



The Relationships Between Humor Styles, Shyness And Automatic Thoughts Among University Students *

Bircan Ergün Başak ¹, Gürhan Can ²

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the relationships between humor styles, shyness and automatic thoughts among university students. The sample of the study consisted of 422 university students. In order to obtain the research data, the humor styles questionnaire, The Shyness Scale and the Automatic Thoughts Scale were used. The data were analyzed using SPSS 15.0 package program; via t-test, correlation analysis and regression analysis methods. The results indicated that negative humor styles of the male students were significantly higher than those of the female students, while there were no significant differences according to gender in terms of positive humor styles. Additionally, it was found that positive humor styles negatively correlated with shyness and automatic thoughts, self defeating humor positively related with automatic thoughts; and aggressive humor positively related with two subscales of automatic thoughts. Other findings of the study indicated that shyness, personal adjustment and desire for change predicted together affiliative humor; shyness and hopelessness predicted together self-enhancing humor; negative feelings and thoughts towards oneself predicted aggressive humor; and negative feelings, thoughts towards oneself personal adjustment and desire for change predicted together self-defeating humor.

Keywords

Humor styles
Shyness
Automatic thoughts
University students

Article Info

Received: 02.22.2013
Accepted: 07.04.2014
Online Published: 08.06.2014

DOI: 10.15390/EB.2014.2619

Introduction

According to positive psychology approach, humor is one of the positive characteristics, which facilitates the individuals' coping with difficult circumstances and adapting themselves to these circumstances (Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray and Weir, 2003). Humor, which has had a place in social lives of all societies since the Common Era (Martin, 2002), is defined as a way of individuals' sharing their thoughts by having fun and entertainment (Roeckelein, 2002). It is put forward that individuals' senses of humor have been influenced by philosophical views that have appeared in the historical process. For example, it is observed that until the 18th century, there had been a sense of humor depending on entertainments by making fun of individuals who were disabled, who were poor, who had mentally ill and who had mental retardation. However, it is observed that with the humanistic approach, strengthening in the 18th century, the sense of fun, which included humiliation

* This study was presented as an oral presentation at The Asian Conference on Education which was held on 2-5 December 2010 in Japan.

¹ Anadolu University, Faculty of Education, Guidance and Psychological Counseling, Turkey, bebasak@anadolu.edu.tr

² Yeditepe University, Faculty of Education, Guidance and Psychological Counseling, Turkey, gurhancan49@gmail.com

and offensiveness, was regarded as incompatible with humor and that kind of entertainment was thought to be rudeness in social relationships (Martin, 2002).

Nowadays, all the behaviors and expressions that lead individuals to laugh are considered humor (Roeckelein, 2002). Each of the behaviors such as making jokes, sharing a funny personal experience, making a witty remark, making of a political satire, making fun of somebody, or having fun with an accidental slip of the tongue is seen as a piece of humor. In other words, today's sense of humor is influenced not only by aggressive and hostile but also thoughtful and courteous attitudes (Ruch, 1996). Additionally, modern individuals may inevitably face with humor in every moment of their daily lives because humorous elements are frequently included in mass media such as television, radio, newspapers, and magazines and in graffiti. However, it is observed that humor has no limits in terms of subject and it mentions all areas such as marriage, sexuality, religion, politics, education, business, and sports (Berger, 1992, p. 1). In summary, humor can be regarded as a universal communication item used in all areas of social life for both entertainment and aggression.

Humor is seen as an action that is based on processes of perception and interpretation (Baldwin, 2007). However, since individuals' perceptual processes function differently (Freedman, Sears and Carlsmith, 1993), they also tend to have differences in their sense of laughing. Accordingly, it is stated that while an individual finds a situation entertaining and laughs at it, it is difficult to state that another one perceives it equally entertaining (Lefcourt, 2000). However, it is also noted that individuals exhibit responses in their ways of smile, giggle or laughter to a varying extent depending on the level of enjoyment individuals perceive in relation to humor (Martin, 2007). These differences observed in individuals' humorous responses indicate that there are senses of humor different from each other (Raskin, 1984).

As a result of their studies, Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray and Weir (2003), who analyzed individual differences observed in humor, revealed that there are four different styles of humor such as affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive and self-defeating humors. While affiliative and self-enhancing humors are stated to be a product of an understanding for cohesion, aggressive and self-defeating humors are suggested to have destructive effects (Kuiper and McHale, 2009). Affiliative humor includes making others laugh by telling jokes, sharing amusing memories and making funny jokes in order to facilitate social relationships. It is stated that individuals using affiliative humor pay attention to creating a relaxing environment and have a sympathetic attitude in their relationships with the others. On the other hand, self-enhancing humor includes approaching general life with an amusing point of view. It is emphasized that individuals who use self-enhancing humor style manage to find amusing sides even in negative experiences they have and to convert it into a philosophy of life (Vernon, Martin, Schermer and Mackie, 2008).

Because the styles of offensive humor and self-defeating humor, the other two of the humor styles, arise from the sense of hostility, they have damaging effects for mental health. Therefore, they are regarded as humor styles with negative attributes. It is stated that offensive humor, one of the negative humor styles, includes hurting other individuals and making fun by scorning them (Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray and Weir, 2003). This style of humor depends on individuals' ironizing others, making fun of them and teasing them with the aim of dignifying themselves (Vernon, Martin, Schermer and Mackie, 2008). It's suggested that individuals who often use the offensive humor style have lack of empathy and therefore it is difficult for them to support others (Yip and Martin, 2006). The self-defeating humor, which is described as another negative humor, is generally observed in individuals having low self-esteem. The most important feature of individuals using this humor style is presenting themselves to others as an object of ridicule. These individuals seem to be creating an environment for being mocked at their helplessness or inability, encouraging others to do so, also laughing with the people who make fun of themselves and having fun with them. Thus, they aim to entertain others at the expense of damaging their own image and establish a relationship with them in this way (Vernon, Martin, Schermer and Mackie, 2008).

Humor is suggested to have a variety of functions in everyday life. Especially positive humor styles are asserted to play important roles in not only having social relations with strangers but also initiating and sustaining friendships (Yip and Martin, 2006). In addition, it is emphasized that it gets easier when individuals explain some of their experiences and personal information that they are embarrassed about or ashamed of with positive humor styles. For example, when individuals think the things that they are going to tell might disturb the others, they use positive humor styles and can remove the negative effects of their shares, or when they might cause some susceptibilities, they can please the others by treating it as a joke. In such situations, individuals can maintain their prestige by means of their positive humor styles (Long and Graesser, 1988). Similarly, positive humor styles are seen as an effective social tool for the individuals who have a broad range of thoughts and feelings to get along with the others without hurting each other. As a result, it is emphasized that positive humor styles have a vital value for individuals' obtaining sincerity and satisfaction in their social relationships (Baldwin, 2007).

The studies performed on the subject indicated that self enhancing and affiliative humor styles positively related with being cheerful, psychological well-being (Kazarian and Martin, 2004; Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray and Weir, 2003), anger management (Soyaldın, 2007), extroversion (Galloway, 2010; Vernon, Martin, Schermer and Mackie, 2008), open-mindedness (Vernon, Martin, Schermer and Mackie, 2008), and accommodating personality traits and self esteem (Galloway, 2010; Saroglou and Scariot, 2002), whereas they negatively related with loneliness (Chechen, 2007), anxiety (Bilge and Saltuk, 2007; Vernon, Martin, Schermer and Mackie, 2008; Yerlikaya, 2009), anger (Bilge and Saltuk, 2007), depression, stress (Vernon, Martin, Schermer and Mackie, 2008; Yerlikaya, 2009), and helpless coping style and submissive coping style (Yerlikaya, 2007). However, it was revealed that affiliative humor positively related with sensitivity towards others and coping by searching social support, while self enhancing humor positively related with safe and optimistic coping approaches (Yerlikaya, 2007). In addition, affiliative humor was found to be the most awe-inspiring humor style on others (Kuiper and Leite, 2009). Moreover, since self-enhancing humor style generally reflects an optimistic point of view, it is considered as a humor style that strengthens emotional and social well-being the most (Vernon, Martin, Schermer and Mackie, 2008).

It is observed that negative humor styles are commonly used as much as positive humor styles in social interactions. Although negative humor styles seem to some individuals to be a way of being considered important and attracting attention in social relationships, it is stated that such kinds of humor styles harm individuals' respectability and social relationships and affect their well being negatively (Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray and Weir, 2003). It was found in some studies that aggressive and destructive humor styles had positive relationships with low academic motivation (Saroglou and Scariot, 2002), neuroticism, well being, anxiety, and hostility (Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray and Weir, 2003), submissive coping style (Yerlikaya, 2007), impaired autonomy, impaired boundaries, depression (Dozois, Martin and Bieling, 2009; Kuiper and McHale, 2009) and need for control (Frewen, Brinker, Martin and Dozois, 2008). On the other hand, it was determined that both of the humor styles had negative relationships with perceiving both the individuals' and the others' own feelings (Yip and Martin, 2006), reconciliation and conscience (Galloway, 2010). Additionally, it was determined that self defeating humor style had a positive relationship with anxious attachment (Kazarian and Martin, 2004), helpless coping style (Yerlikaya, 2007), loneliness (Chechen, 2007), and psychiatric symptoms, while it had a negative relationship with self-esteem, intimacy in social relationships, satisfaction with social support (Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray and Weir, 2003). Aggressive humor style was found to have a positive relationship with extroversion (Galloway, 2010). In addition, aggressive humor style was found to be the humor style that causes the most negative impressions on others (Kuiper and Leite, 2009). When the humor styles were analyzed in terms of gender, no difference was found in terms of gender in self enhancing and affiliative humor styles (Kazarian and Martin, 2004; Tümkaya, 2011), whereas destructive and aggressive humor styles were used more by men (Kalliny, Cruhirds and Minor, 2006; Kazarian and Martin, 2004; Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray and Weir, 2003; Yip and Martin, 2006; Tümkaya, 2011).

It is emphasized that humor is closely related with other personality traits (Wanzer, Boot-Butterfield and Boot-Butterfield, 1996). One of the personality traits that is indicated to be related with humor is shyness. Shyness, which is a type of social anxiety (Cole and McCorskey, 2003), is defined as individuals' showing timidity in displaying social behaviours expected from them (Hampes, 2006). Similarly it is emphasized that shy individuals display anxious attitudes when they are with others (Jones ve Russel, 1982), they have difficulties in adapting to new environments (Hampes, 2006), they participate less in verbal interactions, they display limited communication skills, and they are not preferred as friends by their peers because of their being calm and quiet (Fordham and Stevenson-Hinde, 1999). These traits observed in shy individuals make it for them difficult to establish a communication with others effectively and to be functional in social environments. It is also suggested that shy individuals, who are determined to be anxious and nervous while they are communicating, cannot feel comfortable enough in making jokes and displaying amusing behaviours. In this context, shyness is seen as a trait restricting individuals' displaying easygoing behaviours on the subject of humor. In contrast, there are also studies indicating that even shy individuals have sense of humor. For example, it was found that shyness had negative relations with affiliative humor style, while it had positive relations with destructive humor style (Hampes, 2006; Erözkan, 2009) and aggressive humor style (Erözkan, 2009).

Humor is a feature that draws attention in its social and cognitive aspects. It is suggested that individuals' cognitive attributions related to environment, events and others are affected by their sense of humor (Kuiper and Martin, 1993). The relationship between sense of humor and cognitive attributions brings to mind automatic thoughts. Automatic thoughts are defined as implicit cognitive schemas lying at the bottom of individuals' perceptions and thoughts related to themselves, others and the world. Similarly, automatic thoughts are regarded as cognitions directing individuals' emotional and behavioral responses. It is the automatic thoughts that determine the meanings individuals attribute to their experiences and substances in their environment (Nobre and Pinto-Gouveia, 2008). Moreover, it is also stated that individuals act under the influence of automatic thoughts even when they configure their own world (Calvete and Connor-Smith, 2005). Therefore, automatic thoughts are suggested to be one of the most effective features that individuals take as a reference when they shape their interpersonal relationships. Accordingly, automatic thoughts are considered by individuals to be one of the reasons of perceiving others as a threat in their social environments (Wenzel and Cochran, 2006). Within this scope, it is possible to state that the degree of dominance of automatic thoughts in individuals' cognitive patterns has an effective role in tending to positive or negative humor in interpersonal relationships. Therefore, it is thought that it could be important to examine automatic thoughts and humor styles together in the process of social interaction. As a result, within the scope of this study, it was aimed to examine the relationships between university students' humor styles and their shyness and automatic thoughts. For this purpose, the study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. Do the humor styles differ according to gender?
2. Are there significant relationships between humor styles and shyness and automatic thoughts?
3. Do shyness and automatic thoughts significantly predict humor styles?

Method

Participants

The sample of the study consisted of 422 university students who study in different programs in Anadolu University, Education Faculty in the fall semester of the 2010-2011 academic year. While 62.3% (263) of the participants were females, 37.7% (159) were males. 88 of the participants (18%) were freshman students, 144 of the participants (31.2%) were sophomore students, 95 of the participants (20.6%) were junior students and 95 of the participants (20.6%) were senior students. The age of participants ranged from 18 to 23 (mean = 19).

Data Collection Tools

Personal Information Form, Humor Styles Questionnaire (Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, and Weir, 2003; Yerlikaya, 2003), Automatic Thoughts Scale (Holland and Kendall, 1980; Şahin and Şahin, 1992) and Shyness Scale (Cheek and Buss, 1981; Güngör, 2001) were used in this study. Information about the data collection tools was given below.

Personal Information Form: Information about gender, class level, and age of the students who participated in this study was obtained by means of a Personal Information Form developed by the researchers within the scope of this study.

Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ): Humor Styles Questionnaire was developed by Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray and Weir (2003) in order to measure four different humor styles such as affiliative, self enhancing, aggressive and self defeating. The questionnaire was adapted to Turkish by Yerlikaya (2003). Humor Styles Questionnaire is a Likert type measurement tool, which is composed of 32 items and it consists of four sub scales independent of each other. Internal consistency coefficient of the questionnaire was found to be .78 for self-enhancing humor, .74 for affiliative humor, .69 for aggressive humor and .67 for self-defeating humor. Test- retest correlation coefficients were found to be .82 for self enhancing humor, .88 for affiliative humor, .85 for aggressive humor and .85 for self defeating humor respectively. The fact that the scores obtained from the subscales are higher indicates that the humor style is used more (Yerlikaya, 2003).

Automatic Thoughts Scale (ATS): The scale developed by Holland and Kendall (1980), aims to measure thought patterns often seen in depression. The scale consists of 30 items, scored between 1 and 5, and 5 sub-scales namely; negative feelings and thoughts toward oneself (NFTTO), astonishment and escape phantasies (AEP), personal inconsistency and Change Desires (PICD), loneliness and isolation (LI) and hopelessness (HLS). The lowest score to be obtained in the calculation of total score of the scale is 30, whereas the highest score is 150. The fact that there are high scores obtained from the score indicates that negative automatic thoughts occur frequently (Savaşır and Şahin, 1997). The scale was separately adapted to Turkish by Aydın and Aydın (1990) and Şahin and Şahin (1992). In reliability studies in Turkey, the Cronbach Alfa internal consistency coefficient was found to be .93 by Şahin and Şahin (1992) while it was found to be .95 by Aydın and Aydın (1990).

Shyness Scale (SS): Shyness Scale was developed by Cheek and Buss (1981) in order to determine the level of shyness. The scale has a one-dimensional structure and consists of 20 items, scored between 1 and 5. While the highest score to be obtained from the scale is 100, the lowest score is 20. The result of exploratory factor analyses indicated that the variance explained by the one-dimensional scale is %38,9. The fact that there are high scores indicates that individuals perceive themselves as shy. The scale was adapted to Turkish by Güngör (2001). In the process of the adaptation work to Turkish, the test- retest reliability coefficient of the scale was found as .83, whereas the internal consistency coefficient was found as .91.

Analysis of Data

In the analysis of the data obtained in this study, the SPSS 15.0 software was used. In order to determine whether the participants' humor styles scores differ according to gender, the t-test was used. In order to examine the relationships between humor styles and automatic thoughts and shyness, the Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis were conducted.

Results

1. In order to examine whether the scores obtained from subscales of Humor Styles Questionnaire differ according to gender, the t-test was used. The findings obtained as a result of the analysis are presented in table 1.

Table 1. Analyzing Humor Styles according to Gender

Humor styles	Gender	N	\bar{X}	Ss	t	p
Affiliative humor	Female	263	40.93	8.49	-.161	.872
	Male	159	41.07	8.94		
Self-enhancing humor	Female	263	33.73	9.23	-.671	.502
	Male	159	34.35	9.20		
Aggressive humor	Female	263	21.49	7.60	-4.17	.000**
	Male	159	24.80	8.40		
Self-defeating humor	Female	263	25.38	8.06	-2.58	.010*
	Male	159	27.45	7.81		

** $p \leq .000$, * $p \leq .01$

According to Table 1, the participants' scores of affiliative humor and self-enhancing humor styles do not show a significant difference according to gender, whereas their scores of aggressive humor and self-defating humor styles show a significant difference according to gender. It is seen that male students use both aggressive ($t = -4.17$, $p \leq .000$) and self-defeating ($t = -2.58$, $p \leq .01$) humor styles more than female students.

2. In order to reveal the relationships of humor styles (affiliative humor, self enhancing humor, aggressive humor and self defeating humor) between shyness and automatic thoughts (negative feelings and thoughts towards oneself (NFTTO) astonishment and escape Phantasies (AEP), personal inconsistency and Change Desires (PICD), loneliness and isolation (LI) and hopelessness (HLS), the correlation analysis was conducted. Information about correlation analysis is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The Relationship between Humor Styles and Shyness and Automatic Thoughts

	Sub-dimensions of automatic thoughts scale					
	NFTTO	AEP	PICD	LI	HLS	Shyness
Affiliative humor	-.27**	-.18**	-.10*	-.24**	-.24**	-.34**
Self enhancing humor	-.27**	-.21**	-.16**	-.25**	-.27**	-.26**
Aggressive humor	.15**	.10*	.02	.06	.06	.01
Self defeating humor	.24**	.20**	.23**	.18**	.19**	.03

** $p \leq .01$, * $p \leq .05$

When Table 2 is analyzed, it is seen that affiliative humor style and self-enhancing humor style are related with NFTTO, AEP, PICD, LI, HLS and shyness negatively, that aggressive humor style is related with NFTTO and AEP positively, and that self defeating humor style is related with NFTTO, AEP, PICD, LI and HLS positively. According to the findings in Table 2, as the levels of NFTTO, AEP, PICD, LI, HLS and shyness increase, a decrease occurs in the levels of affiliative humor and self enhancing humor. On the other hand, as NFTTO and AEP increase, the levels of aggressive humor also increase. However, as the levels of NFTTO, AEP, PICD, LI and HLS increase, an increase is also observed in the levels of self-defeating humor. The variables having medium and high levels of relationships between themselves as a result of the correlation analysis were included in the regression analysis. The findings about the regression analysis are presented in Table 3, Table 4, Table 4 and Table 5.

3. In order to determine the prediction relationship between automatic thoughts and shyness and humor styles within the scope of this study, the multiple regression analysis was used. The results of the regression analysis about affiliative humor are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The Results of the Regression Analysis to Explain Affiliative Humor

	B	Standard error	β	t	p	Dual correlation	Partial correlation
NFTTO	-.146	.092	-.13	-1.586	.114	-.270	-.078
AEP	.120	.118	.07	1.014	.311	-.179	.050
PICD	.573	.199	.19	2.882	.004	-.105	.140
LI	-.314	.189	-.13	-1.668	.096	-.240	-.082
HLS	-.350	.184	-.16	-1.895	.059	-.243	-.093
Shyness	-.186	.031	-.28	-6.059	.000	-.345	-.285

R=.41, R²=.17, F=14.259, p≤.0001

According to Table 3, NFTTO, AEP, PICD, LI, HLS and shyness together explain 17% of the total variance in affiliative humor style. When the results of t-test about the significance of regression coefficients are analysed, shyness and PICD are seen to be the variables to explain affiliative humor significantly. Accordingly, when PICD increases and shyness level decreases at the same time, the individuals' affiliative humor levels increase. On the other hand, according to Table 3, HLS, NFTTO, and LI do not have a significant effect on affiliative humor. The results of multiple regression analysis about self-enhancing humor are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. The results of the Regression Analysis to Explain Self-enhancing Humor

	B	Standard error	β	t	p	Dual correlation	Partial correlation
NFTTO	-.109	.101	-.092	-1.078	.281	-.271	-.053
AEP	.057	.130	.035	.442	.658	-.211	.022
PICD	.358	.218	.115	1.644	.101	-.156	.080
LI	-.246	.206	-.096	-1.190	.235	-.250	-.058
HLS	-.409	.202	-.179	-2.027	.043	-.268	-.099
Shyness	-.135	.034	-.197	-4.036	.000	-.265	-.194

R=.35, R²=.12, F=9.747, p≤.0001

According to Table 4, NFTTO, AEP, PICD, LI, HLS and shyness together explain 12% of the total variance in self-enhancing humor style. When the results of t-test about the significance of regression coefficients in Table 4 are analysed, shyness and HLS are seen to be the variables to explain self-enhancing humor style significantly. Accordingly, when shyness level and HLS decrease at the same time, the individuals' self-enhancing humor level increases. On the other hand, PICD, LI, NFTTO and AEP do not have a significant effect on self-enhancing humor. The results of regression analysis conducted to determine the variables to explain aggressive humor are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. The Results of the Regression Analysis to Explain Aggressive Humor

	B	Standard error	β	t	p	Dual correlation	Partial correlation
NFTTO	.171	.075	.164	2.294	.022	.153	.111
AEP	-.022	.101	-.015	-.215	.830	.106	-.010

R=.15, R²=.02, F=5.040, p≤.05

Because it was found that AEP and NFTTO were related with aggressive humor in correlation analysis between humor styles, automatic thoughts and shyness (Table 2), the regression analysis was performed with these two variables. According to Table 5, NFTTO and AEP together explain 02% of the total variance in aggressive humor style. When the results of t-test about the significance of regression coefficients in Table 5 are analysed, NFTTO is seen to be the variables to explain aggressive humor style significantly. Accordingly, when NFTTO increases, the individuals' aggressive humor level increases. On the other hand, AEF does not have a significant effect on aggressive humor. The findings of regression analysis about self-defeating humor style is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. The Results of the Regression Analysis to Explain Self-defeating Humor of Automatic Thoughts

	B	Standard error	β	t	p	Dual correlation	Partial correlation
NFTTO	.239	.089	.231	2.690	.007	.242	.131
AEP	.037	.116	.027	.322	.747	.198	.016
PICD	.446	.195	.164	2.290	.023	.228	.112
LI	-.149	.184	-.067	-.807	.420	.177	-.040
HLS	-.161	.181	-.081	-.893	.372	.185	-.042

R=.26, R²=.07, F=6.419, p≤.0001

Because the results of correlation analysis (Table 2) revealed that there was not a significant relationship between shyness and self-defeating humor style, the variable of shyness was not included in this regression analysis. According to the results of multiple regression analysis, automatic thoughts explain 07% of self-defeating humor style (Table 6). When the results of t-test about the significance of regression coefficients in Table 6 are analysed, NFTTO and PICD are seen to be the most important variables to explain self-defeating humor style. Accordingly, when NFTTO and PICD increase, the individuals' self-defeating humor level increases. On the other hand, HLS, LI and AEF do not have a significant effect on aggressive humor.

Discussion

In this study, humor styles of university students were examined according to gender, automatic thoughts and shyness. In the analysis conducted within the scope of the study, it was found that the scores of male students' self-defeating humor style and aggressive humor style were significantly higher than those of the female students. This finding is consistent with the previous findings in the literature (Kazarian and Martin, 2004; Kalliny, Cruhirds and Minor, 2006; Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray and Weir, 2003; Tmkaya, 2011; Yip and Martin, 2006). On the other hand, the fact that negative humor styles are more common among males than among females may be associated with aggression because there are some researchers who revealed that the tendency of aggression is more common among males than among females (Efilti, 2006; Kılınç and Murat, 2012). However, this comment needs to be tested in studies to be conducted in the future because whether the fact that negative humor styles are seen at higher levels among males is related with aggression was not analyzed in this study.

In another analysis conducted within the scope of this study, it was found that humor styles were related with shyness and automatic thoughts. One of the findings obtained as a result of this analysis reveals that positive humor styles are negatively related with all dimensions of automatic thoughts and shyness. Another finding also reveals that negative humor styles are positively related with the dimension of negative feelings and thoughts towards oneself and the dimension of astonishment and escape phantasies of the automatic thoughts. In addition, as a result of the analysis conducted in the study, it was seen that self-defeating humor has positive relationships with hopelessness, personal maladaptiveness and desire of change and the sub-dimensions of loneliness and isolation of the automatic thoughts scale. Similarly, with these findings, it is emphasized that

there are automatic thoughts lying at the bottom of negative humor styles, whereas there is the ability of rational thinking lying at the bottom of positive humor styles (Martin, 2007). These results support the findings revealing that automatic thoughts have negative relationships with positive humor styles, whereas positive relationships with negative humor styles. The fact that shyness has a negative relationship with positive humor styles can be explained with the levels of social skills of the individuals who have positive humor styles. Yet, it is stated that the individuals who have a tendency to positive humor styles do not have any difficulty in starting and continuing the social relationships (Yip and Martin, 2006). Accordingly, it is understood that affiliative and self-enhancing humor styles cannot comply with shyness.

Finally, as a result of the analysis conducted within the scope of this study in order to determine the prediction relationship between automatic thoughts and shyness and humor styles, it was found that automatic thoughts and shyness explained 17% of the total variance in affiliative humor style, while 12% of the total variance in self enhancing humor style. These findings indicate that a decrease in individuals' automatic thoughts and shyness levels leads to an increase in positive humor styles (affiliative and self enhancing). In other words, it is possible to state that being purified from automatic thoughts, which include irrational tendencies, and from shyness, which is seen as an anxious approach for relationships between people, has a contribution to positive humor styles. According to another finding obtained from the regression analysis, two of the dimensions of automatic thoughts (negative feelings and thoughts towards oneself and astonishment-escape fantasies) together explain 02% of the total variance in aggressive humor style. On the other hand, it was found that all dimensions of automatic thoughts together explain only 07% of the total variance in self-defeating humor style. According to these findings, it can be said that automatic thoughts increase the tendency to resort negative humor styles at the least. According to cognitive therapy approaches, automatic thoughts include unrealistic and distorted perceptions (Yücel, Kora, Özyalçın, Alçalar, Özdemir and Yücel, 2002). Within this scope, negative automatic thoughts, regarded as an indicator of maladaptiveness, support negative humor styles.

This study provides information about university students' humor styles and levels of shyness and automatic thoughts. In the light of these findings, some activities can be arranged for university students to recognize the importance of humor styles in their lives and to comprehend the relationships between personality traits and humor styles. Thus, university students can be supported to develop their senses of humor positively as a way of maintaining psychological adaptation. On the other hand, the study has some limitations. One of these limitations is that the participants are composed of students of education faculty. Additionally, it was aimed in the study to examine the relationship between humor styles and only two independent variables. However, examining different factors affecting humor phenomenon with more comprehensive samples and independent variables will contribute to the literature in the future.

References

- Aydın, G. & Aydın, O. (1990). Otomatik düşünceler ölçeğinin geçerlik ve güvenirlik çalışması. *Türk Psikoloji Dergisi*, 7(4), 51-57.
- Baldwin, E. (2007). *Humor Perception: The Contribution of Cognitive Factors*. Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi. Georgia State University College of Art and Science, USA.
- Berger, A. (1992). *An anatomy of humor*. New Jersey, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Bilge, F. & Saltuk, S. (2007). Humor styles, subjective well-being, trait anger, and anxiety among university students in Turkey. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 2(5), 464-469.
- Calvete, E. & Connor-Smith, J. K. (2005). Automatic thoughts and psychological symptoms: A cross-cultural comparison of American and Spanish students. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 29(2), 201-217.
- Cheek, J. M., & Buss, A. H. (1981). Shyness and sociability. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 41, 330-339.
- Cole, J. G. & McCorskey, J. C. (2003). The association of perceived communication apprehension, shyness, and verbal aggression with perceptions of source credibility and affect in organizational and interpersonal contexts. *Communication Quarterly*, 51(1), 101-110.
- Çeçen, A. R. (2007). Humor styles in predicting loneliness among Turkish students. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 35(6), 835-844.
- Dozois, D. J. A., Martin, R. A. & Bieling, P. J. (2009). Early maladaptive schemas and adaptive/maladaptive styles of humor. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 33(6), 585-596.
- Efiliti, E. (2006). *Orta öğretim kurumlarında okuyan öğrencilerin saldırganlık ve denetim odağı'nın karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenmesi*. Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi. Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Konya.
- Erözkan, A. (2009). The relationship between humour styles and shyness: an investigation of Turkish university students. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*, 4(2), 87-96.
- Fordham, K. & Stevenson-Hinde, J. (1999). Shyness, friendship quality, and adjustment during middle childhood. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 40, 757-768.
- Freedman, J. L., Sears, D. O. & Carlsmith, J. M. (1993). *Sosyal Psikoloji* (Çev: A. Dönmez). Ankara: İmge Kitabevi.
- Frewen, P. A., Brinker, J.K., Martin, R.A. & Dozois, D.J.A. (2008). Humor styles and personality-vulnerability to depression. *Humor*, 2(21), 179-195.
- Galloway, G. (2010). Individual differences in personal humor styles: Identification of prominent patterns and their associates. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 48, 563-567.
- Güngör, A. (2001), Utangaçlık ölçeğinin geliştirilmesi geçerlik ve güvenirlik çalışmaları. *Türk Psikolojik Danışma ve Rehberlik Dergisi*, 2 (15), 17-22.
- Hampes, W. P. (2006). Humor and shyness: The relation between humor styles and shyness. *International Journal of Humor Research*, 19, 179-187.
- Jones, W. H. & Russell, D. (1982). The social reticence scale: An objective instrument to measure shyness. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 46, 629-631.
- Kalliny, M. Cruthirds, K. & Minor, M. (2006). Differences between American, Egyptian and Lebanese humor styles: implications for international management. *Internationa Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 6, 121-134.
- Kazarian, S. S. & Martin, R. A. (2004). Humor styles, personality, and well-being among Lebanese university students. *European Journal of Personality*, 18, 209-219.

- Kılınc, E. & Murat, M. (2012). Genel lise 9. sınıf öğrencilerinin bazı değişkenlere ve sürekli kaygı düzeylerine göre saldırganlık düzeylerinin incelenmesi. *Gaziantep Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 11(3), 835 -853.
- Kuiper, N. A. & Leite, C. (2009). Personality impressions associated with four distinct humor styles. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 51, 115-122
- Kuiper, N. A. & Martin, R. A. (1993). Humor and self-concept. *International Journal of Humor Research*, 6(3), 251-270.
- Kuiper, N.A. & McHale, N. (2009). Humor styles as mediators between self-evaluative standards and psychological well-being. *Journal of Psychology*, 143(4), 359-376.
- Lefcourt R M. (2000). *Humor: The Psychology of Living Buoyantly*. New York, NY: Plenum Publishers.
- Lefcourt, H. M., Davidson, K. & Kueneman, K. (1990). Humor and immune-system functioning. *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research*, 3 (3), 305-321.
- Long, D. L. & Graesser, A. C. (1988). Wit and humor in discourse processing. *Discourse Processes*, 11, 35-60.
- Martin, R. A. (2002). Sense of Humor, S. J. Lopez & C. R. Synder (Ed). *Handbook of Positive Psychological Assessment* (313-326). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Martin, R.A. (2007). *The Psychology of Humor: An Integrative Approach*. Burlington, MA: Elsevier Academic Press.
- Martin, R.A., Puhlik-Doris, P., Larsen, G., Gray, J. & Weir, K. (2003). Individual differences in uses of humor and their relation to psychological well-being: development of the humor styles questionnaire. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 37, 48-75.
- Maslow A. (1970). *Motivation and Personality*. New York, NY: Harper and Row Publishers.
- Nobre P. J. & Pinto-Gouveia, J. (2008). Cognitive and emotional predictors of female sexual dysfunctions: preliminary findings. *Journal of Sex Marital Therapy*, 34(4), 325-42.
- Raskin, V. (1984). *Semantic Mechanisms of Humor*. London: Springer Publishing.
- Roeckelein, J. E. (2002). *The Psychology of Humor: A Reference Guide and Annotated Bibliography*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Ruch, W. (1996). Measurement approaches to the sense of humor: Introduction and overview. *Humor*, 9, 239-250.
- Saroglou, V. & Scariot, C. (2002). Humor Styles Questionnaire: Personality and educational correlates in Belgian high school and college students. *European Journal of Personality*, 16, 43-54.
- Savaşır I. & Şahin, H. N, (1997). *Bilişsel-Davranışçı Terapilerde Değerlendirme: Sık Kullanılan Ölçekler*. Ankara: Türk Psikologlar Derneği Yayınları.
- Soyaldın, Z. S. (2007). *Ortaöğretim öğrencilerinin öfke ifade tarzları ile mizah tarzları arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi*. Yayımlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Mersin Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Mersin.
- Şahin N. H. & Şahin N. (1992). Reliability and validity of the Turkish version of the automatic thoughts questionnaire. *Journal of Clinic Psychology*, 48(3), 334-40.
- Tümkaya, S. (2011). Türk üniversite öğrencilerinde öznel iyi oluşu yordayan sosyodemografik değişkenler ve mizah tarzları. *Eğitim ve Bilim*, 36(160), 158-161.
- Vernon, P.A., Martin, R.A., Schermer, J.A. & Mackie, A. (2008). A behavioral genetic investigation of humor styles and their correlations with the Big-Five personality dimensions. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 44, 1116-1125.
- Wanzer, M., Booth-Butterfield, M. & Booth-Butterfield, S. (1996). Are funny people more popular: The relationship of humor orientation, loneliness, and social attraction. *Communication Quarterly*, 44, 42-52.

- Wenzel, A. & Cochran, C. K. (2006). Autobiographical memories prompted by automatic thoughts in panic disorder and social phobia. *Cognitive Behaviour Therapy*, 35, 129–137.
- Yerlikaya, E. E. (2003). *Mizah tarzları ölçeğinin uyarlama çalışması*. Yayımlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Çukurova Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Adana.
- Yerlikaya, N. (2007). *Lise öğrencilerinin mizah tarzları ile stresle başa çıkma tarzları arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi*. Yayımlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Çukurova Üniversitesi, Adana.
- Yerlikaya, E.E. (2009). *Üniversite Öğrencilerinin Mizah Tarzları ile Algılanan Stres, Kaygı ve Depresyon Düzeyleri Arasındaki İlişkinin İncelenmesi*. Yayımlanmamış Doktora Tezi. Çukurova Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Adana.
- Yip, J. A. & Martin, R. A. (2006). Sense of humor, emotional intelligence, and social competence. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 40, 1202–1208.
- Yücel, B., Kora, K., Özyalçın, S., Alçalar, N., Özdemir, Ö. ve Yücel, A. (2002). Depression, automatic thoughts, alexithymia, and assertiveness in patients with tension-type headache. *Headache: The Journal of Head and Face Pain*, 42(3), 192-194.