categories that apply to information-eliciting questions are yes-no questions and declarative questions. Let's look at some information-eliciting questions from the interviews of the present data.

Example 14.

→68 C: let's talk here. <u>Real</u> mobsters, I understand, <u>real</u> <u>real</u> mobsters, the real thing are
→69 critical sometimes, (.) of the technical aspects of the show. Is that true?
70 S: well first of all, real mobsters love the show.
71 C: right.
72 S: the Sopranos keep mobsters off the street on Sunday nights.
73 ((audience laughs))
74 C: [right
75 S: [you know what I mean?
76 C: right
77 S: eh, (0.5) but I live in Little Italy, I see a lot of guys all the time, and, one guy came
78 up to me, he says "Hey Steve, you know I love the show but, there was that scene that
79 shot the guy on the back of the head. Anybody who's ever done that <u>knows</u>, (.) you

80 don't do it that way."
81 ((audience laughs, Conan laughs))
82 (3.0)
83 S: I said "oh (.) I: think I got to get going", you know.
84 ((audience laughs))
85 (1.5)
86 S: and

In the example 14, the question in line 69 and its preface in line 68-69 '*let's talk here. <u>Real</u> mobsters, I understand, <u>real</u> <u>real</u> mobsters, the real thing are critical sometimes, (.) of the technical aspects of the show. Is that true?*' is an information-eliciting yes-no question. According to its definition, an information-eliciting question requires information but not necessarily a verbalised answer. In this case, the host asks for specific information but in theory the guest can answer that question without using words. He could, for instance, nod in response. However, instead of nodding or shaking his head or just simply answering the question 'yes' or 'no' the guest chooses to elaborate. It is interesting that S does not answers the question straight ahead, but rather makes a detour from the question in lines 70, 72 and 75. Only then (lines 77-80) he answers the question posed by the host in the lines 68-69. Such a long response and storytelling as in lines 77-80 suits the purpose of the comedy talk show very well: it is expected that the guest must tell a story and elaborate during the interview. What would the show look like if all the information-eliciting questions would be answered just plainly 'yes' or 'no'. It would not be as interesting then. In other words, even though the question is formally information-eliciting, it expects an elaborative answer. A similar observation was made by Penz (1996) in his study of American talk shows. Minimal responses 'yes' or 'no' rarely occur in talk shows after yes-no questions but are usually followed by some kind of explanation, since the goal of talk show is to produce talk (Penz 1996:115-120).

Another interesting point in this example is that the host presents a ready-made proposition that '*the real real mobsters, the real thing are critical sometimes, (.) of the technical aspects of the show*'. This is a point of view of the interviewer and the interviewee didn't help to construct it. Connor-Linton (as cited in Penz 1996:112-114) talks about this phenomena as topic

control because interviewee is in a subordinate role and the theme is defined by the interviewer. However, here the interviewee (S) tends to disagree with the host (line 70) '*well first of all, real mobsters love the show*' and then justifies his comment further '*the Sopranos keep mobsters off the street on Sunday nights*' (line 72). In this case, we can say that S does not let the interviewer totally control the topic. S has a say on the content, he does not agree with the host and expresses his opinion straight away. And only after that the guest collaborates on the question and admits that real mobsters actually criticise the show (lines 77-80). So, even if the topic is controlled by the host, the guest can also disagree with the statement or a way the question is presented. Therefore, the host and the guest are more or less equal participants of the conversation.

Let's look at another example from the data. Here we can see that it is not always clear what kind of question we have, an answer-eliciting question or information-eliciting question. In fact, one question can function as both. Ilie (1999:980) even suggests a more general name for the questions that require a response, response-eliciting questions.

Example 15.

→60 C: Do you get recog (.) I mean you, you've done eh eh upright citizen's (   ) and
→61 you've been on … a lot, but now you are on Saturday Night Live (.) regular cast
62 A: ((nods))
→63 C: = Are you getting (.) recognised a lot now when you walk on the street
64 A: = you know I don't get recognised that much but I actually got a great remark the
65 other day.
66 A: = I don't think it was because somebody recognised me
67 A: = There was a one hand (?) street and there were these (.) these two guys unloading
68 a truck (0.6) and a..
→69 C: = Were you alone or?
70 A: I was, I was among a sea of many different women, ah and, and one guy turns to
71 the other guy and says like "hey Bobby, why don't you ask these girls why they left
72 their asses at home"
73
74 ((audience laughs))
75
76 A: and and I was like "Thank you! [I did leave my ass at home, hahaha!"
77 C: [((laughs))
78 C: [Uhuh
79 A: [and then I went to work and Tracy Morgan pointed out that this wasn't a
80 compliment.
81 C: = That's not a compliment ((shakes his head))
82 A: ((shakes her head))

83 C: yeah, it's too [bad.
84 A: [They wanted me to bring my ass [(xxx) ((nods))
85 C: [= yeah, that's the kind of like
86 getting [recognised.
87 A: [hahaha yeah

In the example 15, we can see that the difference between answer-eliciting question and information-eliciting question is not always clear. The first question of the episode presented in this example is in lines 60-61, *'Do you get recog (.) I mean you, you've done eh eh upright citizen's (xxx) and you've been on … a lot, but now you are on Saturday Night Live (.) regular cast'* and it continues in line 63 *'= Are you getting (.) recognised a lot now when you walk on the street'*. The guest (A) nods in response to the first part of question (lines 60-61). We can assume that A just waits for the host to finish his thought and just nods in agreement to what Conan says. In other words, A waits for the second part of the question, because in line 60 Conan interrupts himself and does not really present the question completely i.e. *'Do you get recog (.)'* but decides to make a further introduction of the guest and tells what she has done and at the same time points out that A is quite famous. In line 63, the host reformulates the question that he started to present. This time it is a formally grammatical question and the guest interprets it as an answer-eliciting question and presents a verbalized answer (see lines 64-68). In connection to her answer she starts to tell a story. On the one hand, we can assume that the question in line 63 *'Are you getting (.) recognised a lot now when you walk on the street'* is information-eliciting because this question does not require a verbalized answer. The respondent could just nod or shake his/her head in response. On the other hand, the guest interprets it as an answer-eliciting question and starts to tell a story (lines 64-68). Here we can see that it is not always easy to distinguish between an answer-eliciting and an information-eliciting question. Therefore, as Ilie (1999) suggests, response-elicitation may be the best term to describe the discourse function of this type of question.

However, if we consider the question in line 69 *'=Were you alone or?'*, it is obvious that the question is answer-eliciting because it needs a verbalized answer. If the question would be 'Were you alone?' then it would not

necessarily require a verbalized answer and it would be sufficient to just nod or shake a head in response. In this case, we could have interpreted it as an information-eliciting question. But in the case of the question in line 69, we deal with answer-eliciting question and a small conjunction '*or*' makes the difference. A answers the question '*I was, I was among a sea of many different women*' (line 70) and then carries on the story (lines 70-76) she has started to tell before Conan presented the specifying question '*Were you alone or?*'.

Let's look at another example from the data. Conan and J talk about the movie that J made recently.

Example 16.

→386 C: we have a clip here from, f-hah-rom the movie. do you need to set this up?
387 J: okay.
388 ((Conan and J start laughing simultaneously.)) (3.0)
389 C: "yeah, all right." ((mocks J's manner, in which she just responded to his question))
390 J: nah hahaha ((laughs)) (2.0)
391 C: "okay."
392 J: I will.
393 C: "I'll [do that]" ((making fun of J, scratching his teeth))
394 J: [you are], you are on a roll today. I'm I'm, okay, I'm going to. eeh, what's the clip, eeh,
395 (0.7)
396 ((audience laughs)) (1.0)
397
398 J: ((suddenly she remembers it)) it's when [we just (xxx)]
399 C: [this is where you find the rabbit, oh eh-
400 J: haha, we find, we find a big, we've gone out, to look for this big boat that we've heard about but
401 we think that we can, ((hand gestures)) ehm, get parts and make money [of it,]
402 C: [salvage it]
403 J: salvage it. and this is when we first walk into a boat.
404 C: okay, let's take a look at this clip from Ghost Ship.

This is an interesting case. The question in line 386 '*do you need to set this up?*' can be interpreted as both answer-eliciting and information-eliciting question. The host and the guest interpret this question differently. The host means it as an answer-eliciting question. Even though the question '*do you need to set this up?*' can be answered plainly 'yes' or 'no', in the context of talk show, it is obvious that Conan expects an elaborative answer from J. This is a common practise. Before a clip from a movie is presented, the host

asks the guest to set the clip up, in other words, to tell what is happening at the certain point in the movie, so the viewers and the audience of the show can follow the clip. However, J interprets the question in line 386 just as information-eliciting question and responds plainly '*okay*' (line 387). The intonation of her response is falling, so one interprets it as no further response is going to follow. The answer in line 387 is followed by J and Conan laughing. I suppose J has realised that she did not follow the unwritten rules of how you answer this kind of question and noticed how comical her response seems in this situation. This comical situation is confirmed by Conan, because he also laughs for quite a while, 3 seconds and then mocks J's response (lines 389 and 391). We can speculate that J has responded the way she did (line 387) on purpose, in order to be funny. However, in line 392 J says '*I will*' and later in lines 398, 400-401 and 403 elaborates and sets up the clip from the movie. But before J's elaboration, she lets the host make fun of her and therefore entertain the public (see lines 392-397).

The question '*do you need to set this up?*' (line 386) is a yes-no question. By presenting this question the host controls the topic of the conversation. Previous to the episode presented above (example 9), the host and the guest talk about J's latest movie. The question in line 386 is a way to wrap up the conversation and move on and see the clip. However, in this case, a yes-no question did not produce an elaborate answer as such question type might do in the context of a talk show (Penz, 1996:115-120).

A lot of information-eliciting declarative questions are specifying questions but some also invite elaborative answers. Now, let's look at a declarative question from the data.

Example 17.

→125 you have a who:le, chapter in here on <u>tipping</u>. the
→126 importance of <u>tipping</u>.
127 S: well that's a big part of goomba: (.) style, they tip the valet park, you know I come
128 from Vegas, I was a metro dee for years. You tip the valet, you tip the metro dee, (.)
129 you tip everyone but a judge or a cop. (1.0) Unless they ask, you know¿

130 ((audience laughs))
131 C: right. (.) if they bring it up, then it's [ok.
132 S: [the:n, you can throw some out there. But I'll
133 tell you what was funny, I tipped the priest. <This is a true story.> …

The guest of the show (S) talks about his new book, *A Goomba's guide to life*. Here (lines 125-126) is an information-eliciting question that falls into the category of declarative question. The question's discourse function is to elicit information. The host asks the question in order to confirm the information he already knows, i.e. that the book *Goomba's guide to life* contains a chapter on tipping. Therefore, it is natural that the answer is affirmative. Here, the guest does not answer the question directly but rather indirectly '*well that's a big part of Goomba: (.) style*' (line 127) and then S elaborates how tipping is important to Goomba's life (lines 127-129). In this case, the response to information-eliciting question (lines 125-126) is elaborative. The question generates a longer answer (lines 127-129, 132) and after that the interviewee (S) tells a long story on tipping (lines 133 and on) which is, however, not related to his book.

Sometimes several information-eliciting questions appear in a row in the present data. Let's look at example 18.

Example 18.

→89 C: now you, eh (.) grew up, this is (.) you know it's almost Halloween here.
90 J: tomorrow is
→91 C: tomorrow's Halloween and (.) yo:u grew up in England. (.)
92 J: right.
→93 C: and (.) I just (xx) like they don't <u>have</u> (.) Halloween¿ [(xx)]
94 J: [they] didn't use to when I was growing up
95 there. (.) ehm (0.6) it's just gotten (.) trendy. I mean (.) because our cultures are (.) intermingling I
96 think now (.) Halloween is (.) eh- sort of universal,
→97 C: so they're just starting to get it [over there¿
98 J: [they're just starting to get it. My girlfriends who have kids now
99 have to dress up their kids <and go trick or treating> but when I was a kid, they didn't have
100 Halloween then. (.) Guy Fawkes' day which is November fifth. (0.5) a:nd,
101
→102 C: = wh- what do people do on Guy Fawkes' day?
103 J: you (.) have a big bonfire, that's where they burn all the <u>witches</u>. (1.0) [and
104 C: [se:e, can I just say this
105 about Europe, and I know this is gonna sound very <u>ignorant</u> (0.6) but (.) <u>every</u> time I hear about the

106 way they <u>cele</u>brate something in (.) in like Europe, it always sounds (.) sa:d (.) compared to what
107 we've got. you know?
108 J: eheheh ((laughs))
109 ((audience laughs))

It is interesting to note that the first four questions (lines 89, 91, 93 and 97) are all information-eliciting questions that formal category of declarative questions. (The question in line 102 is, however, an answer-eliciting wh-question.) The host introduces a new topic in line 89, which is Halloween. By presenting declarative questions he confirms the information that he already knows. For example, in line 89 'this *is (.) you know, it's almost Halloween here*' Conan makes sure the fact that J knows that Halloween is soon. J confirms that by answering 'tomorrow is' (line 90). Then Conan confirms the fact that J grew up in England '*tomorrow is Halloween (.) and you grew up in England*' (line 91). J answers the declarative question by saying '*right*' (line 92). Another declarative follows straight away '*and (.) I just (xx) like they don't <u>have</u> (.) Halloween¿*' (line 93). The host stresses the word 'have', underlining the fact that they do not have Halloween in England. J responds to this question by confirming that they did not actually have Halloween when she was little and that it is a recent trend (lines 94-96). By presenting another declarative question in line 97 Conan specifies J's answer and asks for her confirmation '*so they're just starting to get it [over there¿*'. In her response J confirms and that England started to celebrate Halloween only recently and repeats herself that when she was a child they did not have it (lines 98-100). In other words, the host elicit information from the guest by presenting a lot of declarative questions. And all of the questions (lines 89, 91, 93 and 97) lead to affirmative answers. Some questions get a short affirmative answers, for example responses in lines 90 and 92. Other get longer elaborate answers, see lines 94-96 and 98-100.

In line 100 J, in her answer to Conan's question in line 97, brings up Guy Fawkes' day. Conan interrupts J and asks her '=wh- what do people do on Guy Fawkes' day?' (line 102). This is no longer an information-eliciting question but rather an answer-eliciting question and the subject shifts form

Halloween to Guy Fawkes' day. The new subject requires an answer-eliciting question. Information elicitation in the declarative form is no use at this part of the episode anymore. However, after a while (see example 19) the conversation goes back to Halloween (line 136). This return to the already discussed subject requires an information-eliciting question (see example 19 below). This time the question (line 136) is no longer a declarative but a yes-no question. By presenting a yes-no question the host controls the topic and goes from something else back to Halloween.

Example 19.

→136 C: eh- are you going to any Halloween parties?
137 J: my sister, eh- (.) actually is having a- a Halloween party here in the city for the kids, I have two
138 nieces, eh- eleven and seven. And she actually does live in one of those (.) well, most it's beautiful
139 but it's scary to me. It's a huge ehm (.) old mansion (.) way way uptown and- (.) so she's having a
140 scary party. And the funny- (.) one of her frie:nds (.) said "oh, you can borrow my coffin"!
141 (1.0)

Information-eliciting questions are very typical to the talk show *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*. Formal categories of information-eliciting questions are yes-no question and declarative question. Information-eliciting questions require information but not necessary a verbalized answer (Ilie 1999: 981). The majority of information-eliciting questions in the talk show received verbalized answers. It suits the genre of talk show which aim is to generate talk. Sometimes information-eliciting questions received only short answers and sometimes they were followed by longer stories and collaborations from the guests. In short, information-eliciting questions can elicit brief responses as well as elaborative ones.

8.1.3 Action-eliciting questions

There were no action-eliciting questions found in the data. The questions coming from the host of the show required mainly verbal or mental responses but not any kind of action from the participants. Perhaps, in the

case of a personality-centered talk show, action-eliciting questions are not common. The situation can be compared to an issue-centered talk show as, for instance, *Oprah* or *Donahue,* where the situation with action-elicitation is different. In those kinds of talk shows, the audience is an active participant and basing on Ilie's (1999) and Penz's (1996) judgements action-eliciting questions are more common to the issue-centered talk shows.

8.1.4 Mental response-eliciting questions

Mental response-eliciting questions require neither a verbalized nor a non-verbalized answer, but a silent acknowledgment of, and preferably agreement with interlocutor's message (Ilie 1999:981). Let's take a look at mental response-eliciting questions and consider in which parts of the interviews they appear. Mental response-eliciting questions appear in every interview of the present data, but not frequently. In the context of the talk show, many mental response-eliciting questions would not be natural, because then the show would be like a monologue of one person. Since the talk show involves interaction between the host, the guest and the audience, it requires more than just mental response-eliciting questions. However, a few could be detected in the present data; example 20 illustrates this category:

Example 20.

102 C: = wh- what do people do on Guy Fawkes' day?
103 J: you (.) have a big bonfire, that's where they burn all the <u>wi</u>tches. (1.0) [and
→104 C: [se:e, can I just say this
→105 about Europe, and I know this is gonna sound very <u>ig</u>norant (0.6) but (.) <u>every</u> time I hear about the
→106 way they <u>cele</u>brate something in (.) in like Europe, it always sounds (.) sa:d (.) compared to what
→107 we've got. you know?
108 J: eheheh ((laughs))
109 ((audience laughs))
→110 C: and I I- (.) please (spare) me out for a second. we have like (.) we have like Christmas. wow,
→111 Christmas is great. we get (.) presents and (xxx) and you talk to someone (.) you know, in England
→112 and when you go you get Christmas? They are like (.) well we just have a little warm bun and then

→113 we go to sleep. ((looks confused))
114 ((Julianna laughs, audience laughs))
115 (2.0)
116
→117 C: okay, what about Easter? what are you doing on Easter? you know we have a big meal and they
→118 are like "oh, we just have a little pot tea and then go to bed, you know¿
119 ((Julianna laughs, audience laughs))
120 (1.4)

This example was already discussed above (see example 5), where we took a general look at the formal categories of questions and host's self-answered questions but here we are going to concentrate at mental response-eliciting questions. As we can see, same questions can be interpreted in different ways. So, in this example, there are two mental response-eliciting questions (see lines 104-107 and 117-118) and a specification to the first mental response question (lines 110-113) that contains a question in itself. In the first case the question is prefaced by statement, where the host talks about celebrations of different holidays in Europe. The first mental response-eliciting question starts in line 104 and ends in line 107 '*you know?*'. Conan makes fun of Europe and the question in lines 104-107 functions rhetorically and elicits no response at all but rather reinforces awareness in the addressees, i.e. the guest and the audience. The host does not really expect an answer but a quiet agreement. The audience and J respond to his question by laughing (lines 108 and 109). Their response tells us that they have acknowledged the funny situation and mentally responded to it.

After that Conan specifies his mental response-eliciting question in lines 110-113 and continues to make fun of Europe. He presents a monologue about Christmas (lines 110-112) and then a question '*and you talk to someone (.) you know, in England and when you go you get Christmas?*' (lines 111-112). After that the host responses to his question himself '*They are like (.) well we just have a little warm bun and then we go to sleep*' (lines 112-113). So, the whole episode (lines 110-113) is a specification of the previous mental response-eliciting question but it also contains a question of its own (lines 110-111). This question is a part of Conan's monologue is the host does not expect an answer to it. The whole specification episode invokes mental response in the audience and J,

because they react to the story by laughing (lines 114-115). They laugh for two seconds and it is quite a long time if we consider the talk interaction in the talk show.

The second mental response-eliciting question (lines 117-118) is similar to the first one presented in the example 20. The question is prefaced by statement on how Europe celebrates Easter (lines 117-118). This statement includes a question that the host presents '*what about Easter? what are you doing on Easter?* ' (line 117) and answers it himself '*oh, we just have a little pot tea and then go to bed*' (line 118). We can say that it is all a preparation to the real mental response-eliciting question that the host presents to the audience and J. It is a question in line 118 '*You know¿*'. It functions rhetorically and does not expect an answer but a silent acknowledgement and agreement with the speaker. The audience and J react to the question by laughing (lines 119-120).

Mental response-eliciting questions in the example 20 contain a so-called introduction. In other words, the questions are well grounded, they contain information and sometimes even a short story, see for example, the first mental-response eliciting question in lines 107-110 and its specification in lines 110-113. Both mental response-eliciting questions belong to the formal category of declarative questions. This was the host confirms the information he already knows and this way makes a statement that expects only a silent acknowledgement. For example, in lines 117-118 Conan presents how Europeans respond when one asks them about celebrating Easter and in lines 104-107 Conan states that every time he hears about the way people celebrate something in Europe, '*it sounds sad*' compared to America.

Let's look at some other example of mental response-eliciting questions.

Example 21.

167 J: … and yeah, I'm supposed to dress up, I still don't know

168 what to go as, cause I've never (.) dressed up-
169 C: I can't go to those. I ca:nno:t dress, I can't go to parties where you have to <u>dress</u> [up]
170 J: [no], I can't
171 either
→172 C: =and I've realised recently it's because (.) I make an ass of myself for a <u>living</u>, (.) that I don't
→173 want to go to something dressed up as like a bunny, you- you know what I mean?
174 ((J laughs))
→175 C: it's like (.) that's what I do every da:y (.) pretty [much ((nods))
176 J: [you're a bunny [every day
177 C: [<u>ye:ah,</u> I just wanna (.)
178 ((shrugs)) j- go, an- and chill [and hang out,]
179 J: [you just wanna] be you.
180 C: I wanna be me. [the ultimate (.) Halloween [costume
181 J: [(xx)   [hahahaha ((laughs)),
182 ((audience laughs))

This part of the interview was already presented earlier, in example 12, but here we are going to look at different questions that in example 12. There, we looked at answer-eliciting question (line 184) but here, we are going to look at mental response-eliciting questions. In the example 21, Conan and J talk about dressing up for Halloween. And in lines 172-173 and 175 Conan presents a mental response-eliciting question. Conan tells this joke about himself and expects the audience and J to relate to him, that he does not want to dress up for the parties because he makes fun on himself every day anyway by hosting the comedy talk show. This question does not require an answer but just a silent acknowledgement and agreement with the host's message. J responds to the question by laughing (line 174), in other words, she acknowledges the situation. The guest laughs because the situation in itself is funny. At the same time as J laughs, the host continues to specify his mental response-elicitation '*it's like (.) that's what I do every da:y (.) pretty [much ((nods))*' (line 175). Since J has already acknowledged the situation, i.e. laughed (line 174), she then also makes a comment '*[you are a bunny [every day*' (line 176). Even though mental response-eliciting questions do not require a verbalized or non-verbalized answer, J decides to comment Conan. It is also interesting to notice that the audience does not react to Conan's mental response-eliciting question at all. If we look at the video tape of this particular episode, we notice that when J laughs (line 174) the audience is quiet and it continues to be quiet until line 182. Besides that, the whole interaction between the host and the guest (lines 169-181) does not seem natural but rather uneasy. It feels like both, the host and the guest are

acting. The replicas feel rehearsed and perhaps the audience sense that and does not respond accordingly, like they would in a more natural situation.

Let's look at another mental response-eliciting question.

Example 22.

28 C: you only ate eight stakes, yeah. Now, (1.0) when you started doing the show, they
29 cause you were on once and you talked about they had you wear fat suit. (0.8) Now
30 they don't make you to wear a fat suit anymore.
31 ((audience laughs))
32 (1.5)
33 S: I guess they think I'm fat enough
34 ((audience laughs))
35 (1.5)
36 C: [(xxx)
37 S: [at le- at least I've got my hair, Conan ((pointing to his head))
38 ((audience laughs))
39 (1.0)
40
41 ((S turns to T))
42 S: no offence, Ted
43 ((audience buzzes))
→44 C: what the hell? ((Conan looks puzzled))
45 ((S kisses T's hand))
46 S: no offence, no offence
47 (2.0)
48 C: ((laughs silently)) I like he (xxx) make up to the guys and kiss 'em ((imitates
49 S kissing T's hand))
50 S: =wh- what do you want me to do? ((spreads his hands))
51 C: all right,
52 ((laughs from the audience))

This is an example that was already presented earlier (see example 10), in the part of the analysis where we looked at answer-eliciting questions. There, the question in line 44 '*what the hell?*' was interpreted as an answer-eliciting question but, it was also mentioned that there is a possibility that this question is just not answered at all. In fact, the question '*what the hell?*' (line 44) can also be interpreted as a mental response-eliciting question. Conan's comment in line 44 is a reaction to S's comment in line 37 '*[at le-at least I've got my hair, Conan*' and the fact that S turned to T (line 41), who, if we look at the video does not have that much hair. Even though S explains himself in line 42 '*no offence, Ted*', the audience buzzes (line 43). The host, besides reacting to the lines 37 and 41, also reacts to the audience's buzz (line 43) and asks a mental response-eliciting question

'*what the hell?*' (line 44). This question does not require a response but rather an acknowledgement of the situation. '*What the hell?*' can mean 'how dare you say things like that?'. It functions rhetorically and makes the guest (S) to acknowledge the fact that he was not very polite. S points out in lines 45-46 that he did not mean to offend T, just as he mentioned before (lines 41-42).

It is interesting to notice that the first time, when S mentioned hair or lack of it (line 37), the audience reacted to that by laughing (lines 38-39) but when S turned to T the audience started to buzz and S said '*no offence, Ted*' (lines 41-43). Conan's reaction and mental response-eliciting question appear at that point (line 44). We can interpret this as if S's turning to T is the point where S "turned" into being impolite. By turning to T, S showed that he considers T to not have that much hair. He realised that he is impolite and that is why he utters '*no offence, Ted*' (line 42). Even though the purpose of this comedy talk show is to entertain and the guest and the host do make fun of themselves a lot when interacting with each other, making fun of the third party is not appropriate in this case. That is why Conan's reaction i.e. mental response-eliciting question (line 44) can be interpreted as if the host wants to save the situation and make S acknowledge that you do not talk like that to the guests of the show.

In short, mental response-eliciting questions that appeared in the data are either declarative questions or wh-questions. Presenting declarative questions, the host makes a proposition and expects a silent acknowledge of it. Declarative questions a lot of times invite affirmative answers and in the case of mental response-eliciting questions it is a silent agreement (see e.g. Penz 1996). One of the examples of that is in example 24. The case with wh-questions is different. Usually wh-questions are used to request information, to ask for specific facts or to get a narrative or a description (see e.g. Penz 1996). However, according to our study, this formal category of questions in a discourse can function also rhetorically (e.g. see example 25).

Overall, only three types of standard questions are present in the data, i.e. answer-eliciting, information-eliciting and mental response-eliciting questions. None action-eliciting questions were found in the data. Perhaps, action-eliciting type of questions is not common to comedy talk shows (vs. issue-centred talk shows) because the show's purpose is to entertain people through interaction with famous people and inform the audience about their new projects.

8.2 Non-standard questions

8.2.1 Expository questions

Now let's take a look at non-standard questions. Those are expository questions, rhetorical questions and echo questions. Expository questions usually appear in the beginning of interview(s) or episodes or in connection with topic shifts and foreshadow information about the featuring topic. Ilie (1999:980) states that "expository questions do not normally elicit a verbalized response from the interlocutor, because their function is to address the audience and foreshadow information about the topic to be discussed, rather than elicit information." However, I do not fully agree with this statement. In my opinion, and as we can see in the data, expository questions can also function as conversation openers and introduce new topics in a way, that makes it possible for the guest to tell more about it. Let's look at the example 26 below.

Example 23.

23 C: ehm (.) now (0.4) We have a lot to talk [about
24 B: [yeah
→25 C: =I know you are no longer on MTV, you've moved on to bigger and better things.
26 B: yes, si:r ((nods))
→27 C: = but you are still passionate about the music scene
28 B: yeah, I mean (.) before I started working on these series, I got a chance to
29 (summon) to go to a couple of concerts (.) and I actually got a chance to see eeh
30 Sade. Sade

In this example, there is an expository question in lines 25 and 27. Let's assume that it is one question and not two separate questions. The first part

of the question appears in line 25 and the second part in line 27 accordingly. This expository question (lines 25 and 27) emerges in the beginning of the episode whose topic is B's passion about music. The question (lines 25 and 27) *'=I know you are no longer on MTV, you've moved on to bigger and better things…=but you are still passionate about the music scene'* can be interpreted as a declarative question, according to the criterion of Quirk and Greenbaum (1973). But according to Ilie's classification of questions it could be seen as expository question. It appears in connection with a topic shift, i.e. Conan initiates new topic after the introductory part of the interview (not shown here) and foreshadows the discussion about B's passion for music. After the expository part of the episode, the guest and the host talk about music for a while. In other words, the expository question has its own role in the interview.

However, in example 23, unlike Ilie (1999) claims that expository question do not elicit a verbalized response, B responds to the first part of the expository question verbally (line 26). The same thing happens in the second part of expository question in this example. In lines 28-30 B responds to the second part of the question '=*but you are still passionate about the music scene*' (line 27). B interprets the question (lines 25, 27) as information-eliciting and starts telling the host more on the topic. On the other hand, the question in line 27 is not an information-eliciting question. It does not request information directly nor expects an answer. Perhaps, Conan just wanted to introduce the new topic of conversation and had in mind different kind of question but the guest interpreted a statement in line 27 as a request of information. This could happen because topics of interviews are discussed in advance and each guest is informed about the topics of the show. Therefore, B interpreted Conan's expository question as a request of information on a pre-discussed topic.

Let's take a look at another example from another interview.

Example 24.

→125 C: … you have a who:le, chapter in here on <u>tipping</u>. the
→126 importance of <u>tipping</u>.
127 S: well that's a big part of goomba: (.) style, they tip the valet park, you know I come
128 from Vegas, I was a metro dee for years. You tip the valet, you tip the metro dee, (.)
129 you tip everyone but a judge or a cop. (1.0) Unless they ask, you know¿
130 ((audience laughs))
131 C: right. (.) if they bring it up, then it's [ok.
132 S: [the:n, you can throw some out there. But I'll
133 tell you what was funny, I tipped the priest. <This is a true story.> The priest who I
134 (xx), my daughter's baptism. I had the restaurant from two to five. (1.0) So we had the
135 baptism earlier, but was a little worried we weren't gonna get there quick enough.
136 C: =if it goes lo: [ng,
137 S: [a::nd we gonna screw up the party, you know, (the baptisms) aren't
138 that important, you know¿
139 C: right
140 ((audience laughs))
141 S: (.) but eh, so,
142 ((audience laughs, S and Conan laugh))
143 (2.0)
144
145 S: you know we [(xxx) to party], I'M PAYING FOR THE [PARTY],
146 C: [(xxx)   ]   [yeah   ], right.

The same chunk of interview was examined previously in example 17, where we interpreted the question in lines 125-126 as an information-eliciting question. However, since questions can be interpreted in different ways and can be multifunctional, here, in the example 24, we interpret a question in lines 125-126 as an expository question. It is the only question of the whole episode which is presented here as a unit. Conan introduces the topic and presents and expository question which is interpreted by S as permission to start talking/ answer the question. S responds to expository question by telling a story about how tipping is a part of Goomba's life (lines 127-132). Then S tells a personal story related to tipping. It starts in line 132 and goes on till the end of the episode (line 167, not shown here[6]). The guest is mainly the only one who talks and Conan just makes minor comments during the episode on tipping the priest. It's obvious that S is a very good storyteller and during the interview Conan does not need to ask him many questions. The interview needs only little direction from the host.

Let's look at another example of an expository question.

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[6] See Appendix 2 for full transcription of the interview.

Example 25.

→178 C: Now I (.) eh over the past years I would say (.) we have a lot we used a lot of (.) I
→179 think very good performers on the show to do little bits
180 A: yeah ((nods))
→181 C: = but you always stood out because we would we used to use you to play Andy
→182 Richter's sister in the audience
183 A: ((nods)) right
→184 C: = and you do these different bits in the audience and you just seem really thri:ve
→185 when you are in front of people performing
186 A: ((nods))
→187 C: I mean you'd you'd be great at rehearsal and you'd be ten times better when you
→188 are in front of the crowd
189 A: = oh thanks
→190 C: yeah, did you like being in the audience performing like that?
191 A: = yeah it's really fun but word word to the audience (.) is ehm we used to do bits
192 here and you know I would have to sit in the audience and every once in a while
193 during the bit people would realize that they are on camera and they would (xxx   )
194   [(xxx)
195 C: [and they're doing it like they do it sometimes behind the actor who is doing
196 something
197 A: right ((nods))
198 C: = which ruins the whole [reality
199 A: [right, they are really like "woo, look at this girl, she's
200 crazy"
201C: right
202 A: and so sometimes they would screw up a bit and so I started getting wise to that
203 after like (.) twenty (xxx)
204 C: = right

The expository question (lines 178-179, 181-182, 184-185, 187-188) appears in connection with a topic shift. In other words, the expository question of the example 25 launches a new topic of conversation. Before that the host and the guest talked about A visiting a Chinese herbalist and now, with the help of expository question the conversation moves on to A's performing. Here, expository question does not necessary require a verbalized response, however, A confirms Conan's expository question by saying '*yeah*' and nodding (see e.g. lines 180, 183, 186). The expository question would function the same way even without A's confirmations. Therefore, it does not need a verbalize response. After addressing the audience and foreshadowing information about A's performing abilities, the host moves on and asks information-eliciting question '*... did you like being in the audience performing like that?*' (see line 190) that does require an answer.

Here is another expository question.

Example 26.

→87 C: Now, I gotta talk to you (1.0) I'm obsessed (0.6) obsessed with the MTV Beach
→88 House.
89 B: O::h yeah
→90 C: You:: spend a lot of time with the MTV Beach [House
91 B: [ye:ah
→92 C: =give me some (xxx) on the MTV Beach House
93 B: [I nev- I'm not supposed to tell though.
94 C: [Cause to me that's the dream.
95 C: I know, but that's the dream job, you know.

The expository question here (lines 87-88 and 90) again starts a completely
new topic of conversation. Before that the host and the guest talked about
B's passion for music and now Conan initiates a new topic by presenting
expository question. The question prepares the audience for the new topic.
The expository part of the question '*Now, I gotta talk to you (1.0) I'm
obsessed (0.6) obsessed with the MTV Beach House*' (lines 87-88) does not
elicit an answer, however, B decides to answer or comment the question
(see line 89). His answer '*o::h yeah*' expresses an agreement on talking
about the subject, i.e. 'oh yeah, it's ok if you talk to me about MTV Beach
House'. The second part of the expository question '*You:: spend a lot of
time with MTV Beach [House*' continues foreshadowing information about
the new topic and at the same time prepares the guest for action-eliciting
question in line 92. After the new topic is established, the host presents a
question (line 92) that requires an action from the guest. In this case, the
host requests a verbalized answer.

All the expository questions from the data are declarative questions.
Declarative questions often require a verification or a denial of the
proposition. That explains the guest(s) reactions to expository questions. For
example, in example 26, B confirms the question in lines 87-88 by
answering '*o::h yeah*' (line 89) and '*You:: spend a lot of time with MTV
Beach [House*' (line 90) by saying '*[ye:ah*' (line 91). Sometimes the guest
confirms the proposition by nodding, see example 28, lines 184-185 for the
proposition '*= and you do these different bits in the audience and you just*

seem really thri:ve when you are in front of people performing' and line 186 for a gesture response, i.e. nodding. However, the declarative question in example 24 '... *you have a who:le, chapter in here on <u>tipping</u>. the importance of <u>tipping</u>*' evokes a more extended answer than just short confirmation or denial, see lines 127-129.

In short, judging from the previous examples (examples 19-22), we can say that expository questions often evoke a verbal or non-verbal answer, a reaction to the question, in spite of their function, which is not to request information but to introduce and foreshadow the topic of conversation. This differs from Ilie's (1999:980) view who claims that expository questions do not elicit a verbalized response from the interlocutor because their function is to address the audience and present information about the topic rather than elicit information. In the case of the talk show investigated in the present study, expository questions introduce new topics, foreshadow information and at the same time invite responses from the guests.

8.2.2 Rhetorical questions

The present data also include examples of rhetorical questions. However, the line between a rhetorical question and mental response-eliciting question is not always clear. Mental response-eliciting questions have a rhetorical function and rhetorical questions intend to trigger a mental response in the hearer (Ilie 1999). Neither rhetorical nor mental response-eliciting questions expect an answer. So, how do rhetorical questions differ from mental response-eliciting questions? According to Ilie (1999:980-981), rhetorical questions in talk shows are mostly used to shape arguments and influence public opinion, partly by defending and/or attacking particular points of view and partly by striving to reach shared agreement, rather than simply to win a debate by imposing one particular point of view whereas mental response-eliciting questions require only a silent acknowledgement and preferably agreement with the interlocutor's message. Therefore, we can say

that those types of questions have similar features but still differ from each other. Let's look at some examples of rhetorical questions.

Example 27.

31 C: you only ate eight stakes, yeah. Now, (1.0) when you started doing the show, they
32 cause you were on once and you talked about they had you wear fat suit. (0.8) Now
33 they don't make you to wear a fat suit anymore.
34 ((audience laughs))
35 (1.5)
36 S: I guess they think I'm fat enough
37 ((audience laughs))
38 (1.5)
39 C: [(xxx)
40 S: [at le- at least I've got my hair, Conan ((pointing to his head))
41 ((audience laughs))
42 (1.0)
43
44 ((S turns to T))
45 S: no offence, T
46 ((audience buzzes))
47 C: what the hell? ((Conan looks puzzled))
48 ((S kisses T's hand))
49 S: no offence
50 (2.0)
51 C: ((laughs silently)) I like he (xxx) make up to the guys and kiss 'em ((imitates
52 S kissing T's hand))
→53 S: =wh- what do you want me to do? ((spreads his hands))
54 C: all right,
55 ((laughs from the audience))
56
57 T: [(xxx)   ]
→58 C: yeah, [what do you] want from me? ((spreads his hands)) yeah, yeah. You're one
59 of the girls now. eh-
60 ((S laughs, audience laughs))
61 (2.0)
62 S: ((points to Conan)) easy (xx).
63 C: all right, all right, <I don't want any trouble>.
64 S: you are not that tall.
65 ((audience laughs))
66 (2.3)

This interview bit includes the host (Conan O'Brien), the guest (S) and Conan's previous guest, T, whom Conan interviewed prior to interviewing S. It is a common practise at this show that the guest that is interviewed earlier, stays in the studio and sometimes even participates in small conversation with other guests. In this case, T participates in conversation with Conan and S. In example 27 quite a long chunk of interview is presented. Without the context it is not possible to interpret the rhetorical questions that appear in lines 53 and 58, that is why the extract from the

interview is quite extensive. We must, however, notice that a rhetorical question in line 53 is uttered by the guest in a response to Conan's comment in lines 51-52. Since the focus of our study is questions asked by the host, we will not look at this question further but rather concentrate our attention on a rhetorical question in line 58. Here, Conan imitates S, who in line 53 rhetorically asks *'what do you want me to do?'*. Conan attacks S by mocking him and making fun of him. This question in line 58 *'yeah, [what do you] want from me?'* does not expect an answer. In fact, in lines 58-59, after presenting the rhetorical question, Conan continues to make fun of S *'yeah, yeah. You're one of the girls now. eh-'* and does not expect an answer to the question. Therefore, the question in line 58 is rhetorical (see e.g. Quirk and Greenbaum 1973).

Here is another interesting example.

Example 28.

268 J: so:, I'm gonna go and actually I got invited to a stones party. (.) on Sun[day
→269 C: [you're kidding?
270 J: so I'm going to my very first rock-and-roll party. yeah. I'm very [excited
271 C: [you've never been to a rock-
272 and-roll- [I mean I know like I've [been to
273 J: [no ((shrugs))   [oh, I-
274 C: oh, <u>Abb</u>a threw a party once [that I've been to.
275   [((Julianna laughs, audience laughs.))
276 (0.8)
277 C: we really rocked, we had some fondue and then right to bed
278 ((audience and Julianna laugh))
279 (1.8)

As we looked earlier at this piece of interview in example 4, just before line 268, J talks about working with Mick Jagger, a member of the Rolling Stones band. Then J continues and tells that she got invited to a Stones party (line 268). Conan's question '*[are you kidding?*' (line 269) functions rhetorically. The host does not expect an answer to the question. The question is not meant to request or confirm the information but rather it expresses Conan's elaboration with J's story. By presenting a rhetorical question the host shows that he is following the story and that he is an active listener. His question '*are you kidding?*' (line 269) expresses that J has said

something unbelievable. Conan rather expresses his amazement than requests information or an answer. J continues her story '*so I'm going to my very first rock-and-roll party. yeah. I'm very [excited*' (line 270) right after the rhetorical question and that confirms the fact J does not interpret Conan's question as the one that needs an answer. She just continues her story. However, if Conan's question would really require an answer, the rules of talk interaction in a talk show would force the interviewee to answer it. Otherwise, she would break the rules of conversation and appear impolite. After J has finished her story, Conan asks another question (lines 271-272) and it is not a repetition of the question in line 269 '*are you kidding?*'. Therefore the question in line 271-272 is not the kind of question that the host really wanted an answer to.

Let's look at another example of a rhetorical question.

Example 29.

```
245 C: e:h ( xxx ) about Fastlane (.)
246 B: ye:ah
247 C: =this is a:: I've I've seen the show, this is it's kind of: (.) it's almost like Miami Vice
248     [ (.) done now it's like
249 B: [ yeah ( xxx )
250 B: done no two thousand fi:ve, e are: (.) it's sort of
251 C: £be- two thousand five£  ((laughs))
252 B: =ye:ah (.) we are ahead [ at (the end) of the game
→253 C:                        [ what are you on? ((laughs))
254 ((audience laughs)) (1.0)
255
256 B: [ we-
257 C: [ < It's you kno, it's about today, it's about now.> Two thousand five.
258 B: ye::ah! (.) hahhah
259 B: check it out. This is the dead. Wh- Miami Vice is definitely like (.) th- the Mom and
260 Dad of our show and we're like a new kid.
261 C: =right
```

In this episode the host talks to his guest about the TV series *Fastlane* that B is starring in. B talks about the show, see lines 250 and 252. His replies sound unreal to the host and he presents a rhetorical question '*What are you on?*' (line 253). This question functions as a way to influence the opinion of the audience that B actually says strange things and that B's description of the show appears weird. The audience's reaction to that rhetorical question

is laughter (see line 254). The question fulfilled its function and got the point across. It is obvious that B does not respond to the question, since it is rhetorical but in line 256 he starts to explain himself. He interpreted the rhetorical question that Conan posed as if his story is not clear enough and needs further explanation. However, at the same time, in line 256, B gets interrupted by the host but in lines 259-260 B continues his explanation of Fastlane '*This is the dead. Wh- Miami Vice is definitely like (.) th- the Mom and Dad of our show and we are like a new kid*'.

The majority of rhetorical questions of the present data formally belong to either wh-questions or declarative questions, see examples 20-22 above. However, no matter what formal type rhetorical question belongs to, it functions rhetorically and does not require an answer. The formal category only has a say in a way of shaping an argument or influencing public opinion. And even though, the questions are interrogative in structure, they carry a strong force of assertion. For example, a declarative question '*you're kidding?*' (see example 28, line 269) has strong affirmation and stresses a certain point to the audience, i.e. that the situation in question is so unbelievable that the interviewee may as well be kidding. Therefore, it confirms the observation that Penz (1996) made on the functions of declarative questions, i.e. that they stress certain points to the audience.

In case of wh-questions, they tend to present speaker's point of view and have argumentative functions (see Penz 1996:126-127). In example 29, the host asks the guest a rhetorical question '*What are you on?*' (see example 29 for more details). It presents a point of view of the host that there is something wrong with the guest and he stresses that to B (the guest) and indirectly also to the audience. The audience is always present in this type of interaction because the show is produced for the viewers and the live audience. Therefore, even though rhetorical questions do not need an answer, the formal question forms affect the intensity of the message of a question.

8.2.3 Echo-questions

The last type of non-standard questions that we are going to look at is echo-questions. Echo questions depend on a context and repeat fully or partially a preceding utterance in order to evoke a repetition or clarification of an unheard or misperceived form or they may even challenge the echoed utterance (Ilie 1999:980). Ilie also points out that echo questions may convey an attitude of surprise or disbelief in regard of the interlocutor's preceding utterances. The less repetition-eliciting the echo question is, the more argumentatively it functions.

Let's take a look at the echo-questions found in the data.

Example 30.

123 C: eh- are you going to any Halloween parties?
124 J: my sister, eh- (.) actually is having a- a Halloween party here in the city for the kids, I have two
125 nieces, eh- eleven and seven. And she actually does live in one of those (.) well, most it's beautiful
126 but it's scary to me. It's a huge ehm (.) old mansion (.) way way uptown and- (.) so she's having a
127 scary party. And the funny- (.) one of her frie:nds (.) said "oh, you can borrow my coffin"!
128 (1.0)
→129 C: what to-
130 ((audience laughs, Julianna shrugs)) (0.6)
131
132 C: first of a:ll, (0.5) eh,
133 J: I know=
134 C: =why did she have a coffin?
135 J: we don't know, ((laughs))
→136 C: you don't [know?
137 J: [we can't figure out why ((laughs)) but we're [borrowing
138 C: [you should find out why she has
139 a coffin ((nods))
140 J: ((laughs)) we are borrowing her coffin and stuffing it with eh, (.) you know, a fake man.

In the example above (example 30) there are two echo questions. The first one is in line 129 *'what to-'*. It is not uttered completely but is interrupted by audience's laugh (line 130). We can assume that Conan meant to ask J 'what to borrow?', which is an echo question. This question, if uttered in its full form, would clarify the information that the host heard and at the same time would challenge the utterance. The host does not believe that J's sister is

borrowing someone's coffin for the party. This echo question expresses surprise of what is just heard. J shrugs in response (line 130) and if we look at the tape, her shrug can be interpreted as 'well, you heard it right even though it sounds strange'. She also confirms that the fact sounds weird in line 133 '*I know=*'. Even though Conan tries to say something in line 132 '*first of a:ll, (0.5) eh,*' J interrupts him and confirms that borrowing a coffin does not make sense. This proves the fact that J interpreted Conan's question in line 129 as something that needs clarification.

Prior to second echo question in line 136, Conan asks J why her sister's friend has a coffin (line 134) and J answers '*we don't know,*' and laughs (line 135). Conan's echo question (line 136) '*you don't [know?*' expresses the host's disbelief of the fact that the guest does not know why this person has a coffin. It is quite likely that J does not know the reason for someone to get himself/herself a coffin but Conan wants to laugh at the situation. He shows surprise that J does not know why somebody would have a coffin and therefore makes a situation quite funny. J's response in line 137 '*[we can't figure out why ((laughs)) but we're [borrowing*' and especially her laughter confirms the comical effect of the question and the insanity of the situation.

Let's look at another example of echo question.

Example 31.

170 S: … now my mother I tip. (.) Believe it or not.
→171 C: =what do you mean, you tip your mother¿
172 S: look, I I love my mother to death but, you know once in a while, (.) little complain
173 here and there, [so]
174 C: [right], right,
175 S: I kept going over there, it was a little difficult. so I said you know what I'm gonna
176 do? like a metrodee, (.) I'm gonna give her two hundred up front when I walk in the
177 door, (0.5) see if that works, you know, tip to en<u>sure</u> proper service
178 C: =right
179 S: I walk in, (0.6) I give her two hundred up front,
180 C: [right]
181 S: [she's], no doesn't have an illness, she doesn't have an ache and pain,
182 C: [hahahaha]
183 S: [everything's beautiful], …

The host and the guest talk about tipping. Previously to this piece of interview, S told a story how he tipped the priest and then he initiates another story by telling that he also tips his mother '*now, my mother I tip. (.) Believe it or not*' (line 170). The idea of tipping one's mother is quite unusual and as we notice, B finds it unusual too, because he says '*Believe it or not*'. Probably the guest wants to entertain the audience by telling such a funny thing. Right after S has told that he tips his mother, the host presents an echo question '*=what do you mean, you tip your mother¿*' (line 171). Conan asks for clarification or, in other words, an explanation what S means by tipping his mother. The host wants that the guest to elaborate on that. If we watch the interview, we notice that Conan is absolutely serious when he presents his question (line 171). The host achieves the wanted effect and S starts telling a story how and why he tips his mother (see lines 172-173, 175-177, 179, 181, 183). The host does not interrupt the interviewee but just makes small comments, i.e. '*right*' (for example, in lines 178 and 180). So, in this example, echo question functions as an invitation for a story. It is a way for the interviewer to ask the interviewee to elaborate and explain his statement '*now, my mother I tip. (.) Believe it or not*' (line 170). Here, echo question does not have an element of surprise or disbelief, as many echo questions have (see e.g. Ilie 1999).

Here is another example of echo question.

Example 32.

74 S: eh, (0.5) but I live in Little Italy, I see a lot of guys all the time, and, one guy came
75 up to me, he says "Hey S, you know I love the show but, there was that scene that
76 shot the guy on the back of the head. Anybody who's ever done that <u>knows</u>, (.) you
77 don't do it that way."
78 ((audience laughs, Conan laughs))
79 (3.0)
80 S: I said "oh (.) I: think I got to get going", you know.
81 ((audience laughs))
82 (1.5)
83 S: and
→84 C: =I'm also curious like how, what do you mean, you shoot (the guy) back in the
→85 head. "Ouh, ((waving his hand)) you gotta do it this way". (xx) <what do you think?>
86 S: I I've no idea.
87 C: yeah
88 S: I didn- I didn't stick around to find [out.

89 C: [right, right.

This is an interesting example, because here, the echo question does not appear straight after the statement. In lines 74-77 S explains that somebody came to talk to him about the TV series he stars in and says '*... there was that scene that shot the guy on the back of the head. Anybody who's ever done that <u>knows</u>, (.) you don't do it that way*' (lines 75-77). This reply is followed by extended laugher from the audience and from the host, see lines 78-79. Then, in line 80, S continues his story and it is again followed by laughter from the audience (lines 81-82). In line 83, S wanted to continue his story but the host interrupts him and presents an echo question '*=I'm also curious like how, what do you mean, you shoot (the guy) back in the head*' (lines 84-85). According to Greenbaum and Quirk (1990:240), an echo question repeats part of all of what has been said, therefore this question is an echo question. The echo question in lines 84-85 repeats part of S's earlier statement even though there are some other replicas in between the statement and the question. It is interesting to see that the host also answers the question himself and only then asks the guest what he thinks, even though one would assume that if the host asks an echo question, he needs a clarification on the subject. Conan presents an alternative answer '*Ouh, ((waving his hand)) you gotta do it this way*' (line 85) and only then inquire S's opinion '*<what do you think?>*' (line 85). One can interpret this question as a part of the echo question, i.e. 'I'm also curious like how, what do you mean, you shoot the guy back in the head, what do you think?'. Here, echo question invites a clarification or an explanation and receives a short answer from the interviewee '*I've no idea. I didn't stick around to find out.*' (lines 86 and 88).

All the echo questions that are found in my data belong to formal categories of either wh-questions or declarative questions. Those formal categories are typical for a question to function as echo question because the features of formal category of wh-question are the most appropriate and useful for using parts of previous utterances while repeating what has been said and presenting a question at the same time. Typical features of declarative

questions are, for example, affirmation and stressing certain points of the conversation. This fits well into the concept of echo question. Wh-questions, on the other hand, present speaker's point of view and have argumentative functions, i.e. invite an argument from the guest. Wh-questions are also quite restricting and ask for specific facts. Those are the useful components for the question to function as echo question.

Let's look at some other examples. In example 30, in line 129 the host asks the guest '*what to-*', meaning 'what to borrow?'. Here, Conan asks for a specific fact, like if he misheard the guest's previous replica. In the same example, in line 136 the host asks another echo question '*you don't [know?*', which formally belongs to declarative question type. This declarative question is used to confirm the information that the host already knows, because the guest just expressed her opinion in the previous lines. In the example 32, the wh-question '*=I'm also curious like how, what do you mean, you shoot (the guy) back in the head*' (lines 84-85) invites a narrative or an explanation. The host wants the guest to elaborate in response. Even though, later on in this example the host proposes his own answer to this question, he still wants to hear what the guest has to say, see line 85 '*what do you think?*'. The same phenomena is seen in example 31, where Conan asks '*what do you mean, you tip your mother¿*' (line 171). He wants to hear a narrative, arguments from the guest and an explanation to this unusual statement. Therefore, once again we can see that wh-questions invite argumentations and narratives and declarative questions ask for affirmations and stress certain points of conversation.

In short, standard as well as non-standard questions were found in the data. Standard questions that are present in the data include information-eliciting, answer-eliciting, action-eliciting and mental response-eliciting questions. Non-standard questions such as expository questions, rhetorical questions and echo questions were all a part of the talk show interviews.

9. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to examine the types and functions of questions that can be identified in an American comedy talk show *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*. The focus of the present study was only on questions presented by the interviewer, i.e. the host. The questions were classified into the formal and functional categories and both categories were used in analysing questions and their discursive functions.

One of the typical features of talk shows is their semi-institutional context, because talk shows display discursive features of casual conversation and formal conversation, i.e. institutional discourse. The talk show *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* displays purposeful as well as spontaneous talk with elements of comedy. The show's host, Conan O'Brien, monitors the show but at the same time he is also one of the participants in the interviews with the special guests. Unlike casual conversations, talk shows are placed into an institutional context, i.e. TV-studio. It is an audience-oriented event. In talk shows the ongoing talk is on display and its purpose is to reach and make an impact on a broad audience. The people in TV-studio represent the present audience and TV-viewers are so-called non-present audience. Both audiences are the recipients of the talk show and speakers' messages.

Each interview of the present data consists of smaller episodes and each episode has a certain theme or topic. Episodes consist of smaller units, sequences. Sequences within an episode relate to one topic and usually consist of question, response and a possible follow-up. The majority of questions in the interviews were presented by the host. This is his way of monitoring the show. Besides introducing questions, the host also comments and adds information during the conversations with the guests. Therefore, the host is a co-participant of the discussions and, as a representative of the institution, also a talk-monitor.

In analysing questions the classification consisted of two categories, formal questions and functional questions. Formal questions category was based on grammatical categorization of questions introduced by Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) and also used by Penz (1996). The functional category of

questions was based on Ilie's (1999) categorisation of questions who examined questions according to their discourse functions. As we have already noticed, questions have a significant impact on the conducting and channelling of the conversation in the talk show. When we look at the interviewer's questions, it is important to keep in mind the distinction between the grammatical form of spoken utterances and the meaning of those utterances when they are spoken in particular context (Levinson 1984, as cited in Clayman and Heritage 2002:99). Formally or grammatically, the questions can be declarative or interrogative but there is no clear correspondence between the grammatical functions and the action they perform. Also a function of a question influence what will be regarded as an appropriate answer. Certain syntactic choices may structure the responses.

Several topics are discussed during interviews on *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*. The majority of topic initiations were done by Conan O'Brien, the host of the show. However, sometimes the guest could initiate a content shift within the topic and, thus introduce new points of view or tell a different story related to the topic. The topics of interviews do not usually evolve gradually. The host initiates new topics just by changing the subject of conversation and introducing new questions. Questions, however, do not only play the role of topic change but inside episodes they play a specifying role and may channel the conversation in a particular direction. The longer the interview, the more specifying questions the host asks. However, there were no specific question patterns found the in the interviews.

The types of questions asked by the host of the talk show reflect a particular discursive orientation. Such discursive orientation can be answer-elicitation, information-elicitation, action-elicitation and mental response-elicitation, as those were analyzed in the analysis section of the present study. Answer-eliciting and information-eliciting questions represent the most common questions in the talk show interviews. There are, however, also non-answer-eliciting (non-standard) questions which also fulfil institutional and conversational functions. One type of non-standard questions is expository question. They are used in the beginning of the show or in relation to a new

topic to introduce the new subject for discussion (see e.g. Ilie 1999). Other non-answer-eliciting questions are rhetorical questions and echo questions. Rhetorical questions convey strong personal commitments and are used to shape arguments and influence public opinion by defending or attacking certain points of view (see e.g. Ilie 1999). Rhetorical questions do not require an answer. In the context of the talk show, uttered by the host, they are rather used to control and evaluate the ongoing talk (Ilie 201:239). Echo questions depend on a context and repeat fully or partially a preceding utterance in order to evoke a repetition or clarification of an unheard or misperceived form or they may even challenge the echoed utterance. Oftentimes echo questions contain an element of surprise or disbelief. (see e.g. Ilie 1999). All types of questions, standard and non-standard were discussed in the analysis part of the present study.

We have noticed that the discursive functions of questions are not disjunctive and a question can have many functions simultaneously. For example, many standard questions have answer-eliciting function and information-eliciting function at the same time. Answer-eliciting questions appeared quite frequently in the present data. This is not surprising, because this is a talk show and in talk-in-interaction it is inevitable that questions that require answers are presented. It was, however, interesting to notice that the longer the interview is, the less answer-eliciting questions the host asks. Perhaps, this is due to the fact that when there is more show time, the guest has more freedom to tell about things and bring up stories and the host does not need to constantly channel the conversation by asking certain questions.

Different formal types of questions have answer-eliciting function. Wh-questions and declarative questions appear to be answer-eliciting. Wh-questions often function as story openers, allow to present opinions, invite narratives or descriptions or may asks for specific restricting facts. The same observations are also made by Penz (1996) when he studied language and control in American talk shows. Declarative questions make the respondent either to confirm or deny the proposition (see e.g. Penz 1996). In the present data, the declarative questions which had answer-eliciting functions invited

the response and at the same time also extensive elaborations from the guests. See for example, example 11, page 62. Sometimes declarative questions with answer-eliciting function can be specifying and restricting, see example 12, page 63.

Information-eliciting questions in the data belong to two formal categories of questions. They are either yes-no questions or declarative questions. Yes-no questions function as a way of controlling the topic and declaratives may stress certain point of a conversation, invite affirmations or extensive elaborations (e.g. Penz 1996). Since information-eliciting questions do not necessarily require a verbalized answer but rather information, i.e. the respondent can just nod or shake his/her head in response, it seems logical that yes-no and declarative questions dominate in the formal category of questions. In the present data information-eliciting questions, however, usually initiate longer responses. The guest elaborates in responding to questions and really rarely present a simple responses 'yes' or 'no' or gesture responses. Perhaps, such TV format as talk show expects the guests to collaborate on answers and tell stories. However, in example 16, page 70, there is an example of this rare case. The guest responded briefly to the information-eliciting question and thus the situation seemed really funny and awkward, that is in the context of the talk show. There is a feeling that more explanation is needed and the host brings this up by making fun of the situation and thus hinting to the guest that more explanation is needed.

There were no action-eliciting questions in the data. That can be explained by the fact that the comedy talk show is oriented more on verbal interaction. Action requests or elicitations are not that common to this type of the show. Questions' functional ambiguities can be seen when, for example, the same question can be information-eliciting and answer-eliciting at the same time. Especially declarative questions has this feature. For example, the declarative question in example 11 on page 62, can be interpreted as an information-eliciting or an answer-eliciting question, i.e. the host indirectly asks the guest to tell a story, but at the same time it can be understood as a request for information or an answer.

Quite a few mental response-eliciting questions were found in the data. A lot of the talk show jokes are based on mental response-elicitation. In other words, jokes oftentimes invite only a silent acknowledgment with what the speakers says. Laughter is also a reaction to what the speaker says but it is more a mental than a verbal response. We can also notice that many of mental response-eliciting questions are accompanied by '*you know*' or '*you know what I mean*' (see examples 20 and 21). It is a way of making sure that the message is getting through and requires a silent agreement or acknowledgement of the situation. Formally, declarative and wh-questions were used in requesting mental response-elicitation.

All the types of non-standard questions were present in the data, i.e. expository questions, rhetorical questions and echo questions. Expository questions are often used because they introduce utterances in the beginning of the show or in connection of topic shifts. However, contrary to what Ilie (1999) states, expository questions may evoke verbal or non-verbal reactions in spite of their functions, which are to introduce and foreshadow the topic of a conversation. Ilie (1999), in contrast, claims that expository questions do not elicit a verbalized response from the interlocutor, because they function is to address the audience and present information about the topic rather than elicit information. In the data expository questions belong to declarative category of formal questions and usually invite long elaborate responses from the interviewees (see examples 23-25). Sometimes expository questions do not require a verbalized response but the guest may want to "react" to the question by nodding or by just saying 'yeah' or 'right' (see example 25 and 26).

The difference between rhetorical questions and mental response-eliciting questions is not always so obvious because mental response-eliciting questions have also a rhetorical function. However, rhetorical questions never need and never get an answer (vs. mental response-eliciting questions) and are used to influence public opinion by either attacking or defending a certain point of view rather than simply winning a debate by purposing a

certain point of view (see e.g. Ilie 1999). There were not that many rhetorical questions in the data but according to my observations, rhetorical questions are not used much in semi-institutional context. The majority of those questions belonged to wh-questions and declarative questions. In this case, declarative questions stress certain points to the audience and wh-questions functions argumentatively. The grammatical question form of wh-questions only intensifies the rhetorical message.

Finally, there were echo questions, which have often been defined as incompatible with standard rules of questions because they depend on the context (Culicover 1976). In other words, the form and the lexical choice of questions depend on the ongoing conversation. Echo questions of the present data function as a way to clarify information. Oftentimes echo questions also have a comical effect too (see example 30, page 91). But other times, the host just uses an echo question to ask for explanation (see example 31, page 92). Sometimes, it is not clear if the host really wants an explanation or he is just making fun of the situation (see example 32, page 93). Echo questions belonged to two types of formal questions, wh-questions and declarative questions.

This study has showed that the talk show displays various degrees of spontaneous and purposeful talk, controlled and non-controlled talk. Semi-institutional nature of talk shows displays discursive features of casual conversation and institutional discourse. The talk show exhibits a question-response strategy, which is sometimes followed by a follow-up. Questions in the talk show *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* have different discourse functions and the questions with the same discourse functions can belong to different formal categories of questions. The most used formal categories of questions were yes-no questions, wh-questions and declarative questions. Alternative questions are not present in this data. Same question can have different discourse functions simultaneously. Questions are, just as Ilie (1999:997) states, "different values on a continuum" and there are no discrete functional categories of questions.

Since relatively few studies were made in the area of questions in talk shows and my data is very limited, it would be desirable to study the types of questions in talk shows with more samples. Here we only studied four interviews and for reliable results we need to study more data because generalization of types of questions and their functions cannot be made with such small number of samples. Another interesting direction of study would be to investigate questions in different types of talk shows, i.e. personality-centered and topic-centered talk shows. Different types of talk shows may use questions differently, as we saw in this study with action-eliciting questions. They could appear in issue-centered talk shows but do not appear in personality-centered talk show of the present study. Personality-centered and issue-centered talk shows have different purposes and therefore, it would be interesting to see how and if questions functions differ in them.

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Appendix 1

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

(from McIlvenny 2002)

Symbol	Designation
A:	Current speaker (designated by a letter)
CAPS	Indicate that a section of speech is louder than the surrounding speech.
<u>Underscoring</u>	Underlined fragments indicate stress or emphasis.
∘soft∘	Degree signs enclose speech that is quieter than the surrounding speech.
<fast>	Faster than surrounding speech.
>slow<	Slower than surrounding speech.
@voice@	The speech enclosed by the @s is said in an animated voice.
"voice"	Quotation voice.
erm::	A colon indicates a prolongation of the immediately prior sound. The number of colons tells the length of the prologation.
.	A period indicates a falling intonation.
,	A comma indicates a continuing intonation.
?	A question mark indicates a rising intonation.
¿	An upside-down question mark indicates a rising intonation (more upwardly pronounced than a ',' but less so than a '?').
↑ or ↓	A marked shift into a higher or lower pitch in the utterance immediately following the arrow.
Bu-	The dash marks a stop or cut-off in sound.
.hhh *or* hhh	An inbreath or outbreath. The length is indicated by the number of *hs*.
hu, ha, he	Laugh particles. If enclosed in round brackets, eg. (h), then it occurs while talking.

(0.0)	Figures in round brackets represent absences of sound or activity, in steps of one tenth of a second.
(.)	A micropause (roughly 0.2 seconds or less).
oo[ooo] [ooo]oo	Overlap onset in marked with a single left square bracket and a single right square bracket marks where overlap terminates.
=	Latched utterances. There is no 'gap' between two utterances.
( ) or ( )	An untranscribable passage or an unidentifiable speaker.
(guess) *or* (A):	A transcriber's guess of a dubious hearing or speaker indentification.
((comment))	Comment by the transcriber.
→	An arrow in the margin draws the reader's attention to aspects of the analysis discussed in the text.

Appendix 2

C: Conan O'Brien   Interview 1.

A: Amy Poehler

1 C: My next guest has appeared in numerous bits on this show over the years. <u>Now</u>
2 she's a cast member on Saturday Night Live. Here she is in a parody of The Bachelor
3 from last weekend show.
4
5 ((showing a clip from SNL))
6
7 ((applause from the audience))
8
9 C: Very attractive. PLEASE WELCOME AMY POEHLER.
10 ((Amy enters the studio))
11 ((A fixing her pants))
12
13 C: Thanks for coming.
14 A: I fix my pants.
15 C: hehheh You do what you gotta [do,
16 A: [thanks!
17 C: heheh I'll do what I gotta [do.
18 A: [heheheh
19 C: [ehm
20 A: [Thank you for showing the farting bit (   )
21 C: Well,
22 A: [hehehehehe
23 C: [Let's just get it out of the [way, you know what I'm saying
24 A: [hahahaha
25 C: ahah with (.) with the cream always rises at the [top, you know. ((hand gestures,
26 indicating the top))
27 A:
28 [hehehehe
29
30 C: <u>I</u> (.) 've known you for a long time cause you used to
31 A ((nods))
32 C: do all these (.) great terrific bits on our show before you get SaturNiteLive gig (.)
33 and (.)
34 C: it's funny I've always pictured you (.) as a kid you must have been (.) <u>different</u>
35 than the other kids,
36 A: ((nods))
37 C: cause you've got a <u>very</u> unique sense of humour.
38 A: .hhh yeah well (.) you know (.) wh (.) you know how you used to play like house
39 or Secretary when you were a little kid, [I used to
40 C: [yes (.) I did
41 A: ((laughs))
42 A: You used to all the time hahahah
43 C: I live to play [secretary
44 A: [hahaha ((laughs))
45 A: You get out your pencils ((gestures type-writing))
46 C: = yeah
47 A: ehm (.) I used to always kind (.) I was always kind of attracted to the (.) to the
48 trashy (.) cocky and wrong side of the things (.)
49 A: = so I used to always like be like "oh, y'know, I'll play (.) I'll play house, but I
50 wanna be the, you kno, the (.) the unwed mother", you know.

51   C: = hahahah the unwed [mother game ex…
52   A: [I yeah I'll play secretary but, but my
53   secretary has a drug problem [and that
54   C: [right, right
55   A: = and well, you know, people would be like "we are nine"
56   C: hahahah ((laughs))
57   C: let's not
58   A: = let's not go there
59   C: = let's not play this anymore
60   A: ((laughs))
61   C: Do you get recog (.) I mean you, you've done eh eh upright citizen's (   ) and
62   you've been on … a lot, but now you are on Saturday Night Live (.) regular cast
63   A: ((nods))
64   C: = Are you getting (.) recognised a lot now when you walk on the street
65   A: = you know I don't get recognised that much but I actually got a great remark the
66   other day.
67   A: = I don't think it was because somebody recognised me
68   A: = There was a one hand (?) street and there were these (.) these two guys unloading
69   a truck (0.6) and a..
70   C: = Were you alone or?
71   A: I was, I was among a sea of many different women, ah and, and one guy turns to
72   the other guy and says like "hey Bobby, why don't you ask these girls why they left
73   their asses at home"
74
75   ((audience laughs))
76
77   A: and and I was like "Thank you! [I did leave my ass at home, hahaha!"
78   C: [((laughs))
79   C: [Uhuh
80   A: [and then I went to work and Tracy Morgan pointed out that this wasn't a
81   compliment.
82   C: = That's not a compliment ((shakes his head))
83   A: ((shakes her head))
84   C: yeah, it's too [bad.
85   A: [They wanted me to bring my ass [(   )
86   ((nods))
87   C: [= yeah,
88   that's the kind of like getting [recognised.
89   A: [hahaha yeah
90   C: I'm told you're just travelling, you were were you in Canada pretty [recently.
91   A:
92   [yeah, I just went to Toronto for the day
93   and eh we had to go to emigration, you know and eh because of the high security I get
94   really nervous now even though I'm not I'm not doing anything wrong.
95   C: [Right
96   A: [I'm always afraid that for some reason they are not going to let me back into
97   the country like (.) that, that they're gonna be "no, we're full!", you know.
98   ((audience laughs))
99   C: Right

100   A: So I got to emigration and I just started babbling like (.) for no (   )
101   anything to hide. and well ((shrugging, flirting, gazing at Conan))
102   ((audience laughs))
103   A: but and the guy as like, you know, "why did you go to Toronto" and I was like
104   "Oh, I was here for the confirmation, I mean christening, I mean, I mean I was here
105   for a day and (.) emmh I know how to make bong out of apple.
106   C: ((laughs))
107   ((audience laughs))
108   C: It's just this is comes [out. Yeah.
109   A: [it just come out.
110   C: How do you make a bong out of apple?
111   A: hahaha ((laughs))
112   C: we'll talk [later
113   A: [very slowly
114   ((audience laughs))
115   C: Now ehm is that (.) eh-y-you. What can you do to relax, how do you relax?
116   C: Do you ever do anything to just calm down?
117   A: ((nods)) Well, the schedule is pretty rough (.) ehm eh on the show, so I decided to
118   eh (.) take a friend's advice and check out this Chinese ↑herbalist ((trying to make an
119   eye contact with Conan))
120   C: uhuh
121   A: The Japanese guy and that's Chinese medicine
122   A: = he is this really amazing guy in New York (.)
123   ((audience laughs))
124   C: That's confusing all [right ((nods))
125   A: ((laughs))   [hahahaha   ((audience laughs))
126   C: There's should be a law against [that
127   A: [=yeah
128   A: and (.) he was an amazing healer, but he grabbes your wrist ((imitates that)) and
129   this is just like (.) you know, he's grabbing and he's just like "oh! Your splin is very
130   happy!" (.) ((holds Conan's hand imitating the herbalist))
131   ((audience laughs))
132   C: [(   )
133   A: ["Oh you your kidney says "I'm very ti:red" (.)
134   A: stuff like that.
135   ((audience laughs))
136   A: And, and he he wrote down this number on the piece of paper and said "I'm thirty
137   one" and he wrote down eh "Mind thirty one but organs twenty four" (.)
138   A: And I was like "swee:t", you know.
139   C: = That's good.
140   A: And then he's like "Body ready to have baby" (.) ((nods))
141   A: and I said "yeah, I know, but mind is not ready to have baby"
142   C: [= right
143   A: [= he's like "but body ready" and I was like "yeah, but mind is not ready"
144   A: he was like "bo:dy re:ady [to have baby"
145   C: ((laughs))   [hahaha
146   ((audience laughs))
147   C: [so where
148   A: [and I was like "I got it, I got it"
149

150   C: right (.)
151   A: hahaha ((laughs))
152   C: [he was pressuring you
153   A: [but he was pretty cool, yeah, he did all this scan on your body with (.) his fingers
154   [that like ((imitates))
155   C: [are you sure he's a doctor?
156   ((audience laughs))
157   C: hahaha
158   A: ((laughs))
159   C: [Where did you meet this guy?
160   A: [it was
161   C: [= "At a party:"
162   A: [it as at the (   ) [(band)
163   C: [hahaha
164   A: ((laughs))
165   A: I'm gonna
166   C: it time for the fingers scan. yeah (0.5)
167   A: yeah and the he gave me all these herbs and all these pills to like help me with my
168   anxiety, cause I get a little anxious.
169   C: [right
170   A: [and (.) and then I I had this whole list of herbs to take and I got stressed because I
171   wasn't taking them the right way and then a couple of days went by and I didn't take
172   them and I didn't make the tea right and so I had like a panic attack and I threw
173   everything away.
174   C: ((laughs))
175   ((audience laughs))
176   C: [but your splin is very happy
177   A: [(   )
178   A: my splin is happy. Yeah, yeah ((nods slightly))
179
180   C: Now I (.) eh over the past years I would say (.) we have a lot we used a lot of (.) I
181   think very good performers on the show to do little bits
182   A: yeah ((nods))
183   C: = but you always stood out because we would we used to use you to play Andy
184   Richter's sister in the audience
185   A: ((nods)) right
186   C: = and you do these different bits in the audience and you just seem really thri:ve
187   when you are in front of people performing
188   A: ((nods))
189   C: I mean you'd you'd be great at rehearsal and you'd be ten times better when you
190   are in front of the crowd
191   A: = oh thanks
192   C: yeah, did you like being in the audience performing like that?
193   A: = yeah it's really fun but word word to the audience (.) is ehm we used to do bits
194   here and you know I would have to sit in the audience and every once in a while
195   during the bit people would realize that they are on camera and they would (   )
196   [(   )
197   C: [and they're doing it like they do it sometimes behind the actor who is doing
198   something
199   A: right ((nods))

200   C: = which ruins the whole [reality
201   A: [right, they are really like "woo, look at
202   this girl, she's crazy"
203   C: right
204   A: and so sometimes they would screw up a bit and so I started getting wise to that
205   after like (.) twenty (   )
206   C: = right
207   A: So, I I used to sit in the audience and I was turning to people next to me and I
208   would be like "Hey! Hi! How are you doing? Eh, you guys are going to be on TV so
209   you'd better cool it. Ok? Ehm because if you try to wave or make a face I'm gonna
210   kill you."
211   C: ((laughs))
212   ((audience laughs))
213   A: everyone in this bit, me and Ben, we're gonna come and we're gonna hurt you.
214   C: yeah yeah
215   A: [we
216   C: [then you'd see: you're doing the bit and people are just crying quietly.
217   A: = hahaha ((laughs))
218   C: = next to you
219   A: yeah, just [quietly
220   C: [(   ) for a very awkward comedy
221   A: = sitting on their hands
222   C: = eh (.) this weekend <Saturday Night Live> has host eh Nia Vardalos from My
223   Big Fat Greek Wedding (.) and musical guest Eve.
224   A: = yeah ((nods))
225   C: = so it a big (   ) show
226   A: = lots of ladies
227   C: ladies.
228   A:[= uhuh ((nods))
229   C: [= Thanks for being here.
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
241
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249

250   C: Conan O'Brien   Interview 2.

251   B: Bill Bellamy

252

253

254

1   C: Everybody, my next guest (.) is a comedian and an actor, you can see him >each

2   Wednesday< on a brand new Fox series >Fastlane<

3   C: Please welcome Bill Bellamy!

4

5   ((applauses))

6

7   B: Ouh! What's up New Yo:::rk?!

8

9   ((applauses))

10

11   B: (now you got it)

12   C: Two third of them are tourists.

13   B: hahaha ((laughs))

14   B: [But they are here, so they are New Yorkers.

15   C: [(   ) eh,

16   C: yeah

17   B: (   )

18   C: You know, I don't know we always have tourists here (and) people are going

19   "New York" ((waves))

20   C: and people are like ((clapping)) "I guess, I don't know."

21   B: ((laughs))

22

23   C: ehm (.) now (0.4) We have a lot to talk [about

24   B: [yeah

25   C: =I know you are no longer on MTV, you've moved on to bigger and better things.

26   B: yes, si:r ((nods))

27   C: = but you are still passionate about the music scene

28   B: yeah, I mean (.) before I started working on these series, I got a chance to

29   (summon) to go to a couple of concerts (.) and I actually got a chance to see eeh

30   Sade. Sade

31   B: =Anybody, any [Sade fans?

32   [Sade, yeah

33   B: =yeah

34   B: and I, I I think I've bought like every album she's had and never really realised that

35   she is a depressing person.

36   C: haha

37   B: [and

38   C: [you have all the Sade albums?

39   B: yeah but you never really listen to the words.

40   B: =When you go to a concert you can really focus on that she got problems, right?

41   ((audience laughs))

42

43   B: So, [(2.5)

44   [(((audience laughs))

45   B: Notice now at the concert all the couples there in love are fine, cause she comes
46   out for a song
47   B: "is it a cri:me, parara, parara, that I still want you" right?
48   C: right
49   B: =everybody that's in love ((swaying, imitating slow dancing))
50   C: right
51   B: all the girls with no men "I hate it, eh"
52   C: hahaha
53   B: everybody try like they like kill her right?
54   C: right
55   B: everybody's crying at the end of the concert, right?
56   C: [right
57   B: [I'm gonna pay four hundred dollars to do two weeks of therapy after Sade
58   C: right, right
59   B: you understand?
60   C: [right
61   B: [Next week, so two weeks later I go to see DMX, right?
62   B: =totally different concert (.) and I don't care how nice you are, how conservative
63   you are, he will bring out the thug in you.
64
65   ((audience laughs))
66
67   C: DMX (wh wh)
68   B: You don't even see it coming cause the first song is like "what I really wa:::nt, ouh
69   ouh, what I really wa::nt" ((imitates the song))
70   B: I just turned and punched my lady to [face
71   C: [hahaha
72
73   ((audience laughs))
74
75   B: ° I did it °
76   C: yeah (0.5) yeah
77   B: ehm, ehm, you know, [she
78   C: [I, I I would have done that at Sade
79   concert. Ha
80   B: ((laughs))
81
82   ((audience laughs))
83
84   C: That's the difference between us, I guess, yeah
85   B: She was like "I like Sade [better baby" ((covers one of his eyes))
86   C: [hahaha ((laughs))
87
88   C: Now, I gotta talk to you (1.0) I'm obsessed (0.6) obsessed with the MTV Beach
89   House.
90   B: O::h yeah
91   C: You:: spend a lot of time with the MTV Beach [House
92   B:
93   [ye:ah
94   C: =give me some (   ) on the MTV Beach House

95 B: [I nev- I'm not supposed to tell though.
96 C: [Cause to me that's the dream.
97 C: I know, but that's the dream job, you know. I'm up here in my (.) sweet tower,
98 looking over the city.
99 B: ((laughs))
100
101 ((audience laughs))
102
103 C: ehm, shut up!
104 ((audience laughs))
105 C: They don't know at ho:me!
106 B: ((laughs))
107 C: It's cold up here
108 B: hahaha
109 ((audience laughs))
110 C: Someone shut that thing.
111 C: Anyway (0.8) The MTV [Beach House,
112 B: [((laughs)) ((turns around to look at
113 the background screen))
114 C: so that's a (.) that's a (.) that's the sweetest job
115 ((audience laughs))
116 C: Don't look! Don't look! It's (0.5) scary up this high.
117 B: We're up high. Yeah ((laughs))
118
119 ((audience laughs))
120
121 C: ehm (.) hhhuh but (.) but the Beach House though that's (0.5) (yeah) that's the
122 greatest job ever.
123 B: It was fun, man, and and y- you know what was really cool like that they used to
124 let me do like whatever I can come up with cause I (.) I was obviously being a
125 comedian
126 B: =I was always trying to think of funny stuff to do. Right?
127 B: =So one day I was like "(c-), can we get like a hot tub outside you know. I want
128 my own hot tub, to do my own show in a hot tub".
129 B: = <So, he was like "Ok">
130 B: So they had (.) you know, just a portable (water tub) with me, right?
131 B: and I was like "I want a whole bunch of gi:rls in it with me", right?
132 B: = [but
133 C: [Wait a minute (   ) I'm a comedian, so I got to come with some
134 funny ideas.
135
136 ((audience laughs))
137
138 B: No (   ) up! I'm just (0.3) I'm [afraid
139 C: [not just a funny
140 idea, [that's just a great [idea
141 B:
142   [n-   [No it is is (0.7) great, right?
143 ((audience laughs))
144

145   C: =yeah, [yeah
146   B: [but nobody (.) like you know we had the like the whole bubble bath
147   thing going o:n.
148   C: = [right
149   B: = [nobody had on under (0.4) pants.
150   B: We were just chilling like "he::y"
151
152   ((audience laughs))
153
154   C: (1.0) So, you (.) you you were actually (.) naked from the waste [down
155   B:
156   [ye::ah but I mean nobody kne:w (0.3) w- w- we
157   were just really let it (   ) you know what I'm saying?
158
159   ((audience laughs))
160
161   C: (1.8) yeah, I might (hh)have so. ((laughs))
162   B: (0.4) we didn't we [didin't
163   C: [(were there) any complains from any 'f the ladies?
164   Did they know or they're?
165   B: Well you know the ladies were cool but every now and then like one of the ladies
166   would like release a little bubble that was different.
167   C: =all right, [what the hell
168   [((audience laughs)) (2.0)
169   B: [cause
170   C: [I wanted COOL stories about the Beach House and this is what I get.
171   B: ((laughs))
172   ((audience laughs))
173
174   (1.6)
175
176   B: ↑No bu- (.) you know I wouldn't let a lot of guys y'know cause you don't need guys in
177   there, you know, you gotta stay wa::y at the other end of the hot tub @you know what
178   I'm sayin'?@
179   ((B makes a serious face))
180
181   C: (1.0) Yes, I know what [you are saying ((nods))
182   [((audience laughs))
183   B: ((makes hand gestures)) (1.6) mostly ladies
184   C: yeah, mostly lad(hh)ies, [one guy, that's great
185   B: [° mostly ladies, one guy, yeah ° ((nods))
186   C: (0.3) Now, you ca:n't get away with that now, you're [married=
187   B:
188   [ye:a
189   C: =you can't be sitting bottomless in [the:: (0.5) (   )
190   B: [nah, those were the (.)
191   those were the wild days, now I'm kind of chilled, you know, I kind of relax a little bit,
192   go to concerts with my wife. It's pretty nice.
193   C: wh- what else do you? wh- what are two married [couples do?

194   B:
195   [o::h man my wife got me doing like a:: (.) karaoke (   ) (0.4)
196   karaoke ((shakes his head once))
197   ((audience laughs))
198   B: (0.7) and most people don't realise they got a lot of karaoke in them? (.)
199   C: (0.3) right
200   B: un<u>til</u> you get your song. Everybody in here has a <u>song</u>, you don't even know what's
201   your song till you start karaoke.
202   B: You get (.) you get the list, you read the list=
203   C: [right
204   B: [= (and you're) like oh my god (.) and next thing you know people fight in my house
205   man.
206   B: (0.6) fight (.) cause at first you realise that one person likes Tina Turner=
207   B: =that everybody wants to do Private Dancer
208   B: then the next thing you know (.) I'm realising I love Hall & Oates. I didn't even know
209   I like Hall & Oates.
210
211   ((audience laughs))
212
213   C: Wait a(hh)   ((laughs))
214   ((audience laughs))
215
216   B: (0.5) I didn't even <u>know</u>.
217   C: You didn't know you like [Hall & Oates?
218   B: [I mean I didn't know I like it like that
219   though. I'm (.) I'm in the house Sarah's Smile and I'm [(   )
220   C: [((laughs)) hahaha
221   ((audience laughs))
222
223   C: haha [haha
224   B: [if you do Sarah's Smile (   ) on the floor wr- (.) that's my song, you can't
225   do that.
226   C: (0.3) [right (.) right
227   B: [cause if you if you don't hit the note (.) I'm knuckling you up.
228   C: Now you [eh-
229   [((audience laughs))
230
231   C: are you heh (0.4)
232   B: heh
233   C: knuckling you up, theh, I've never heard ((shaking his head))
234   C: (0.4) that sounds weird. @I'm gonna knuckle you up [all ri:ght@ We'll get that l-
235   B:
236   [° yeah °
237   ((audience laughs))
238   ((B laughs))
239
240   C: So, (0.3) ouh (.) what (.) e:h, <let's move on, let's m(h)ove on >
241   C: what ehm (.) wh- so that's your favourite is Hall & Oates?
242   B: ehm (.) I didn't know though that like I said that's surprisingly so Hall & Oates is
243   pretty good cause Sarah's Smile is smooth, is fun, is like you ↑don't like that song?

244   C: yeah, I guess I do.
245   B: " I feel love. You (won) you" ((singing)) Come on man!
246   ((audience laughs))
247   B: (0.6) Don't make me [go to (school) on you play your-
248   C: [you know what? You (.) you just convinced me
249   C: =haha
250   ((audience laughs))
251
252   C: e:h (   ) about Fastlane (.)
253   B: ye:ah
254   C: =this is a:: I've I've seen the show, this is it's kind of: (.) it's almost like Miami
255   Vice
256   [(.) done now it's like
257   B: [yeah (   )
258   B: done no two thousand fi:ve, e are: (.) it's sort of
259   C: £be- two thousand five£ ((laughs))
260   B: =ye:ah (.) we are ahead [at (the end) of the game
261   C: [what are you on? ((laughs))
262   ((audience laughs)) (1.0)
263
264   B: [we-
265   C: [< It's you kno, it's about today, it's about now.> Two thousand <u>five</u>.
266
267   B: ye::ah! (.) hahhah
268   B: check it out. This is the dead. Wh- Miami Vice is definitely like (.) th- the Mom and
269   Dad of our show and we're like a new kid.
270   C: =right
271   B: And basically what we've done is we sort of give tribute to that show, because that
272   show is like a pioneering .h (.) you know, it's like groundbreaking.
273   B: But we <u>add</u> like the fast and the furious kind of energy: e:h (.) really stylish clothes, lot
274   of fast cars, hot guns, hot chicks .hh an- and it's based in LA. And eh [I
275   C:
276   [<I know that you guys have like a <u>Bat</u> cave>
277   almost
278   B: [Why is th-
279   C: [I've checked out the show and like [=
280   B: [I kn<u>o</u>w
281   C: =<other policemen have to go back to the station house> and drink <u>coffee</u> (.) and hang
282   out with Jerry Orback <and you guys are like in a <u>Bat</u> cave>.
283   B: yeah we are in a candy store and a ca:ndy store is pretty much a place where (.) eh we
284   get our assignments from our boss which is eh (.) Tiffany Thiessen. .hh
285   C: hahaha ((laughs)) (1.0)
286   ((audience starts laughing after Conan))
287   ((B smiles))
288
289   B: T<u>ry</u> [to k<u>ee</u>p it ↑h<u>ot</u>.
290   C: [(   ) "yeah, I want you guys, here are your new assignments!"
291   ((audience laughs))
292
293   B: No, I do have a [sexy boss. ((smiles))

294   [jong, jong, jong
295   ((audience laughs))
296
297   C: I'm sorry, but that's (.) that's just new show. I've (.) what kind of ((laughs))
298   B: (1.0) I SA::ID two thousand fi:ve!
299   C: =Two thousand five, yeah. In the future (0.6)
300   B: in the future
301   C: hot chicks wi:ll (.) run=
302   B: = will run your life, so (0.5)
303   B: Peter Facinelli, he is an LA cop.
304   C: =right.
305   B: And we sorta have like, you know, similarities but, you know, my style is totally
306   different from [his=
307   C: [right, right
308   B: =I'm sort of the thinker (.) the more methodical guy=
309   C: = [right
310   B: [He is the like so crazy ready-to-do-it any way possible guy.
311   C: right
312   B: and (.) we have a lot of chemistry, man, and it's been fun, [we (   )
313   C:
314   [<it's also a lot of fun, it's like it's it's not, you know,
315   there's a, a lot of us cop stories that are (.) like this is based on a true story and I watch
316   one episode of yours where you guys are chasing>
317   B: (.) Nothing's true.
318   C: [yeah=
319   B: [hhah
320   C: =Models on models on really cool motorcycles that steel jewels.
321   B: [ye:::ah
322   C: [hahaha ((laughs))
323   ((audience laughs))
324   C: That was like based on a real story, [you know
325   B: [Nohh
326   C: (.) it was great though.
327   B: [Thank you
328   C: [Fastlane airs Wednesday nights at [nine
329   B: [nine o'clock.
330   C: ((nods)) on Fox and you will be performing on Ceasars Tahoe on Novermber 16th.
331   B: -s, sir.
332   C: Always great to have you.
333   B: (yeah) always. Thank you!
334
  1   C: Conan O'Brien   Interview 3
  2   J: Julianna Margulies
  3
  1   C: we are back. my first guest is best known for her award-winning role as nurse
  2   Hathaway on ER. Currently you can see her in two films, The man from the Elysian
  3   Fields and Ghost ship. Please, welcome, the lovely JULIANNA MARGULIES.
  4

5   ((Julianna comes out. Music. Conan stands up, comes out of his table to meet her,
6   shakes her hands and kisses Julianna on the cheek. Julianna smiles and waves to the
7   audience, sits down.))
8
9   C: ((looking at Julianna)) we haven't seen you in a [while].
10 J: [it's a long] time
11 C: =yeah, how have you been?
12 J: good.
13 C: oh yeah?
14 J: and you were with me the whole time in Australia. I was there for four and a half
15 months. (.)
16 C: you were in Australia for wh-
17 J: =doing Ghost Ship
18
19 C: [doing shooting Ghost Ship] ((nods))
20 J: [for four and a half month.] and they play you at ten.
21 C: [at ten o'clock at night,]
22 J: [so people,]   so working people can see you.
23 C: I'm a huge star over there.
24 J: you know what, you are. (.)
25 C: [(xxx)]
26 J: [and it was actually] very comforting cause we were home sick, so we always got
27 to check in with you an'-
28 C: Australia is a stra:ange (.) place too. it's literally on the other side of the wo:[rld.
29 J: [it's
30 upside down, you were upside down. you looked good.
31 C: hah yeah.
32 J: eh-
33 C: =I do well when I'm upside down.
34 ((Julianna laughs))
35
36 C: what- eh (.) what is you like about Australia? what –
37 ((some sound/noise from the audience))
38 J: ((laughs))
39 C: oh ladies, (come on)
40 ((audience laughs, Julianna laughs))
41 (1.5)
42 C: eeh, that's right, uhuh
43 ((audience laughs))
44 (1.3)
45
46 C: @I don't know what just happened@ ((in a crying voice)) eh
47 J: eh (.) it- it- it's a beautiful country. I love Aust- I love Sidney, I love Melbourne. It
48 is a weird phenomenon. when you're used to, (.) I know it's gonna sound ridiculous
49 but you do, (0.8) you watch (.) the toilet flash and it's going the other way. ((showing
50 the direction of water circulation by her hand))
51 (0.8)
52 C: I've heard the toilet (.) [goes the other way there.] ((indicating the direction of
53 water circulation))

54 J: [water goes]   the other way. ((showing the
55 direction of water circulation)) wa- (.) down the drain, everything goes the- [the other
56 way.
57 C: [yeah. that's ok. ehm,
58 you know I'm (.)
59 ((audience laughs, Julianna laughs))
60 (1.5)
61
62 C: you know when you're noticing something [like that
63 J: [(xxx)
64 C: yes, it was, yes.
65 ((Julianna laughs))
66 C: when you're noticing something like that, you realise you have way too much time
67 on your hands (.) ((laughs))
68 J: [yeah
69 C: [=I gotta go to the bathroom and check which way the water is going down.
70 ((Julianna laughs))
71 C: [yeah,] (.)   it's going the other way ((elelee käsillään))
72 J: [there are a lot-]
73 J: there are a lot of waiting on sets ((nods slightly))
74
75 C: now you, eh (.) grew up, this is (.) you know it's almost Halloween here.
76 J: tomorrow is
77 C: tomorrow's Halloween and (.) yo:u grew up in England. (.)
78 J: right.
79 C: and (.) I just (xx) like they don't have (.) Halloween¿ [(xx)]
80 J: [they] didn't use to when I
81 was growing up there. (.) ehm (0.6) it's just gotten (.) trendy. I mean (.) because our
82 cultures are (.) intermingling I think now (.) Halloween is (.) eh- sort of universal,
83 C: so they're just starting to get it [over there¿
84 J: [they're just starting to get it. My girlfriends who
85 have kids now have to dress up their kids <and go trick or treating> but when I was a
86 kid, they didn't have Halloween then. (.) Guy Fawkes' day which is November fifth.
87 (0.5) a:nd,
88
89 C: = wh- what do people do on Guy Fawkes' day?
90 J: you (.) have a big bonfire, that's where they burn all the witches. (1.0) [and
91 C: [se:e, can I
92 just say this about Europe, and I know this is gonna sound very ignorant (0.6) but (.)
93 every time I hear about the way they celebrate something in (.) in like Europe, it
94 always sounds (.) sa:d (.) compared to what we've got. you know?
95 J: eheheh ((laughs))
96 ((audience laughs))
97 C: and I I- (.) please spear me out for a second. we have like (.) we have like
98 Christmas. wow, Christmas is great. we get (.) presents and (xxx) and you talk to
99 someone (.) you know, in England and when you go you get Christmas? They are like
100 (.) well we just have a little warm bun and then we go to sleep. ((looks confused))
101 ((Julianna laughs, audience laughs))
102 (2.0)
103

104   C: okay, what about Easter? what are you doing on Easter? you know we have a big
105   meal and they are like "oh, we just have a little spot tea and then go to bed, you
106   know¿
107   ((Julianna laughs, audience laughs))
108   (1.4)
109   C: (then) you talk to him, what about Halloween? <"oh no, we don't do that. we just
110   have a little cold beef and then <u>right</u> to bed (xx).">
111   ((Julianna laughs, audience laughs))
112   (1.2)
113   J: we celebrate Christmas
114   C: okay, I made that part up. but-
115   ((Julianna laughs, audience laughs))
116   (1.2)
117
118   C: the important thing is (.) [bad Europe, (.) good America
119   [((Julianna laughs))
120   J: [oh that's (xx)
121   C: [that's where I am trying to get to.
122   J: oh okay, (.) that's it.
123   (0.5)
124   C: eh- are you going to any Halloween parties?
125   J: my sister, eh- (.) actually is having a- a Halloween party here in the city for the
126   kids, I have two nieces, eh- eleven and seven. And she actually does live in one of
127   those (.) well, most it's beautiful but it's scary to me. It's a <u>huge</u> ehm (.) old mansion
128   (.) way way uptown and- (.) so she's having a scary party. And the funny- (.) one of
129   her frie:nds (.) said "oh, you can borrow my coffin"!
130   (1.0)
131   C: what to-
132   ((audience laughs, Julianna shrugs)) (0.6)
133
134   C: first of a:ll, (0.5) eh,
135   J: I know=
136   C: =why did she have a coffin?
137   J: we don't know, ((laughs))
138   C: you don't [know?
139   J: [we can't figure out why ((laughs)) but we're [borrowing
140   C: [you should find out why
141   she has a coffin ((nods))
142   J: ((laughs)) we are borrowing her coffin and stuffing it with eh, (.) you know, a fake
143   man.
144   C: <and you need a (xx)>, I mean coffins are [<u>hea</u>vy, you are gonna bring] that to a
145   party?
146   J: [we're bringing the coffin   ]
147
148   J: we-[-
149   C: [I think you should stuff it with be:er,
150   ((Julianna laughs, audience laughs))
151   C: I think that's what, that's what you should, (.)
152   ((audience laughs))
153   J: [(xxx)

154   C: [THAT'S WHAT PEOPLE WOULD WANT YOU TO DO
155   ((audience cheers))
156   (3.0)
157
158   J: (having) fun (.) to (have) a haunting house and yeah, I'm supposed to dress up, I
159   still don't know what to go as, cause I've never (.) dressed up-
160   C: I can't go to those. I ca:nno:t dress, I can't go to parties where you have to dress
161   [up]
162   J:
163   [no], I can't either
164   C: =and I've realised recently it's because (.) I make an ass of myself for a living, (.)
165   that I don't want to go to something dressed up as like a bunny, you- you know what I
166   mean?
167   ((Julianna laughs))
168   C: it's like (.) that's what I do every da:y (.) pretty [much ((nods))
169   J: [you're a bunny [every day
170   C: [ye:ah, I just
171   wanna (.) ((shrugs)) j- go, an- and chill [and hang out,]
172   J: [you just wanna] be you.
173   C: I wanna be me. [the ultimate (.) Halloween [costume
174   J: [(xx)   [hahahaha ((laughs))
175   ((audience laughs))
176
177   C: what- eh (.) so you're not gonna dress as anything or?
178   J: I'm gonna get by wi- I gotta do something cause my seven-year-old niece said to
179   me (.) eh, "you can't come (.) if you're not gonna dress up". (.) So I have to find
180   something [(xx)
181   C: [that's a
182   nice seven-year-old.
183   ((audience laughs))
184   J: so maybe I'll borrow your outfit and (.) go and (.) be you.
185   C: oh that'd be a big hit, at the [party
186   J: [hahaha ((laughs))
187   ((audience laughs))
188   (0.6)
189
190   C: yes, this oversized (.) suit from Sears, is me being [Conan O'Brien
191   J: [I don't know what to go as. I
192   truly- I've been- I I'm gonna go and buy a wig and a mask or something.
193   C: right.
194   J: =I'll do something=
195   C: =you'll do it the last minute.
196   J: there was a Rock mask actually, you know the Rock? (0.8) the Rock?
197   C: yeah, the wrestler the Rock=
198   J: =yeah
199   C: I thought you were just gonna go as a rock ((spreading hands))
200   J: no ((laughs))
201   ((audience laughs))
202   (0.8)
203

204   C: I'm like you are here to do that ((laughs))
205   ((audience laughs))
206   C: let's <u>do</u> [it.
207   J: [it was in the window, when think maybe I thought it's the ro:ck.
208   C: I'm a chunk of co:arse.
209   J: hahahaha
210   ((Julianna laughs, audience laughs))
211   (1.7)
212   C: what a great idea! ((laughs))
213   J: that too.
214
215   C: e::h, (.) now, you did a movie. Is this, is Elysian Fields movie you did with Mick
216   Jagger?
217   J: ye:ah, (0.6) yeah
218   C: what's that like (.) working with someone like (.) Mick Jagger? That's gotta be
219   [very-]
220   J:
221   [yeah] I I so wish I had actually a scene with him, (.) there is only one moment when
222   he sees me and Andy Garcia walk away. But he is fantastic in the movie. And I did
223   get (.) to sit in a make-up trailer with him (.) for an hour. <I had my make-up done
224   when he was having his make-up done>, and (.) we were just chit-chatting about
225   acting. And then al- and then he left to go and do a scene, and I just started screaming.
226   (0.5) "It's a rock-and-roll lege:nd! <I was just talking to a rock-and-roll le->"It (.) was
227   so (.) beyond me that I was in a room with (.) the Rolling (.) Stone himself.
228
229   C: right. now=
230   J: =eh,
231   C: what's he look like in person? I haven't actually got any good-, I saw him once,
232   and I wanna ask (.) he seemed like he was smaller than I [thought]
233   J: [he's tiny]
234   C: and then he has a <u>giant</u> like parade flowed he:ad. ((showing, imitating the head))
235   ((audience laughs))
236   (1.0)
237   C: he really does, he's got like a big giant Mick Jagger head that looks like he's
238   putting over his other he:ad. ((imitating how one is putting the other head on))
239   ((audience laughs))
240   (1.2)
241
242   C: and then he walks around like this kind of ((imitating Mick Jagger's walking
243   style)) (1.0) okay, I made that up too, but I'm just-
244   ((audience laughs))
245   (0.9)
246   C: [is he-]
247   J: [he's] tiny, he's very sma:ll. I mean [he's (.) small ((laughs))
248   [hahaha]
249   J: I was surprised [just how-
250   C: [he's a wee little man.
251   J: he's wee. he's wee thing (.) but he's a (.) he's [lovely
252   C: [hahaha
253   J: an' an' [an']

254   C: [I bet] he loves hearing tha:t, he's gotta check this out.
255   J: but=
256   C: =he is a <u>weed</u> little ma:n
257   J: no [no (.) I mean
258   C: [he lives]   [under a leaf in a forest.]
259   ((audience laughs))
260   J: [he's- he's very (xx)]
261   ((audience laughs))
262
263   J: it's (.) you know, he's very (.) he eats very (xx). It's (.) he d- spends a lot of energy
264   up on stage.
265   C: right. right.
266   J: so:, I'm gonna go and actually I got invited to a stones party. (.) on Sun[day
267   C: [you're
268   kidding?
269   J: so I'm going to my very first rock-and-roll party. yeah. I'm very [excited
270   C: [you've never
271   been to a rock-and-roll- [I mean I know like I've [been to
272   J: [no ((shrugs))   [oh, I-
273   C: oh, <u>Ab</u>ba threw a party once [that I've been to.
274   [((Julianna laughs, audience laughs.))
275   (0.8)
276   C: we really rocked, we had some fondue and then right to bed
277   ((audience and Julianna laugh))
278   (1.8)
279
280   C: what? ((laughs)) what is it?
281   J: that's good! ((points to Conan))
282   C: yeah. was it was it ((laughs))
283   ((audience laughs, Julianna laughs))
284   (1.0)
285   C: I got one ((laughs))
286   ((Julianna laughs))
287   (1.5)
288   C: was it, was it, but that's co:ol. a Rolling Stones [party
289   J: [I know, I don't know what to
290   expect but we are hoping they are going to suddenly play. I think they are starting a
291   tour in LA now. so, it's (.) I'm running home too
292   C: you [know] there must be so much pressure
293   J: [(xx)]
294   C: whether all of them are in one room, everybody's <u>wai</u>ting for <u>them</u> to <u>play</u>. (.)
295   J: [right]
296
297   C: [it's like] I talked to: (.) Kevin Bacon once <and he said> whenever he goes to a
298   wedding (.) people are waiting for him to go on the dancefloor and start (.) dancing,
299   ((imitates dancing)) you know¿ from Footloose ((clapping his hands, imitating the
300   rhythm))
301   J: [right] ((laughs))
302   C: [and eh,] (.) okay no one knows what the hell I'm talking about no:w but,
303   ((audience laughs, Julianna laughs))

304   (0.8)
305   C: there must be a lot of <u>press</u>ure, you know?
306   J: yeah yeah. I'm sure, I'm sure there <u>is</u> when you, you know, the people must always
307   want you to be funny¿
308   C: no, they are always waiting for me to create an awkward silence
309   J: =eheh ((laughs))
310   ((audience laughs)) (1.2)
311
312   C: come on, like you do on TV!
313   J: NO:
314   C: NO, I'm [trying to relax]
315   J: [I don't think so:]
316   ((audience laughs))
317   ((Conan receives a message? through his ear-plugged speaker. At least his touches the
318   speaker, making sure he hears well.))
319   (1.5)
320
321   C: eh, let's talk about Ghost Ship,
322   J: =[let's]
323   C: [this is], this is eh (.) eh- it's a horror movie¿
324   J: it's a <u>fun</u> popcorn movie.
325   C: [right]
326   J: [you] gonna have a good time
327   C: but it's a movie that's gonna, (.) it's [trying to [scary you in points¿
328   J: [it's   [it
329   J: yes, I'm sorry, you're right (.) ((laughs)) it is a horror movie ((laughing))
330   ((audience laughs)) (2.0)
331
332   C: you're forgetting which movie [you're playing. ((laughs))
333   J: [I'm like no, it's fun. ehm
334   C: "it's fun! bring the children! oh wait, no! (.)"
335   J: hahaha ((laughs))
336   C: "don't bring the children."
337   J: no it is, it's <u>very</u> scary. woo, scary, it's for Hallowee:n.
338   ((Julianna laughs, audience laughs, Conan laughs)) (3.0)
339
340   C: o:::kay, (.)
341   J: but it's a<u>maz</u>ing in a special effects department.
342   C: [aha]
343   J: [it's] a great visual (.) eh, film and it's (.) eh scary but also makes fun of itself. (.)
344   so, one minute you are scared but then you're laughing at (xx). it's a lot of fun.
345   C: do yo:u, eh, it's like the snow. haha
346   ((audience laughs))
347   C: do you (.)
348   J: I <u>love</u> this [snow, Conan!
349   C: [I'm just kidding. that's what I do:, but do [you
350   J: [haha
351   C: d- I'm I'm curious like do you like that kind of movie? [do you like-   ]
352   J: [no:: ((shakes her head))]
353   I've ne- I've the last scary movie

354   ((somebody from the audience starts to laugh, Julianna starts laughing too))
355   (2.3)
356
357   J: [what is (xx)]
358   C: ["No, I would never go see thi:s!"] ((mocking Julianna))
359   ((audience laughs)) (1.0)
360   C: "I mean yo:u should! cause WOO-WOO-WOO, SCA:RY"
361   ((Julianna laughs, audience laughs)) (0.9)
362   C: "but not me (.) but you!"
363   ((Julianna laughs)) (1.5)
364   C: I'm [kidding]
365   J: [eh. eh] scary movies scary me too much, I hate being scared.
366   C: =you don't like being scared¿
367   J: no. ((shakes her head)) and the last scary movie I saw was "The shining" which was
368   (.) genius.
369   C: right. right.
370   J: brilliant. ehm, but those images stay with me, and then I'm home alone one night,
371   and there's a weird sound, and I'll immediately go to the movie, and think that
372   someone's killing me and, I just   [can't] handle it. ((laughs shortly))
373   C: [hahah]
374   J: I can't. ((shakes her head))
375
376   C: that's must be, so- so, that's the kind of thing like, in this, in this movie also you
377   had to act scared a lot, which [I've noticed//
378   J: [there is a lot of this ((takes a deep breath in, a signal of being
379   really scared)). apparently that's the universal sign of horror films. ((laughs))
380   C: yeah. yeah. taking in air [into your] lungs.
381   J: [(.aaah)   ] ((deep breath in)
382   C: [yeah].
383   J: [yeah]. (xx) like that.
384   C: it's like you're either scared or you are asthmatic.
385   ((Julianna laughs)) (1.0)
386
387   C: we have a clip here from, f-hah-rom the movie. do you need to set this up?
388   J: okay.
389   ((Conan and Julianna start laughing simultaneously.)) (3.0)
390   C: "yeah, all right." ((mocks Julianna's manner, in which she just responded to his
391   question))
392   J: nah hahaha ((laughs)) (2.0)
393   C: "okay."
394   J: I will.
395   C: "I'll [do that]" ((making fun of J, scratching his teeth))
396   J: [you are], you are on a roll today. I'm I'm, okay, I'm going to. eeh, what's the
397   clip, eeh,
398   (0.7)
399   ((audience laughs)) (1.0)
400
401   J: ((suddenly she remembers it)) it's when [we just (xxx)]
402   C: [this is where you find the rabbit, oh eh-

403   J: haha, we find, we find a big, we've gone out, to look for this big boat that we've
404   heard about but we think that we can, ((elelee käsillä)) ehm, get parts and make
405   money [of it,]
406   C: [salvage it]
407   J: salvage it. and this is when we first walk into a boat.
408   C: okay, let's take a look at this clip from Ghost Ship.
409
410   ((clip from Ghost Ship)) (34.0)
411   ((audience cheers, claps))
412   J: is this fun?
413   C: scary
414   J: boo!
415   ((audience still cheers))
416   J: actually I have to say that eh, (0.8) do you know, do you- have you seen Jamie
417   Kennedy? the Jamie [Kennedy]
418
419   C: [yes,] yes I have. yeah
420   J: we- tomorrow night- Jamie Kennedy and I did a fantastic scene.
421   C: =he has a lot of like hidden camera [like]
422   J: [hidden] camera stuff
423   C: right, right,
424   J: and we held, ehm, auditions for Ghost Ship the musical.
425   ((slight laugh from the audience))
426   J: and people f-heh-ell for it. and it's on tomorrow night, eh//
427
428   C: it's a funny that's a [funny show]
429   J: [it's so] funny:! I d- I didn't realise cause he came up when I
430   was away in Australia, [and he's a genius]
431   C: [he's been here] a couple of times and his show's clips and he does ((nods))
432   [a really good job.]
433   J: ((mocking a male choreographer)) @and he (xxx) as George the choreographer and
434   he does this, ((throwing her hands in the air)) you know@, he,he's//
435   C: right, right.
436   J: you know, you gotta watch it, cause [(xxx)]
437   C: ((points at Julianna)) see you on that tomorrow night.
438   J: tomorrow night, yeah.
439
440   ((Conan looks at his "cheating" card.))
441   C: okay,
442   J: that's [(xxx)]
443   C: ((looks at his cards and reads)) [and] Ghost Ship is in theatres now. the Man from
444   Elysian Fields, (.) with the tiny Mick Jagger is now playing in select cities.
445   ((audience laughs, Julianna laughs, Conan laughs shortly))
446   C: I just wanted to put that in there,
447   J: he's gonna kill me ((smiling))
448   C: no, he'll he'll, no. don't worry I'll take care of him. wha::
449   ((audience laughs, Julianna laughs)) (1.1)
450   C: I'll slap him around a little bit.
451   J: ((nods)) thanks,
452

453 C: ((looks at his cheating card)) look for Evelyn with Pierce [Brosnan]
454 J: [yes,]
455
456 C: later this year. so great to see you.
457 J: so lovely to see you.
458 C: yeah, (.) Julianna Margulies everybody
459
460 ((audience cheers))
461 ((Commercial break))

C: Conan O'Brien   Inteview 4.
S: Steven R. Schirripa

1 C: My next guest plays Bobby Bacala on the <u>hit</u> HBO series the Sopranos, he's also
2 got this brand new book out (.) ((shows the book to the camera)) a Goomba's guide to
3 life. Here's a look at him, from early this season, on the Sopranos
4

5   ((a clip from the movie))
6
7   C: Please welcome, Steven R. Schirripa
8   ((Conan stands up. Steven comes out to the stage, waves to the audience, shakes the
9   hand of Conan's previous guest, Ted Danson, then shakes Conan's hand. Conan goes
10   back to his table and Steven sits down.))
11
12   C: ((looking at Steven)) that, was one of my favourite scenes from this (.) season so
13   far. You guys sitting there,
14   S: that was great,
15   C: [yeah
16   S: [I mean David Chase thought that scene was great but I. I ate like eight stakes
17   ((audience laughs, Conan laughs))
18   S: porterhouse stakes, you know. and I was literally sick to my stomach afterwards,
19   [but
20   C: [you have to keep shooting and shooting and shooting¿ ((making hand
21   gestures))
22   S: exactly. ((making hand gestures)) but as long as everyone enjoyed it, it's all that
23   matters
24   ((Conan laughs, audience cheers))
25   S: for your pleasure ((gestures to the audience, trying to speak loud to be heard over
26   the applauses))
27
28   C: you only ate eight stakes, yeah. Now, (1.0) when you started doing the show, they
29   cause you were on once and you talked about they had you wear fat suit. (0.8) Now
30   they don't make you to wear a fat suit anymore.
31   ((audience laughs))
32   (1.5)
33   S: I guess they think I'm fat enough
34   ((audience laughs))
35   (1.5)
36   C: [(xxx)
37   S: [at le- at least I've got my hair, Conan ((pointing to his head))
38   ((audience laughs))
39   (1.0)
40
41   ((Steven turns to Ted))
42   S: no offence, Ted
43   ((audience buzzes))
44   C: what the hell? ((Conan looks puzzled))
45   ((Steven kisses Ted's hand))
46   S: no offence, no offence
47   (2.0)
48   C: ((laughs silently)) I like he (xxx) make up to the guys and kiss 'em ((imitates
49   Steven kissing Ted's hand))
50   S: =wh- what do you want me to do? ((spreads his hands))
51   C: all right,
52   ((laughs from the audience))
53
54   Ted: [(xxx)   ]

55   C: yeah, [what do you] want from me? ((spreads his hands)) yeah, yeah. You're one
56   of the girls now. eh-
57   ((Steven laughs, audience laughs))
58   (2.0)
59   S: ((points to Conan)) <u>ea</u>sy (xx).
60   C: <u>all</u> right, all right, <I don't want any trouble>.
61   S: you are not <u>that</u> tall.
62   ((audience laughs))
63   (2.3)
64
65   C: let's talk here. <u>Real</u> mobsters, I understand, <u>real real</u> mobsters, the real thing are
66   critical sometimes, (.) of the technical aspects of the show. Is that true?
67   S: well first of all, real mobsters love the show.
68   C: right.
69   S: the Sopranos keep mobsters off the street on Sunday nights.
70   ((audience laughs))
71   C: [right
72   S: [you know what I mean?
73   C: right
74   S: eh, (0.5) but I live in Little Italy, I see a lot of guys all the time, and, one guy came
75   up to me, he says "Hey Steve, you know I love the show but, there was that scene that
76   shot the guy on the back of the head. Anybody who's ever done that <u>knows</u>, (.) you
77   don't do it that way."
78   ((audience laughs, Conan laughs))
79   (3.0)
80   S: I said "oh (.) I: think I got to get going", you know.
81   ((audience laughs))
82   (1.5)
83   S: and
84   C: =I'm also curious like how, what do you mean, you shoot (the guy) back in the
85   head. "Ouh, ((waving his hand)) you gotta do it this way". (xx) <what do you think?>
86   S: I I've no idea.
87   C: yeah
88   S: I didn- I didn't stick around to find [out.
89   C: [right, right.
90
91   S: then Michael Imprioli was in a bar one night, and a guy came up to him, he says
92   "Listen, if you ever need to strangle somebody from behind, (0.8) here's my number,
93   get a hold of me.
94   ((audience laughs))
95   S: I mean what do you say to that? you know. ((looks around)) okay, sure. ((mocking
96   a telephone conversation)) Listen, I'm strangling a guy tomorrow. ((looks at Conan))
97   C: yeah.
98   S: could you come down and give me some tips.
99   C: right, right. (0.5) I think you just act very pleasant, when he's giving the [advice.
100   S:
101   [and then move on.
102 ((Conan nods))
103 S: just keep on moving, you know.
104

105   ((Conan turns and takes a book from his table.))
106   C: you have this book, a Goomba's (.) e:h guide to life (.) and you have a list here of
107   things a Goomba would <u>nev</u>er say. Give us examples, <what are things a Goomba
108   would never say?>
109   S: "Nathan Lane? (.) I adore Nathan Lane."
110   ((audience laughs, Conan laughs))
111   (7.0)
112   S: another thing a Goomba (wouldn't) say "I just got to rent Godfather III again".
113   ((audience laughs))
114   (1.0)
115   S: you never hear a Goomba would say "I would love to, sweetheart, but I'm a
116   married man."
117   ((audience laughs))
118   (2.0)
119   S: you never hear a Goomba would say "Two tickets to the Vagina Monologues,
120   please".
121   ((audience laughs))
122   (1.0)
123   S: all the things they'll never say, Conan.
124
125   C: aha (.) <never gonna have (xx)> you have a who:le, chapter in here on <u>tipping</u>. the
126   importance of <u>tipping</u>.
127   S: well that's a big part of goomba: (.) style, they tip the valet park, you know I come
128   from Vegas, I was a metro dee for years. You tip the valet, you tip the metro dee, (.)
129   you tip everyone but a judge or a cop. (1.0) Unless they ask, you know¿
130   ((audience laughs))
131   C: right. (.) if they bring it up, then it's [ok.
132   S: [the:n, you can
133   throw some out there. But I'll tell you what was funny, I tipped the priest. <This is a
134   true story.> The priest who I (xx), my daughter's baptism. I had the restaurant from
135   two to five. (1.0) So we had the baptism earlier, but was a little worried we weren't
136   gonna get there quick enough.
137   C: =if it goes lo: [ng,
138   S: [a::nd we gonna screw up the party, you know, (the
139   baptisms) aren't that important, you know¿
140   C: right
141   ((audience laughs))
142   S: (.) but eh, so,
143   ((audience laughs, Steven and Conan laugh))
144   (2.0)
145
146   S: you know we [(xxx) to party], I'M PAYING FOR THE [PARTY],
147   C: [(xxx)   ]
148   [yeah   ], right.
149   S: so:, we're sittin' and I'm sittin' and I'm talkin' to the father, I said "Father, listen,
150   you gotta do me a favour", he's goin' (.) "please, whatever you want, son". I pull out
151   fifty dollars. His hand came out from under that robe, (0.5)
152   ((Conan laughs))
153
154   S: he snatched that fifty, ((imitates the priest))

155 ((audience laughs, Conan laughs))
156 (0.5)
157 S: I I I'm I'm telling you, so=
158 C:=it's like alien, phe-[phew] ((imitating how one would take the money))
159 S: [so-   ], he was going "no, no, no, no."
160 ((heilauttaa kieltävästi kättä ja ojentaa toista kättä ottaakseen rahaa)) so,
161 ((audience, Conan & Steven laugh))
162 (2.0)
163
164 S: so, (.) my wife had said "you didn't, you didn't say that", I said "no, of course not,
165 what I'm gonna say¿" (0.6) Half way through the thing, he's reading, (0.6) ((imitates
166 reading)) there's about a hundred and fifty people, there he goes "Steve, (.) how am I
167 doing on time?"
168 ((Conan laughs, audience laughs)) (2.5)
169 S: and that's a true story
170 C: aha ((nods))
171
172 S: <that's (xx) true story>. now my mother I tip. (.) Believe it or not.
173 C: =what do you mean, you tip your mother¿
174 S: look, I I love my mother to death but, you know once in a while, (.) little complain
175 here and there, [so]
176 C: [right], right,
177 S: I kept going over there, it was a little difficult. so I said you know what I'm gonna
178 do? like a metrodee, (.) I'm gonna give her two hundred up front when I walk in the
179 door, (0.5) see if that works, you know, tip to en<u>sure</u> proper service
180 C: =right
181 S: I walk in, (0.6) I give her two hundred up front,
182 C: [right]
183 S: [she's], no doesn't have an illness, she doesn't have an ache and pain,
184 C: [hahahaha]
185 S: [everything's beautiful], (0.7) can I get you [something?
186 C:
187 [that's great
188 ((Conan laughs, audience cheers)) (3.5)
189
190 S: so, (0.5) I realise, (0.5)
191 C: right
192 S: my mother's a metrodee.
193 C: right, right
194 S: and so, on the way out, I gotta give her two a hundred dollar bills, and I say here
195 ma', she's goin' "oh please, you give me enough" ((imitating his mother)) "could you
196 break me one of these before you leave?"
197 ((Conan laughs))
198 (1.4)
199 C: I like your mom ((nods))
200 S: ye- yes she's wonderful. I love my mother.
201
202 C: do you, (.) you have a tipping story about David Copperfield, cause you worked in
203 Vegas, and you had an experience with David Copperfield, befamed illusionist.

204   S: =well that's before he wa-, he was famous but not that famous. This was like
205   nineteen eighty-two. I was a bouncer in Paul Anka's club. (.) and eh you know a lot of
206   guys would give you, I mean I was young, guys would come over to me and give a
207   hundred dollars, (.) "bring girls around my table", you know give me two hundred
208   dollars, give twenty dollars, you know "introduce me to any girls", (0.4) he gave me
209   three dollars, David.
210   ((a little laugh from the audience. Conan smiles))
211
212   S: he gave me three singles and he said "if you can meet any girls, you know, (.) bring
213   them over to me." (1.0) He was alone [(xxx) night.
214   [((Conan laughs,
215   audience laughs))
216   (1.2)
217   S: I'm a pimp but not for that cheap, you know what I mean Conan¿
218   ((audience laughs, Conan laughs))
219   (0.7)
220   C: I like (the idea) like here is three [do:llars ((imitating a magician))
221   S: [here's three dollars,
222   three single ((laughs)) hahahahaha
223   ((audience laughs))
224   C: wham ((imitating a magician))
225   ((Steven laughs))
226   C: that was an illusion, they were really fifties, you just couldn't see: (.) the illu:sion
227   ((imitating a magician))
228   ((Steven laughs, then points to Conan))
229   S: [you] do it very well.
230   C: [eh-]
231   C: a little too well, eh-
232   ((audience laughs))
233   C: a Goomba's guide to life (.) is in stores right now ((showing the book to the
234   camera)), and Steve's performing at the Comedy Garden, (.) in New York City on
235   Saturday, November, ninth. Congratulations on all your success ((shaking hands with
236   Steven))
237   S: [thank you
238   C: [great to have you on the show, come on back.