AN EVALUATION ON CLASSIFICATION OF HUMOR THEORIES*

Mizah Teorilerinin Sınıflandırılması Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme

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ABSTRACT

Humor-related literary genres occupy a significant place in literary research and history to the extent that western scholarship in particular, often treats humor and related literary genres almost as an autonomous discipline. Although certain studies that address the emergence of humor focus on the three main theories, namely "superiority", "incongruity" and "relief" they may be divergent in creating interdependent sub-theories. Therefore, these theoretical approaches as a whole require classification pertaining to the history of humor, to the modes of creating it, and to the disciplines that interpret it. Based on this, the subject of the present essay is the classification of the humor theories in terms of historical periods, style of humor conception, and academic disciplines. Moreover, introduction of these classifications to Turkish scholars is the aim of the present study. Current studies on humor have been mostly put forward within certain theoretical frameworks. The most important reason for the emergence of this theoretical tendency in the current studies on humor is that a large amount of knowledge has been obtained in the theoretical sense over time since the ancient age when the origins of studies on humor, and laughter emerged. In the early period, philosophers focused more on laughter, so the first theoretical approaches to laughter emerged during this period. However, many thinkers and scholars of the modern period have introduced different theoretical approaches through different perspectives on laughter and humor. Moreover, the current laughter and humor studies based on this theoretical background have become an interdisciplinary field of study with the participation of scholars from various disciplines such as literature, education, folklore, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, history, communication, medicine, economics, and fine arts. As a result of the laughter and humor studies carried out in the course of its historical development process, laughter and humor theorists have established many humor theories. Aforementioned humor theories have been classified by scholars based on some of their unique characteristics. This study reclassifies the humor theories in terms of their similarities and differences under the titles "classifications according to historical periods", "classifications of theory families and classifications due to the style of humor conception", and "classifications according to academic disciplines" and evaluate these theories and classifications as a whole.

Key Words

Humor, laughter, joke, theory, classification.

ÖZ

Edebiyat araştırmaları tarihi içerisinde mizaha bağlı türler büyük bir yer tutmaktadır. Öyle ki özellikle Batılı araştırmacılar, mizah ve mizaha bağlı edebi türler konusuna özerk bir disiplin gibi yaklaşmaktadırlar. "Üstünlük", "zıtlık" ve "rahatlama" ana teorilerine bağlı olmak üzere, mizahın ortaya çıkması konusunu teorik boyutta ele alan yabancı kaynaklı çalışmalarda bu ana teorilere bağlı farklı alt teoriler ortaya atılmıştır. Mizah merkezli ortaya atılan bu teorik yaklaşımlar bütünü tarihi bakımdan, mizah yaratma şekli açısından ve ortaya atıldığı disiplinler bakımından bir tasnife muhtaçtır. Bu ihtiyaçtan hareketle, makalemizin konusunu bahsi geçen mizah teorilerinin tasnifi ve tanıtımı oluşturmaktadır. Günümüzde sistematik hale gelmiş olan mizah araştırmalarının en dikkat çeken özelliği, çalışmaların çoğunun belirli teorik çerçeveler dâhilinde ortaya konulmuş olmasıdır. Söz konusu teorik yapının ortaya çıkmasının en önemli sebebi mizah ve gülme hakkındaki çalışmaların kökeninin Antik Çağ'a kadar uzanması ve zamanla teorik anlamda büyük bir bilgi birikiminin elde edilmiş olmasıdır. Erken dönemde daha çok filozoflar gülme konusu üzerinde durmuş ve gülme hakkındaki ilk teorik yaklaşımlar bu dönemde ortaya çıkmıştır. Modern dönemde ise pek çok düşünür ve araştırmacı gülme ve mizah hakkındaki bakış açılarıyla farklı teorik yaklaşımlar ortaya koymuşlardır. Bu teorik zemin üzerinde kurulmuş olan günümüzdeki gülme ve mizah çalışmaları; edebiyat, eğitim, halk bilimi, antropoloji, sosyoloji, felsefe, tarih, iletişim, tıp, ekonomi, güzel sanatlar, bilgisayar vb. gibi farklı disiplinlerdeki bilim insanlarının katılımıyla

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disiplinler arası bir çalışma alanı haline gelmiştir. Tarihi gelişim seyri içinde yürütülen gülme ve mizah çalışmaları sonucunda farklı bakış açıları ve yaklaşımlar çerçevesinde gülme ve mizah teorisyenleri pek çok mizah teorisi oluşturmuşlardır. Söz konusu mizah teorileri kendine özgü bazı özellikleri bakımından bilim adamları tarafından farklı dönemlerde sınıflandırmaya tabi tutulmuştur. Bu makalede, bilim adamlarının yaptığı mizah teorileri sınıflandırmaları benzerlik ve farklılıkları bakımından; "Tarihi Dönemlere Göre Yapılan Sınıflandırmalar", "Teori Aileleri Sınıflandırmaları ve Mizaha Yaklaşım Tarzına Bağlı Sınıflandırmalar" ve "Akademik Disiplinlere Bağlı Sınıflandırmalar" başlıkları altında gruplara ayrılmış ve bütüncül olarak değerlendirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler
Mizah, gülme, şaka, teori, sınıflandırma.

Introduction

The most certain commonality of the studies on humor, which has become systematic day by day, is that most of these studies have been put forward within certain theoretical frameworks. The most important reason for the emergence of this theoretical tendency in the current studies on humor is that a large amount of knowledge has been obtained in the theoretical sense over time since the ancient age when the origins of studies on humor, and laughter emerged. In the early period, philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero focused more on laughter and so the first theoretical approaches to laughter emerged during this period. Later, thoughts of some philosophers such as Muzio, Minturno, Maggi, and Scaliger, which based on the Commedia dell'Arte, created the Renaissance humor theories. In the 16 and 17th centuries, researchers such as George Whetstone, Sir Philip Sidney, and Ben Jonson's opinions on funny literary work made it possible to create a certain theoretical structure for laughter, comic and comedy. On the other hand, many thinkers, scholars, researchers, and writers of the modern period, including Hobbes, Beattie, Schopenhauer, Herbert Spencer, Meredith, Bergson, Sully, Freud, Koestler, Sidis, M'Dougall, Eastman, Greig, Kimmins have introduced varied theoretical approaches through different perspectives on laughter and humor (Piddington, 1933: 152-221). The current laughter and humor studies based on this theoretical background have become an interdisciplinary field of study with the participation of scholars from different disciplines such as literature, education, folklore, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, history, communication, medicine, economics and fine arts.

As a result of the laughter and humor studies carried out in the course of its historical development process, laughter and humor theorists who are experts in several disciplines have established many different humor theories. In fact, it is alleged that the number of the laughter and humor theories that have been established up to now is more than one hundred (Schmidt & Williams, 1971: 96; Haig, 1988: 9; Wu, 2013: 53). Certain studies on this topic support this statement about the number of theories. Edmund Bergler gives brief information about 76 laughter and humor theories without any classification in the first chapter of his book titled *Theories of Ephemeral Theories-Eternal Laughter* (Bergler, 1956: 1-41). The theories in E. Bergler's book are published as a list in a book titled *The Psychology of Humor: A Reference Guide and Annotated Bibliography* by Jon E. Roeckelein **(**Roeckelein, 2002: 193-195). In addition, Roeckelein provides information on 60 humor theories in different parts of the dictionary titled *Elsevier's Dictionary of Psychological Theories* (Roeckelein, 2006).

Some theories (belonging to Bergson, Freud, Hobbes, Schopenhauer, etc.) that Roeckelein informed about appear to be included in both Bergler and Roeckelein's lists. However, some of the theories (belonging to Apte, Grüner, Koestler, Kierkegaard, Morreall, Sidis, Santayana, etc.) in Roeckelein's dictionary are not on Bergler's list. By taking

into consideration that the same theories appear in both lists with different names, the probability of this number being 100 is quite strong. Moreover, J. Y. T. Greig briefly introduced 88 humor theories in the appendix of his book titled *The Psychology of Laughter and Comedy* (Greig, 1923: 225-279). In addition, Norman N. Holland claims that he surveys two hundred theories or theory varieties to seek answers to the question of why people laugh, and to classify humor theories (Holland, 1982: 115). These findings, which are revealed by different researchers, are important to show how many laughter and humor theories there are.

Since the number of proposed research theories on laughter and humor has become so high over time, scholars have tried to classify these theories with different perspectives. The attempt to classify laughter and humor theories began in the early 1900s and has continued until today. However, when the classifications are evaluated as a whole, it is seen that there are some types of classifications which are partially related to each other and partly different. The classification types in question can be examined under three headings, according to the classification styles of the scholars, as: "Classifications According to Historical Periods", "Classifications of Theory Families and Classifications due to the Style of Humor Conception" and "Classifications According to Academic Disciplines". However, these headings do not mean that each of them is completely independent or irrelevant to each other. Some of the classifications given under these three headings are partially intertwined with each other, such as in the classification below.

A. Classifications According to Historical Periods

The first classification that we give as an example under this heading belongs to British educational psychologist Charles William Kimmins. In his work, *Springs of Laughter*, published in 1928, Kimmins introduced laughter theories based on the names of the scholars who propose them. In his book, Kimmins also evaluated the views of laughter theorists on the basis of centuries. He included laughter theories from the 17th century to his present time in 1928 in his book and excluded thinkers like Plato and Aristotle who had the first theoretical approaches to laughter. Moreover, Kimmins argued that it was not necessary to include the theories before the 17th century because Thomas Hobbes had already introduced Plato and Aristotle's thoughts on humor -especially *Derision Theory*- and their followers' points of view on humor (Kimmins, 1928: 10).

Kimmins's classification and the names of the theoreticians he has studied on in his book are as follows:

1. Laughter in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Thomas Hobbes, James Beattie

2. Laughter in the Nineteenth Century: William Hazlitt, Herbert Spencer, Charles Darvin

3. Laughter in the Nineteenth Twentieth Century: James Sully, Sigmund Freud, Henri Bergson, Boris Sidis, William McDougall, Max Eastman. (Kimmins, 1928: 10-53).

In the same period with Kimmins, a similar but more comprehensive classification was made by Ralph Piddington, a psychologist, and anthropologist. Piddington introduced the laughter theories under four headings in a chapter (Historical Summary of theories Relating to Laughter) in his book titled *The Psychology of Laughter: A Study in Social Adaptation*, published in 1933:

1. Classic Writers: Plato, Aristo, Cicero, Quintilian.

2. Theories of the Renaissance: Muzio, Minturno, Maggi.

3. English Literary Theories of Comedy in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: George Whetstone, Sir Philip Sidney, Ben Jonson.

4. Modern Theories: Descartes, Hobbes, Loeke, Addison, Hartley, Warton, Rousseau, Beattie, Kant, Hegel, Hazlitt, Dugald, Stewart, Schopenhauer, Bain, Dumont, Lévêque, Herbert Spencer, Darwin, Meredith, Höffding, Penjon, Melinand, Dewey, Hall ve Allin, Renouvier ve Prat, Bergson, Palmer, Sully, Freud, Kallen, Sidis, M'Dougall, Bliss, Baillie, Eastman, Wallis, Greig, Gregory, Dumas, Wilson, Dupreel, Hayworth, Kimmins (Piddington, 1933: 152-221).

Another classification made with a similar approach belongs to Frank J. MacHovec. He reviewed humor theories under three headings in his book titled *Humor: Theory, History, Applications*. MacHovec stated that in the world literature there were eight main theories of humor from ancient times to the modern period. He also argued that two of these theories were put forward in the antique or classical period, the four in the neoclassical period and the last two in the modern period. In addition, he introduced *Syzygy Theory* for the first time in his book (MacHovec, 1988: 27). MacHovec's classification is as follows:

1. Classical Theories: Derision or Superiority, Disappointment or Frustrated Expectation

2. Neo Classical Theories: Pleasure-Pain and Learning-Conditioning, Instinct-Physiological, Sympathy-Empathy, Creativity and Change

3. Modern Theories: Semantics and Content Analysis, Syzygy (Polarity, Power, Process Theory) (MacHovec, 1988: 39-105).

B. Classifications of Theory Families and Classifications due to the Style of Humor Conception

Similar laughter and humor theories in terms of the method of humorous explanation and the basic tendency, have been evaluated within the framework of certain theories/main theories/roof theories. From that framework, theory groups have emerged which are called "Laughter and Humor Theory Families" by some scholars, and explanations for all laughter and humor theories have been applied from the context of these main humor theory families. Although the type and the number of main theories have changed over time, the view that there are three main or roof theories in laughter humor studies is generally accepted today and entitled as "Superiority", "Incongruity" and "Relief" theories. The most important point here is that each of these theories must be considered as a theory family, not as a single theory. Therefore, the following classifications in the present study are remarkable in that they show how -the theory families; the roof theories, or the main theories have changed and evolved over time. In this chapter of the present study, the classification of theory families will be evaluated first, and then, classifications related to the manner of approach, which is the continuation of this classification, will be introduced.

The first classification attempt of laughter and humor theories and an evaluation of these theories within the framework of certain main theories were conducted by British psychologist James Sully. In his book titled *An Essay on Laughter: Its Forms, Its Causes, Its Development and Its Value*, published in 1902, Sully noted that there were essentially two main laughter theories: the first of them could be called "Moral Theory" or "Theory of Degradation" (Sully, 1902: 120) and the other could be called "Intellectual Theory" or

"Theory of Contrariety or Incongruity" (Sully, 1902: 125). Sully evaluated the theories that had existed until then, under two headings as follows:

1. Theory of Degradation or Moral: Aristo, Hobbes and Brain's Theories

2. Theory of Contrariety or Incongruity: Kant's Theory of Nullified Expectation, Schopenhauer's Theory and Different forms of the incongruous (Sully, 1902: 119-135).

The general acceptance of laughter and humor theory families or the roof theories as "superiority", "incongruity" and "relief" theories has been widespread after the philosopher Davit Hector Monro's study on humor. In his book, *Argument of Laughter*, which was first published in Canada in 1951, Monro stated that "The Release from Restraint Theory" and "The Ambivalence Theory" theories should be added to "Theory of Degradation or Moral" and "Theory of Contrariety or Incongruity", which James Sully accepted as the main theories of humor (Monro, 1963: 83). Although Monro basically made a classification based on four headings, he also evaluated some theories and theoreticians in different groups, as will be shown below:

1. Superiority Theories-I: Hobbes, Bain
2. Superiority Theories-II: Leacock, Ludovici
3. Bergson
4. Feibleman, McDougall
5. Incongruity Theories-I: Kant, Schopenhauer, Spencer
6. Incongruity Theories-II: Eastman
7. Release from Restraint-I: Kline
8. Release from Restraint-II: Freud
9. Release from Restraint-III: Gregory
10. Ambivalence-I: Greig
11. Ambivalence-II: Menon (Monro, 1963: 83-231).

However, in his article titled "Theories of Humor" in *Collier's Encyclopedia* (1985) Monro expresses that "A fourth type of theory, which takes the central feature of humor to be ambivalence, a mingling of attraction and repulsion, is of minor importance." (Monro, 1985: 349). Later, he introduces humor theories under three headings which are broadly accepted today:

1. Superiority Theories: Thomas Hobbes, Henri Bergson
2. Incongruity Theories: Immanuel Kant, Arthur Schopenhauer, Herbert Spencer
3. Relief Theories: Sigmund Freud (Monro, 1985: 356-358).

The most common classification that scholars working on humor theories utilize, is made by Patricia Keith-Spiegel in 1972. Since the classification of Keith-Spiegel, it has become even more prevalent to classify humor theories in a systematic framework. She classified the laughter and humor theories under the title "Varieties of Early Humor Theory" as follows:

1. Biological, Instinct, and Evolution Theories
2. Superiority Theories
3. Incongruity Theories
4. Surprise Theories
5. Ambivalence Theories
6. Release and Relief Theories
7. Configurational Theories
8. Psychoanalytic Theory (Keith-Spiegel, 1972: 4-13).

Another classification from a similar point of view belongs to Christopher P. Wilson. He devoted a chapter of his book about the anecdote that is the most common types of humor, titled "Jokes: Form, Content, Use, and Function" for humor theories. At the beginning of this chapter, Wilson stated that there are three interrelated theory families. He expressed: "Relief" accounts have emphasized the emotional impact of humour. "Conflict" theories have stressed the behavioral implications of humour. "Incongruity" theories refer to the cognitive consequences of humour." (Wilson, 1979: 10). Examining humor theories, Wilson evaluated seven theory families and two theories in separate titles:

1. Relief Theories
2. Conflict Theories
3. Incongruity Theories
4. Dualistic Theories
5. Gestalt Theories
6. Piagetian Theories
7. Mastery Theories
8. Freud's Theory
9. Apter and Smith's Theory (Wilson, 1979: 10-19).

Another scholar, Warren A. Shibles devoted the eighth chapter of his book titled *Humor Reference Guide: A Comprehensive Classification and Analysis* (1997) to humor theories. He examined humor theories under 16 titles in this chapter:

1. Cognitive Theories
2. Conative Theories
3. Affective Theories
4. Instinct Theories
5. Humor as Based on Emotion
6. Humor as Based on Physiology
7. Arousal Theories of Humor
8. Configuration or Gestalt Theory
9. Humor as Based on the Irrational
10. Circular Theories of Humor
11. Stimulus-Response or Learning Theories of Humor
12. Theories for or Against Humor
13. Aristotle's Theories of Humor
14. Freudian Theory of Humor
15. Linguistic Theories of Humor
16. Theories of Humor Exemplified by Type. (Shibles, 1997).

Another study in which laughter and humor theories are categorized as theory families is *Inside Jokes: Using Humor to Reverse-Engineer the Mind* by Matthew M. Hurley, Daniel C. Dennett, and Reginald B. Adams, published in 2011. The authors examine humor theories under seven titles in the chapter titled "A Brief History of Humor Theories":

A. Biological Theories
B. Play Theories
C. Superiority Theories
D. Release Theories
E. Incongruity and Incongruity-Resolution Theories
F. Surprise Theories

G. Bergson's Mechanical Humor Theory (Hurley, Dennett & Adams, 2011: 37-57).

In the last three studies which will be introduced below, laughter and humor theories are categorized as theory families. These studies are as follows: *Incongruity and Resolution of Medieval Humorous Narratives* (2010) by Christian F. Hempelmann, *We Are Not Amused: Failed Humor in Interaction* (2015) by Nancy Bell and *The Complexity of Workplace Humour: Laughter, Jokers and the Dark Side of Humour* (2016) by Barbara Plester. All three scholars examine humor theories under three widely accepted headings: 1. Superiority Theories, 2. Incongruity Theories, 3. Relief Theories (Hempelmann, 2010: 10-16; Bell, 2015: 21-27; Plester, 2016: 17-25).

Salvatore Attardo, presents humor theories in his book titled *The Linguistic Theories of Humor* published in 1994 in the form of Three Theory Family as follows:

Cognitive	**Social**	**Psychoanalytical**
Incongruity	Hostility	Release
Contrast	Aggression	Sublimation
	Superiority	Liberation
	Triumph	Economy
	Derision	
	Disparagement	

Another classification of humor theories due to the style of humor conception is presented by Jim B. Lyttle. Lyttle who categorized humor theories under three main headings in his Ph.D. dissertation titled *The Effectiveness of Humor in Persuasion: The Case of Business Ethics Training*:

1. Functional Theories

2. Stimuli Theories

3. Response Theories (Lyttle, 2001: 23).

In this classification, under the heading *Functional Theories*, an explanation is given of why and how humor is a vital value for human beings. Functional theories include biological, psychoanalytic or relief, and ambivalence theories. On the other hand, with *Stimuli Theories*, explanations are given of what makes some things funny, including; incongruity, surprise, and configuration theories. Lastly, with *Response Theories*, explanations are given of how and why we find some things funny (Lyttle, 2001: 22-33).

Another classification that is included in this section is Norman Norwood Holland's. Holland categorized humor theories under five headings in his book *Laughing: A*

Psychology of Humor, published in 1982: stimulus, conditions, psychology, physiology, and catharsis. Subheadings of this classification are as follows:

I. Stimulus: Incongruity
1. Cognitive: simultaneous affirmation and negation
2. Ethical: between things as they are and as they ought to be
3. Formal: between content and form
II. Conditions
1. Playfulness
2. Suddenness
III. Psychology
1. Archetype theories
2. Psychologies of consciousness
a. Relief theories
b. Superiority theories
3. Psychoanalytic theories
4. Experiments
IV. Physiology
1. Laughter as innate action cluster
2. Laughter as physical reflection of mental movements
3. Laughter as adaptive communication
V. Catharsis
1. Social correction
a. Restoration to desired conduct
b. Social revolution
c. Affirmation of life over society
2. Religious catharsis
a. Affirmation of life as God's gift
b. Rejection of life as low
3. Transcendence
a. Both acceptance and rejection of both low life and beyond-life
b. A mysticism transcending all. (Holland, 1982: 108).

Holland's classification is designed to answer to the question: "Why do people laugh?" So, in the preface of his book, Holland states: "The questions, in turn, make it possible to understand the hundreds of traditional theories and variations on theories in a larger, psychological framework within which they can answer the question better." (Holland, 1982: 10). Holland has fully evaluated humor theories from a psychological perspective and has formed his classification accordingly.

C. Classifications According to Academic Disciplines

This chapter assesses the classifications of humor theories by H. E. Schmidt and D. I. Williams, Jon E. Roeckelein, and Rod A. Martin based on academic disciplines at different dates. The first classification based on the academic disciplines of humor theories was formed by H. E. Schmidt and D. I. Williams. They evaluated humor theories formed by scholars from six different academic disciplines, in their article published in 1971. Their classification is as follows:

1. Anthropological: Safety, relation, joking relationships

2. Physiological: Pleasure, expenditure of surplus nervous energy, triumph, protection against excessive sympathy, cruelty, relief, play

3. Philosophical: Incongruity, superiority, expectations reduced to nothing, freedom release, play

4. Psychological: Many experiments supporting theories of individual differences, strung for maturity for competence or mastery

5. Psychoanalytical: Economy of psychic energy, the re-allocation of released energy, liberation of ego, regression in the service of the ego

6. Sociological: Social or creative playfulness, laughter as a tool for correction, neurotic compensation, social sanctions having survival and other values, empathetic identification. (Schmidt & Williams, 1971: 95-106).

Another classification, in which humor theories are classified according to different academic disciplines, is encountered in a book which is an annotated bibliography, titled *The Psychology of Humor: A Reference Guide and Annotated Bibliography* (2002) by Jon E. Roeckelein. Roeckelein devoted a chapter of his book titled "Modern Theoretical Aspects of Humor" to humor theories. He introduced humor theories in the chapter by classifying them according to various academic disciplines in this chapter. At the end of this chapter, he also added a bibliography of publications on humor theories. After introducing the early humor theories in the previous chapter, this chapter is divided into two titles, named "Nonpsychological Theories of Humor" and "Psychological Theories of Humor". His classification is as follows:

I. Nonpsychological Theories of Humor

1. Theories Based in Literature

2. Theories Based in Physiology/Biology

3. Theories Based in Communications/Culture/Advertising

II. Psychological Theories of Humor

1. Theories Based in Modern Philosophy

2. Behavioral Theories

3. Cognitive/Perceptual Theories

4. Psychodynamic/Psychoanalytic Theories

5. Theories Based in Sociology/Social Psychology/Anthropology (Roeckelein, 2002: 119-196).

Rod A. Martin, in his book titled *The Psychology of Humor: An Integrative Approach*, examined the laughter and humor theories in terms of the discipline of psychology. Martin evaluated psychological laughter theories until 1980 under the title "Theories and Early Research I, II" in his book and formulated a classification as follows:

1. Theories and Early Research I: Psychoanalytic and Superiority Theories

2. Theories and Early Research II: Arousal, Incongruity, and Reversal Theories

3. The Cognitive Psychology of Humor

4. The Social Psychology of Humor

5. The Psychobiology of Humor and Laughter

6. Personality Approaches to the Sense of Humor

7. The Developmental Psychology of Humor

8. Humor and Mental Health

9. Humor and Physical Health (Martin, 2007: 31-266).

In addition to these studies on the classification of humor theories, folklorist Gülin Öğüt Eker, attempts to reveal a classification. In her book, titled *İnsan, Kültür, Mizah (Human, Culture, Humor)*, Eker stated that main humor theories can be categorized under five titles; "Biological, Instinctive and Evolution Theories", "Incongruity Theories with Cognitive-Perceptual Characteristics", "The Ambivalence Theory", "Disparagement and Superiority Theories Highlighting Social Values and Perceptions", "Psychoanalytic Theories Including Elements such as Suppression and Release", and "Theories Recently Established". Then, she evaluated certain theories such as "Incongruity Theory", "The Ambivalence Theory", "Superiority Theory", "Psychoanalytic Theory/Relief Theory", "Berlyne's Collative Motivation Theory", "Semantic Theory", "Linguistic Theory", and "Unilateral Humor Theory" (Eker, 2009: 133-166).

The final classification to be dwelled on in this study belongs to Joanna Jabłońska-Hood. J. Jabłońska-Hood classified humor theories under two headings: "Physiological Theories of Humor" and "Linguistic Theories of Humor" in his book *A Conceptual Blending Theory of Humor: Selected British Comedy Productions in Focus* published in 2015. This classification is as follows:

1. Physiological Theories of Humour
- *a. Incongruity Theories*
- *b. Superiority Theories*
- *c. Release Theories*

2. Linguistic Theories of Humour
- *a. The Semantic Script Theory of Humour (SSTH)*
- *b. The General Theory of Verbal Humour (GTVH)*
- *c. Ritchie's Proposals*
- *d. Pragmatic Approaches to Humour* (Jabłońska-Hood, 2015: 109-154).

Apart from the classifications of laughter and humor theories given in this study, various scholars have studied humor theories in a certain order without making a systematic classification (Justin, 1932: 119-120; Morreal, 1983: 1-59; Wyer & Collins, 1992: 663-688; Berman & Keegan, 1999: 67-68; Rappoport, 2005: 13-31; Sampietro, 2013: 19-26; Carroll, 2014: 7-54).

As a result, almost all of the researchers working on the classification of humor theories have chosen to make a classification based on their disciplines' relationship with humor. Therefore, several theories are classified under diverse headings. The classifications made by many scholars based on their field of study show that it is very difficult to make a classification which may apply to all the different disciplines studied in humor. As mentioned at the beginning of this study, the great number of theories put forward and the terminological differences in naming the theories further complicate matters. Therefore, it seems impossible to include all theories in a classification with their sub-approaches. Making a more general classification by evaluating the humor studies from a holistic point of view could be more appropriate for the use of all fields working on humor. However, the classification of Joanna Jabłońska-Hood, the last example of classification assessed in the very last part of our study, is quite usable and inclusive for all disciplines dealing with humor.

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