

Pragmatic Analysis of Dialogue in *Wednesday Season 2* : Interpreting Implied Meanings

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Received: 17th November 2025

Accepted: 6th December 2025

Published: 6th February 2026

Abstract

This study analyzes the pragmatic aspects of dialogue in *Wednesday Season 2* with a focus on interpreting implied meanings conveyed through sarcasm, irony, and indirect speech. Using a descriptive qualitative method and the framework of Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1986), the research examines selected dialogues to uncover how characters express meaning beyond literal language and construct complex social interactions. The findings show that sarcasm and irony are central to Wednesday Addams's identity, functioning as tools of humor, defiance, and social critique. Indirect speech and mock politeness also reveal her resistance to authority and her distinct way of asserting individuality. Overall, the study concludes that pragmatic elements in the series play a crucial role in building character depth, enhancing narrative tone, and engaging the audience through layered, context-dependent communication that reflects both cognitive and emotional dimensions of meaning.

Keywords: pragmatics; sarcasm; irony; implied meaning; *Wednesday* series

1. Introduction

Language is an essential communication system that allows humans to convey ideas, emotions, and experiences effectively, and in recent years pragmatics scholars have emphasized how meaning is often negotiated beyond mere words Fitri (2022) this shift underscores the importance of implied or context-dependent meaning in contemporary media. It functions not only as a means of transferring information but also as a tool for expressing identity, maintaining social relationships, and communicating cultural values, especially in modern narrative forms Mazzocconi et al. (2025) where multimodal cues, tone, and gesture weave together with utterances to produce meaning. In human interaction, meaning is often determined not only by the literal content of words but also by the speaker's intentions, contextual nuances, and the hearer's inferential work; this is the core business of pragmatics, the branch of linguistics that investigates how implied meanings emerge from context (as discussed in recent pragmatics surveys, e.g. the automatic sarcasm detection survey, 2024) a hermeneutic process especially visible in fiction and serialized dialogue.

In modern visual narratives such as Netflix series, dialogue serves a dual role both as a vehicle for storytelling and as a tool for character construction, enriching meaning through what is unsaid or indirectly signaled. *Wednesday Season 2* (2025) presents a particularly fertile ground for pragmatic analysis: its dark humor, sarcasm, and ironic undertones operate as semiotic devices unveiling characters' deeper motives, conflicts, and tensions. Whereas many linguistic studies examine irony in literary or spoken discourse, only a few recent works have extended pragmatic scrutiny to streaming narratives and media dialogue Joshua (2020) which reveals a gap in applying theories of implied meaning to TV series. Despite increasing interest in computational pragmatics (e.g. sarcasm detection in social media contexts, 2024) and multimodal

communication, there remains limited research specifically addressing how sarcasm functions in serialized visual media, especially in a stylized show like *Wednesday* that plays with grotesque, gothic, and ironic registers.

The Netflix series: "Wednesday" is a supernatural mystery comedy focused on the life of Wednesday Addams, a dark, mysterious daughter of the Addams family played by "Jenna Ortega", as it fulfills to the unique environment in the Nevermore Academy. The second season continues to explore his psychic abilities and the dynamics of relationships with those around her, with a speech full of rich sarcasm, irony, and implied significance, beyond literal meaning. This Netflix series not only draws attention because of its unique story and complex character but also serves as an ideal example for analyzing pragmatic language use in lively, nuanced contexts. One of the interesting phenomena in pragmatic studies is sarcasm and irony that are often used in dialogue to convey implied meaning. The Netflix "Wednesday Season 2" (2025) emerged from the legendary character Wednesday Addams, providing many examples of pragmatic dialogue with the rich use of sarcasm, irony and the implicit language. The second season of this series, mixing of characters in more and more complex implications has become a compelling study in pragmatic linguistics. Focuses on question of how implied meaning, especially sarcasm and irony, are expressed in the dialogue of "Wednesday Season 2" (2025). The main issue is that there is still limited research exploring how these pragmatic features work in this series, which is known for its complex characters and rich use of indirect language. The writer assumes that the dialogues in Wednesday Season 2 use sarcasm, irony, and indirect speech not only to create humor but also to build deeper characterizations and develop the story.

This study aims to analyze the pragmatic aspects of dialogue in Wednesday Season 2, with a particular focus on interpreting implied meanings behind the characters' speech acts. Through pragmatic analysis, this research seeks to reveal how sarcasm, irony, indirect speech, and context-dependent meanings contribute to the humor, character development, and narrative complexity of the series. By examining these linguistic features, the study provides insights into how modern visual media deploy pragmatic strategies to convey layered meanings. The focus of this study lies in identifying how sarcasm, irony, and indirect speech in *Wednesday Season 2* function not just as humorous embellishments, but as integral mechanisms conveying implied meanings beyond literal interpretation. I posit that these pragmatic strategies are essential in constructing character identity, casting social commentary, and deepening narrative texture especially in a series that thrives on duplicities of meaning, contradiction, and hidden intent. By examining selected dialogues containing sarcasm, ironic inversion, and indirect speech acts, this research aims to elucidate how text, context, and inference interact to produce layered meaning for the viewer. In doing so, the study not only contributes to pragmatic theory in media discourse, but also responds to the need for up-to-date empirical work on humour, irony, and implicature in streaming television that bridge theory and practice.

2. Method

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach designed to provide a systematic, factual, and interpretative description of the pragmatic phenomena found in *Wednesday Season 2* (2025). The qualitative paradigm is chosen because the data are verbal utterances, not numerical variables, and therefore require deep contextual interpretation rather than statistical generalization (Rahmayanti et al., 2025). The main objective is to reveal how implied meanings particularly those manifested through sarcasm, irony, and indirect speech acts are constructed, interpreted, and function within the narrative framework of the series.

The primary data consist of dialogue transcripts taken from selected episodes of *Wednesday Season 2* (2025) available on Netflix by using note taking technique. The researcher focused on utterances containing pragmatic features such as sarcasm, irony, and indirectness that express meanings beyond their literal form. Each episode was observed, and dialogues were manually transcribed and categorized according to the type of pragmatic phenomenon identified. The selection process followed purposive sampling, where only dialogues that exhibit clear pragmatic intent or implicit meaning were included (Li & Wongwaropakorn, 2024). Supporting data were obtained from subtitles, contextual scene observations, and script excerpts to ensure accuracy in representing tone and communicative intent.

The analysis is grounded in Relevance Theory proposed by Sperber & Wilson (1986), which views communication as an inferential process in which listeners construct meaning through the interplay of cognitive effort and contextual relevance. According to this theory, every utterance implies that it is worth the listener's attention (Shulginov, 2025) because it yields adequate contextual effects for the least processing effort. This framework allows the researcher to examine how sarcasm, irony and indirect speech act as inferential cues that guide audience interpretation beyond explicit language.

3. Findings and Discussion

One of the interesting phenomena in pragmatic studies is sarcasm and irony that are often used in dialogue to convey implied meaning. The Netflix "Wednesday Season 2" (2025) emerged from the legendary character Wednesday Addams, providing many examples of pragmatic dialogue with the rich use of sarcasm and the implicit language. The second season of this series, mixing of characters in more and more complex implications has become a compelling study in pragmatic linguistics. Wednesday is a supernatural mystery comedy series centered around the life of Wednesday Addams, the dark

and complex daughter of the Addams family, as she navigates the unusual environment of Nevermore Academy. Season 2 continues to explore her psychic abilities and interpersonal relationships, with dialogue laden with sarcasm, irony, and rich implied meanings that transcend literal interpretation. The series' popularity and unique character interactions make it an ideal context for studying pragmatic language use. This study aims to analyze the pragmatic aspects of dialogue in Wednesday Season 2, with a particular focus on interpreting implied meanings behind the characters' speech acts. Through pragmatic analysis, this research seeks to reveal how sarcasm, irony, indirectness, and context-dependent meanings contribute to the humor, character development, and narrative complexity of the series. By examining these linguistic features, the study provides insights into how modern visual media deploy pragmatic strategies to convey layered meanings. Data analysis refers to the theory of relevance developed by Sperber and Wilson (1995), where understanding implicit meaning is done through the construction of explicatures, which are contextualized literal interpretations, and the identification of implicit premises and conclusions necessary for an intention to be understood. The steps of the analysis include determining implicitly meaningful utterances, constructing explicatures, analyzing implicature premises, and inferring implicature conclusions that are appropriate to the context. The results of this analysis are then interpreted to understand the pragmatic function of the dialogue, which reflects the speaker's communicative intent in a particular social and cultural context. The validity of the research is maintained through literature triangulation and discussions with colleagues to strengthen the interpretation.

Wednesday Addams's style of language in Wednesday Season 2 demonstrates how sarcasm and irony contribute to identity construction. Dialogue analysis from Wednesday Season 2 reveals that sarcasm, irony, and implied meaning are frequently used and crucial to humor and character development. These findings support the central theory that pragmatic features are useful tools for characterizing interpersonal dynamics and plot development. The following dialogue data from the Netflix series Wednesday Season 2 contain implied meanings of sarcasm, irony, or indirect speech.

Morticia Addams: "Promise me you will take care of your brother."
Wednesday: **"I always do."**

Her mother, Morticia Addams asks her to protect her little brother (Pugsley) because it's their first day come back at Nevermore (school for the outcast) and there was always so much crime in it because all of the student has a super power. At first glance, the response "I always do" while on that scene show the audience throwback when they was child Wednesday try to burry Pugsley alive in coffin and lock it with wooden, yet the context provides a radically different interpretation. The audience recalls a flashback where young Wednesday nearly buried her brother alive, reframing "taking care" as a *macabre act of affection*. In one scene in Wednesday, Morticia Addams asks her daughter to look after her younger brother, Pugsley, with the words, "Take care of your brother." This request is made on their first day back at Nevermore School, a special institution for outcasts or outcasts with supernatural powers. At first glance, the conversation seems simple and full of the typical motherly affection for her child. However, when Wednesday replies with a deadpan expression and tone, "I always do," the narrative context and character background make it loaded with complex pragmatic meaning. For viewers familiar with the Addams family, this answer immediately triggers memories of Wednesday's childhood scene of attempting to bury Pugsley alive in a coffin an act ironically perceived as a form of affection within their family. Thus, the visual context and narrative memory create a double interpretation between the literal meaning of "protecting" and the connotative meaning of "hurting with affection."

Practically, the utterance "I always do" is a potent example of irony omitted in Sperber & Wilson (1986) theory of relevance. In this theory, irony often emerges through the mechanism of echoic mention, where the speaker echoes a familiar social utterance or norm, but with an attitude that is inverse or contradictory to its original meaning. In this context, Wednesday echoes the conventional phrase "take care," which typically implies care and protection, but she utters it with a cynical attitude and a counterintuitive meaning. This attitude produces an ironic effect: she seems to emphasize that the form of "care" in her family is not gentle or normative, but rather eccentric and dark. This irony functions not only as a form of humor but also as a way for Wednesday to assert her identity and social position in a world that rejects her uniqueness..

This analysis is reinforced by Kuzhevskaya (2019) perspective, which introduces the concept of identity-protective sarcasm, namely the use of sarcasm to maintain one's autonomy from social pressures. In Wednesday's context, sarcasm becomes a communication strategy that protects her identity from the demands of social conventions and the moral expectations of adults, particularly authority figures like her mother. By conveying Morticia's commands through irony, Wednesday demonstrates her approval of normative forms of affection without explicitly contradicting them. This sarcastic humor serves as a psychological mechanism for self-expression while maintaining distance from social values that align with one's worldview. This finding aligns with research by McAuley & Glenwright (2025), which states that sarcasm can function as a psychological buffer, a protective barrier that allows individuals to maintain emotional control and personal identity in stressful social interactions. Thus, Wednesday's sarcasm is not a sign of emotional detachment, but rather an expression of social intelligence and self-strength. Her dark humor represents the Addams Family's version of empathy and love not through tenderness, but through a reversal of the moral logic of mainstream society.

Furthermore, Wednesday's utterances can also be understood as markers of epistemic stance, namely, a marker of the speaker's intellectual and social position, as explained by (González-Cruz, 2025). Through this irony, Wednesday

positions herself as an individual intellectually and emotionally superior to her social environment, which is considered hypocritical or overly normative. Her sarcasm is not merely satire, but also a form of self-reflection and an affirmation of social boundaries between herself and the outside world. By reversing the meaning of affection into a form of strangeness and dark humor, Wednesday rejects common norms of decency and simultaneously reinforces the Addams family's distinctive alternative morality. From a socio-pragmatic framework, this statement demonstrates how irony can function as a tool for identity formation and group cohesion (in-group identity). According to Nasrullah, (2025), irony in fictional discourse not only serves to create humor but also to construct an internal value system within the narrative community. In the Addams family, dark humor and eccentric behavior are ways they express love and solidarity. Therefore, when Wednesday says, "I always do," she not only expresses affection in a reversal way but also reinforces their family values that reject current societal definitions of morality. Considering the linguistic, social, and psychological contexts, it can be concluded that the utterance carries an implicit meaning that goes far beyond simply obeying the mother's orders. Through irony, sarcasm, and play with meaning, Wednesday negotiates her position as an autonomous, intelligent, and unique individual in a world that demands uniformity. Pragmatically, the utterance illustrates how language can be a means of resistance, a veiled expression of affection, and the affirmation of social identity. Thus, this scene is not simply a moment of humor, but also a complex representation of the relationship between language, power, and meaning in the context of interpersonal communication in the fictional world.

Principal Barry Dort: "Would you like a sticker?"

Wednesday: "**Only if you have one that says 'Do not resuscitate.'**"

An interaction occurs between Wednesday Addams and the principal of Nevermore Academy. The principal, in a gentle and paternalistic tone, offers Wednesday a sticker as a reward for her "positive" behavior in class. The principal's statement, "Would you like a sticker?" appears to be a typical expression of politeness and concern for a student who needs motivation. However, Wednesday perceives this offer as a form of infantilization, or a treatment that belittles her intelligence and maturity by treating her like a child. In response, Wednesday, with a flat expression and a sarcastic tone, replies, "Do not resuscitate." Literally, this phrase means "do not revive," a medical term used to refuse life support when someone is in critical condition. However, in the context of the conversation, this remark is not a medical statement, but rather a sarcastic response that implies a rejection of a form of validation that is perceived as false and demeaning. This scene is pragmatically interesting because it shows how a form of politeness that should foster harmony is instead twisted into a means of symbolic resistance. Wednesday uses sarcasm to express discomfort with the power structures that try to subdue her with false friendliness. the utterance "Do not resuscitate" seems irrelevant to the principal's offer of stickers. However, pragmatically, the discrepancy between form and function creates the effect of mock politeness, a strategy of false politeness that masks rejection beneath a veneer of politeness. As explained by Crible (2025) mock politeness, or politeness inversion, occurs when linguistic markers of politeness are given antagonistic or defensive meanings. In this case, the principal attempts to uphold institutional politeness by offering a small reward to the student, but Wednesday inverts that politeness into a sarcastic rejection of the reward. The response "Do not resuscitate" serves as a sarcastic rejection of the principal's attempts to appease and control. Wednesday rejects not only the offer of stickers but also the entire idea that she needs to be "fixed" or "motivated" in a childish manner. Her morbid humor demonstrates her rejection of any form of superficial validation that disrespects her autonomy and intelligence. Thus, the utterance has two main pragmatic functions: first, it rejects infantilization, which is the demeaning treatment of adults by equating them with children; and second, it takes control of the conversation by changing the social role from "advice recipient" to "discourse controller."

This finding aligns with the theory of Galiano and Semeraro (2023), who argue that mock politeness in audiovisual dialogue functions as a discursive weapon a discourse weapon that combines humor and social criticism. In this case, the principal's utterance ("Would you like a sticker?") suggests superficial kindness, but its pragmatic implicature implies that Wednesday is considered immature. Wednesday grasps this implicit meaning and rejects it through clever sarcasm. This analysis also aligns with the research of Rahmayanti (2025), who found that pragmatic humor in media is often used to negotiate power imbalances between speaker and listener. In this scene, the principal holds greater social and institutional authority, but Wednesday uses dark humor to reverse this power relationship. Sarcasm becomes a tool for reclaiming interactional control, allowing him to maintain his autonomy and dignity in the face of authority. Furthermore, as Li (2024) argues, sarcasm is not only an aesthetic means of creating humor, but also a form of pragmatic empowerment a way for speakers to reclaim agency and self-control through verbal resistance. In other words, Wednesday's sarcasm functions as a defense mechanism against symbolic domination, demonstrating that verbal intelligence can be a form of power in itself. From a pragmatic perspective, this utterance illustrates a violation of the politeness principle as explained by Leech (1983) in the Irony Principle. This principle states that speakers may intentionally violate politeness maxims to achieve higher communicative goals, such as creating humor, satire, or social criticism. In the utterance "Do not resuscitate," Wednesday consciously rejects the maxims of agreement and approbation two maxims that require a willingness to agree and accept appreciation. She instead chooses an extreme, morbid form, which, in the context of the Addams family, is a typical expression of affection.

Linguistically, the combination of humor and the threat of death ("Do not resuscitate") reinforces the thematic coherence of the Addams' world, where death and the uncanny symbolize emotional depth and freedom of thought. This utterance is not simply a form of dark humor, but also a semiotic strategy to blur the lines between politeness and aggression, between acceptance and rejection. By uttering this sentence, Wednesday redefines a form of social interaction typically considered polite: she transforms the act of giving a compliment into a space to critique superficial validation false compliments that only assess surface behavior without understanding the essence of the individual. The pragmatics of this utterance also demonstrate the close relationship between language and power. Through mock politeness, Wednesday demonstrates that politeness is not always neutral; it can be a subtle tool of domination. However, by reversing this logic of politeness, Wednesday uses language as a means of symbolic resistance, expressing wit, irony, and self-autonomy. Thus, this utterance serves as a concrete example of how strategies of irony and sarcasm can function as liberatory mechanisms in a hierarchical social context.

Gomez Addams: **"Principal Dort, have you met our little angel of death?"**

Principal Dort: "Yep, iam sure Wednesdday would enjoy having you around more this year."

This scene occurs when Gomez Addams introduces his daughter, Wednesday Addams, to Nevermore's Headmaster, Principal Dort. This situation is part of a formal social interaction between the Addams family and the educational institution. In the context of typical social communication, the moment a child is introduced to educational authorities is usually marked by praise or positive expressions of affection. A father, for example, might say, "This is my lovely daughter," or "She's our pride and joy." However, Gomez chooses to introduce Wednesday with a paradoxical phrase: "our little angel of death." Literally, the phrase "angel of death" carries connotations of death, destruction, and darkness. In mainstream culture, the "angel of death" is a fearsome figure associated with the end of life. However, in the context of the Addams family, this phrase functions as a unique form of affection that goes against societal norms. For them, death is not something to fear, but rather a symbol of beauty, peace, and a natural part of life. Therefore, when Gomez calls Wednesday "angel of death," he is actually praising his daughter, not insulting or intimidating her. The humor that emerges from this statement stems from the clash between social expectations (that parents should use gentle words of praise) and the reality of the Addams family, which views morbidity as elegant and loving. This context demonstrates that communication within the Addams family operates within an inverted moral order. Speech deemed "dark" by society actually has positive meaning for them. Therefore, understanding the pragmatic meaning in this scene requires the audience to understand the Addams family's internal norms in order to grasp the irony and warmth behind the seemingly dark humor.

Linguistically, the phrase "our little angel of death" is a clear example of sarcasm as social commentary, used not merely for humor but also to provide social criticism of dominant moral values. The phrase contains an oxymoron, a semantic contradiction between the words "angel" (a symbol of purity and compassion) and "death" (a symbol of darkness and the end of life). The combination of these two contradictory elements creates a humorous effect as well as a subtle satire on societal norms that idealize goodness, purity, and conformity. According to Nasrullah (2025), this phenomenon is called pragmatic incongruity, a semantic discrepancy that produces a humorous effect while also opening up space for social reflection. When Gomez calls Wednesday the "angel of death," he is not only telling a joke but also implicitly challenging society's moral perspective on death and the uncanny. Pragmatically, this discrepancy implies that affection within the Addams family is not subject to common social norms but is defined by their own value system. Meanwhile, Dynel (2025) explains that exaggerated and theatrical hyperbolic sarcasm in narrative media often serves to create ideological distancing, that is, an ideological distance between the speaker and dominant norms. In this scene, the hyperbole of the "angel of death" serves as a subtle rejection of social expectations that require parents to display affection in a gentle and normative manner. Gomez does not reject affection itself, but rather the way society defines it. Thus, sarcasm here functions as symbolic resistance to a value system that considers oddity as deviant. Furthermore, Crible's (2025) theory of irony in multimodal media asserts that irony in audiovisual works serves not only an aesthetic function but also forms cultural counter-discourses, namely, counter-discourses that challenge mainstream views. Gomez Addams' dialogue confirms this: the dark humor he uses is not only for entertainment but also to affirm the Addams family's cultural identity, which is at odds with social norms. Their humor became a kind of "secret language" that only family members or viewers who shared an understanding of the Addams world could understand.

From a pragmatic perspective, this utterance reflects how language is used to negotiate group identity and solidarity. Within the Addams family, there is a pattern of language use that consistently subverts common moral values: death is considered beautiful, suffering is considered romantic, and gloom is considered joyous. According to Sperber and Wilson's (1995) theory of relevance, understanding irony and humor in such contexts depends on contextual expectations, namely shared knowledge that shapes how the audience interprets meaning. This means that the audience does not understand Gomez's utterance based on its literal meaning, but rather through the social and cultural context of the Addams family established within the narrative. Thus, pragmatically, the phrase "our little angel of death" functions as both an identity marker and an affective expression. This utterance demonstrates the emotional closeness between father and son through a form of inverted humor, while also communicating pride in Wednesday's uniqueness. Within the framework of pragmatic incongruity, irony serves as a means of building character cohesion and highlighting the cultural differences between the

Addams family and the outside world (Shrivastava, 2021). The sarcasm in this dialogue also serves to create an ideological balance between the characters and the social structures surrounding them. By embracing "death" as praise and "darkness" as virtue, the Addams family proclaims an alternative moral system in which strangeness, freedom of thought, and non-conformity are considered forms of truth. Pragmatically, this demonstrates that humor is not merely a means of entertainment but also a communication mechanism that allows individuals or groups to negotiate their social position in a society rife with moral and cultural pressures. Therefore, Gomez Addams's remark "our little angel of death" cannot be understood simply as dark humor. It represents a multilevel form of communication, where sarcasm functions as a medium for affection, identity affirmation, and social critique of a culture that judges humans based on narrow moral conventions. By combining tenderness and death in a single phrase, Gomez Addams presents a portrait of a warm yet eccentric family where love, death, and humor blend into a distinctive and meaningful symbolic language.

Stranger Man: "Who you talking to, Little girl?"

Wednesday: **"Use the words 'little' and 'girl' to address me again, and I can't guarantee your safety."**

This scene demonstrates one of Wednesday Addams's key characteristics: her assertiveness and rejection of gender stereotypes and the infantilization often associated with adolescent girls. The dialogue occurs when her uncle call he 'little girl', addresses Wednesday as "little girl." Within common social norms, such a greeting is often considered friendly or even sweet. However, for Wednesday, the term carries a condescending tone, positioning her as weak, insecure, and in need of protection. In a calm but firm tone, Wednesday replies: "Use the words 'little' and 'girl' to address me again, and I can't guarantee your safety." Superficially, this sentence sounds like a threat, but pragmatically, it functions more complexly. This utterance is a form of sarcastic threat or ironic warning, a threat wrapped in Wednesday's signature sarcasm and dark humor. Rather than expressing physical aggression, the utterance serves as a symbolic declaration of independence and a rejection of social categorizations that belittle her. The film's context suggests that Wednesday lives in an environment that seeks to normalize female behavior within the framework of "gentle, submissive, and emotional." Using sarcastic threats, she rejects these assumptions and asserts herself as a strong, rational, and free individual. Therefore, the socio-psychological context behind this utterance is crucial: it is not merely a response to a derogatory remark, but also a form of identity resistance against a patriarchal social structure.

From a pragmatic perspective, this utterance constitutes an indirect threat—a threat conveyed through humor or irony, yet still implying a real illocutionary force. Literally, the sentence "I can't guarantee your safety" implies physical danger. However, when combined with Wednesday's flat, cynical tone, and reputation as an eccentric and bold figure, the meaning shifts to a symbolic threat, not because he will actually attack, but because he refuses to submit to the role assigned to him. This aligns with Li's (2024) findings, which state that indirect threats in modern communication often function not as a form of aggression but as an identity-preserving mechanism. In this case, Wednesday's threat serves to maintain his autonomy. By packaging the threat in sarcasm, Wednesday demonstrates his intelligence while simultaneously refusing to be controlled by others. Sarcasm is a more subtle yet more powerful form of language than explicit aggression, as it combines verbal intelligence and personal power.

Furthermore, this utterance reflects the concept of performative utterance proposed by J. L. Austin (1962) in *How to Do Things with Words*. According to Austin, language functions not only to describe reality (constative) but also to create social action (performative). When Wednesday says, "I can't guarantee your safety," she isn't describing a threat; she's performing an action, asserting power and boundaries over her interlocutor. In other words, language here becomes a performative tool of power, not simply a medium of communication. In this context, sarcasm not only functions to create humor but also becomes a social act that asserts a woman's agency (self-control) in a discourse space typically dominated by men. This aligns with Nasrullah's (2025) concept of linguistic self-defense, which explains that humor and sarcasm can be forms of linguistic defense for women to maintain their identity and power in a patriarchal society. By uttering this sentence, Wednesday rejects her passive role and positions herself as an active subject who determines the meaning of the interaction.

Pragmatically, this utterance contains several layers of meaning that work together. First, from the illocutionary act aspect, the sentence is a form of threat delivered ironically. Although packaged in a humorous tone, the illocutionary force, the power of the speech act, actually conveys a firm message: the speaker rejects demeaning treatment and demands recognition of his position. Second, from the perlocutionary act aspect, this utterance creates a psychological effect on the listener, namely a feeling of reverence, fear, or surprise. However, this effect is not due to the threat of violence, but rather to Wednesday's authoritative and unexpected charisma. The dark humor he uses creates an ambiguity between threat and joke, forcing the interlocutor to reassess his position in the interaction. Third, from a sociopragmatic perspective, this utterance demonstrates how women can use sarcasm to reverse power relations. In patriarchal cultures, women are often associated with politeness and gentleness. However, Wednesday uses language that violates these norms of politeness as a form of empowerment. Sarcasm becomes a means to negotiate linguistic authority she doesn't need to shout or get angry to demonstrate her power; a single cynical sentence that combines humor and threat is sufficient. The irony in this utterance can also be explained through Sperber and Wilson's (1995) Relevance Theory, which posits that meaning lies not in the words themselves, but in the context and inferences formed by the listener. The audience understands that Wednesday isn't actually going to hurt the person who calls her "little girl," but they perceive the implicit message that she refuses to be

positioned as small or weak. Thus, irony serves to convey nonviolent resistance, and sarcasm becomes a form of intellectual communication that combines social criticism and humor (Johnson, 2024). Furthermore, from an ideological perspective, this dialogue demonstrates how the film, *Wednesday*, represents resistance to gender stereotypes. By combining threats, sarcasm, and humor, *Wednesday* presents a subversive feminine form a strong, intelligent woman who defies social expectations. Language becomes her weapon, and irony becomes her protection. Thus, this utterance serves a dual function: linguistically, it is a performative speech act, and socially, it is a symbolic form of liberation from oppressive patriarchal structures.

Ajax: "How was your summer?"

Wednesday: "**I scalped a serial killer.**"

This conversation takes place as Ajax calmly explains how the summer vacation on *Wednesday* unfolded. This question is generally correct and serves as a guide that is commonly used to understand a story or situation over time. *Wednesday*'s answer, which is, "I killed a serial killer," describes the unusual characters and world, as well as the violence that occurred on *Wednesday*. As a *Wednesday*'s characteristic in this series, this context highlights the contrast between asking a question and receiving an extreme and unusual answer.

A pragmatic analysis of *Wednesday*'s response highlights the use of humor and hyperbole as effective communication strategies for expressing unique identities (Jameel, 2023). This sentence is not literal—*Wednesday* could not possibly commit such acts of violence—meaning that it contains implied meaning that reveals a cold, sarcastic, and rebellious nature. According to Relevance Theory, the clear implied meaning for readers is that *Wednesday* is characterized by uniqueness and a distinct impression, using language intended to help them fulfill social norms. (Johnson, 2024)

From a pragmatic point of view, this dialogue also illustrates expressive speech acts that reflect *Wednesday*'s emotional and psychological attitude. These remarks serve as a distinctive feature that explains how the character builds social networks and reinforces her image as a mysterious and dark figure. In addition, the use of hyperbole as a form of dark humor is a way to attract attention and provide a dramatic effect that sometimes encourages the audience to make comments that can be understood in the context of the lesson (Sitorus, 2025). Therefore, this dialogue is not only a means of exchanging information, but also a complex communication tool for building character and narrative.

(Pugsley performs strange acts)

Gomez Addams: "**Well done, Pugsley!**"

This dialogue occurs after Pugsley does something that is considered strange or unusual according to social norms, but receives praise from Gomez Addams. The phrase "Well done, Pugsley!" is a form of recognition for this unconventional behavior. The unique and eccentric context of the Addams family allows for the interpretation of strange actions as positive and acceptable, so this dialogue reflects the interpersonal dynamics within a family that has different norms from the wider society. At first glance, this seems like a typical parental compliment; however, within the context of the Addams family's eccentric worldview, it carries an ironic and sarcastic meaning. The utterance reflects how what is considered *abnormal* or *bizarre* in mainstream society is seen as *praiseworthy* in the Addams family.

Pragmatically, the compliment subverts conventional social norms, turning deviance into virtue. The contextual implication is that Gomez's "well done" operates as a validation of Pugsley's behavior that aligns with the family's macabre values. This dialogue also demonstrates how irony becomes a communicative norm within the Addams family, reflecting their collective identity as outsiders who celebrate the unconventional.

According to a pragmatic analysis conducted using Sperber and Wilson's (1986) Relevance Theory, Gomez's statement does not only mean literal praise, but also implicitly that Pugsley's actions are in line with their family's principles and expectations. According to this implicature, behavior that is strange to others may be appreciated in certain situations. According to this study, social and cultural context is very important for understanding the meaning of utterances because listeners can change their interpretations based on the speaker's communicative purpose and relevance (Sperber & Wilson, 1986). Gomez Addams' statement is an expressive speech act that implicitly expresses support and appreciation. In addition, this statement enhances interpersonal relationships and reinforces family principles in the formation of the character's social identity. Therefore, this dialogue involves emotional and social aspects that are important in everyday communication beyond the mere exchange of information (Thomas, 1995).

Agnes: "can I get your autograph?"

Wednesday: "**I only sign my name with blood.**"

Agnes: "I would expect nothing less."

Wednesday: "**I never said it was my own blood.**"

This dialogue takes place in an atmosphere that portrays *Wednesday* as a dark, mysterious character with a distinctive sarcastic sense of humor. When Agnes asks for an autograph, *Wednesday* responds with the unusual phrase, "I only sign my name with blood," which demonstrates a communication style full of sarcasm and dark humor. This utterance

demonstrates Wednesday's unique and socially challenging way of communicating, while also serving as a means of expressing her distinct identity and emphasizing the social distance between herself and others. Agnes responds with acceptance of this style, "I would expect nothing less," which indicates her understanding and agreement with Wednesday's attitude and persona. Wednesday's final response, "I never said it was my own blood," reinforces the ironic and kind of sinister tone of the dialogue, strengthening the character's unique image.

From a pragmatic perspective, this dialogue has many implicit meanings conveyed through reverse politeness and wordplay. According to Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1986), Wednesday's statement is not meant to be translated literally, but rather, it is a way of expressing identity and dark humor that reveals attitude and social distance. Furthermore, the phrase contains implications such as a hidden threat legitimized by the fictional context and the character's unique communication style; this requires the listener to understand its meaning based on context. Expressive and ironic speech acts, which reinforce characterization, as well as interpersonal relationships built through implicit agreement on alternative communication norms, are pragmatic aspects of this dialogue (Shulginov, 2025). As a dramatic force in the story, Wednesday's speech affirms an attitude that defies conventional social norms. In the context of visual media, the dynamics of nonverbal communication are very important, and Agnes' response to this style of speaking demonstrates important social confirmation.

As can be seen from the pragmatic strategy, this conversation is marked by implied meaning conveyed through the use of reverse strategies and words. According to Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory (1986), Wednesday is not meant to be interpreted literally, but rather as an expression of self-identity and a style of humor that occasionally reflects social criticism and humor. This statement also contains hidden meanings, such as veiled threats influenced by the fictional context and the character's unique communication style, which requires the listener to adjust the meaning according to the surrounding context (Johnson, 2024). The expressive and ironic tone used in this dialogue not only reinforces the character's personality but also builds interpersonal relationships based on prevailing alternative communication norms. This illustrates how dialogue functions as a dramatic tool that supports a rejection of conventional social norms.

Principle Dort: "Most people would have FOMO, Fear of Missing Out."

Wednesday: **"I have FOBI. Fear of Being Included."**

This utterance exhibits a clever use of irony, inversion, and parody of psychological terminology. Wednesday intentionally subverts the common acronym *FOMO* (Fear of Missing Out) a modern expression of social anxiety into *FOBI*, which humorously represents the opposite fear: being part of a group. The context of this dialogue highlights the differing social perspectives of the characters, where *FOMO* is common in today's highly connected social culture, while *FOBI* indicates a deliberate feeling of exclusion or unwillingness to engage in typical social interactions. This reveals Wednesday's unique character traits that go against common social norms.

Pragmatically, this conveys her discomfort with social inclusion and preference for solitude. The contextual explanation involves her interaction with Enid, her overly social roommate, whose enthusiasm clashes with Wednesday's introversion. The utterance carries implicature, implying that she views inclusion as suffocating rather than desirable. From a pragmatic standpoint, the dialogue demonstrates conversational irony and self-deprecating humor, showing how Wednesday uses wit to navigate social situations while maintaining emotional distance. The illocutionary act is self-definition an explicit articulation of her alienation while the perlocutionary effect is amusement or confusion on the listener's part. Her wordplay reflects a meta-commentary on societal pressure to belong, turning a psychological term into a satirical critique of conformity.

Across all four dialogues, Wednesday's speech patterns illustrate a consistent pragmatic strategy of using sarcasm, irony, and linguistic inversion as tools of identity performance and resistance. Each utterance reflects how she negotiates power, individuality, and social expectations through language. Her pragmatic style challenges conventional politeness norms (Brown & Levinson, 1987) by employing *negative politeness* strategies asserting independence and rejecting imposition while using humor to mitigate the confrontational tone. Thus, Wednesday's pragmatics reveal not only her dark humor but also her psychological depth: her sarcasm operates as both armor and expression, protecting her from vulnerability while simultaneously defining her unique worldview.

4. Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that sarcasm, irony, and indirect speech in *Wednesday Season 2* function as the central pragmatic mechanisms that construct the series' communicative identity, psychological depth, subverting norms, and enabling cultural critique, using Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986). These linguistic strategies go far beyond the realm of mere humor; they operate as instruments of self-expression, social resistance, and emotional articulation. Through the interplay of sarcastic tones and ironic detachment, the series establishes a distinctive communicative style that both entertains and critiques social conventions. In particular, Wednesday Addams's sarcastic

remarks and ironic utterances are not random or superficial expressions, but deliberate linguistic acts that reveal her independence, intellectual sharpness, and moral autonomy. Each instance of sarcasm embodies her defiance toward conformity and patriarchal expectations, turning language into a symbolic weapon of identity construction. Her humor dark, morbid, and intelligent serves as a bridge between rebellion and vulnerability, allowing her to express emotion without sacrificing self-control or dignity. The sarcastic and ironic remarks of Wednesday Addams are deliberate linguistic acts that reveal her independence, freedom, and intelligence. Each example of sarcasm demonstrates her opposition to conventions and patriarchal expectations, using language as a symbolic tool to construct identity.

Moreover, irony in *Wednesday Season 2* performs a dual function: it shapes interpersonal relations while simultaneously offering social commentary. The Addams family's inverted moral lexicon praising death, mocking virtue, and romanticizing darkness transforms everyday discourse into a site of ideological resistance. This inversion of meaning not only provides entertainment but also invites the audience to question normative hierarchies and moral binaries. From a broader pragmatic perspective, the study confirms that humor in *Wednesday* is structural rather than decorative. It organizes discourse, defines character relationships, and mediates cultural critique. In doing so, the series exemplifies how modern audiovisual narratives employ pragmatic play such as sarcasm, irony, and indirect speech to stimulate cognitive engagement and invite viewers to co-construct meaning. In conclusion, sarcasm, irony and indirect speech emerge as integral communicative tools that define both the linguistic style and thematic essence of *Wednesday Season 2*. They embody a dynamic interaction between form and function, aesthetics and ideology, intellect and emotion. Ultimately, Wednesday's language reflects not only her personality and worldview but also the broader cultural evolution of humor as a medium for self-definition and subtle resistance in contemporary storytelling.

5. References

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