RHETORICAL HUMOR FRAMEWORK: A COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF HUMOR

DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

Previous research has shown that humor production is a distinctly human activity. Although other animals play in the pursuit of pleasure, humans are the only ones who do so through communication. Moreover, humor has been found to play an integral role in the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships as well as a pervasive aspect of our daily lives. Surprisingly little is known, however, about the ways in which individuals determine when to use or not use humor. Further, no theoretical framework currently exists to help corral the somewhat harried subject.

This dissertation introduces a rhetorical humor framework as an approach to the study of humor in an effort to expand our current understanding from a broader communicative perspective. Further, a study is presented in which the results support that this is a needed step forward in the understanding of humor as a communicative phenomenon. In particular, the results demonstrate the need to move beyond trait humor explanations for humor use and call for closer inspection of situational and interpersonal variables influencing humor production.
Dedicated to my parents Michael and Rebecca Guinsler
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Modern technology has allowed researchers to determine that humor detection and consequent appreciation occur in separate areas in the brain (Moran et al., 2004; Goel & Dolan, 2001; Watson, Matthews, & Allman, 2006). Further, modality differences also appear in processing and appreciation of various forms of humor from language uses (e.g., puns) to visual humor (e.g., slapstick) (Goel & Dolan, 2001; Watson, Matthews, & Allman, 2006). Common among these studies is the finding that humor activates areas in the brain associated with reward processing. In other words, humor makes us feel good. It is no wonder then, given the hedonistic impulses of humans, that humor is so pervasive in our daily existence. Likewise, as is the curious nature of humans, it is understandable that humor has been studied by great thinkers since antiquity from a variety of perspectives, including but not limited to anthropology, psychology, literature, medicine, philosophy, math, education, semiotics, linguistics, folklore, gelatology, and, of course, communication (Attardo, 1994).

Humor is not a new topic in communication research, but one that has been explored from several perspectives. As a trait, humor orientation is defined as an individual’s propensity to use humor (Booth-Butterfield & Booth-
Butterfield, 1991) and as a cognitive ability, humor is regarded as an individual's ability to create, comprehend, reproduce, and remember jokes (Feingold & Mazella, 1993). From a functional perspective, humor has been shown to serve as a coping mechanism (Lefcourt & Martin, 1986; Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield, & Booth-Butterfield, 2005), a tool for communicative support (Bippus, 2000), a way to increase patient compliance and satisfaction and physician credibility (Wrench & Booth-Butterfield, 2003), and an essential aspect in relationship development (Fraley & Aron, 2004; Graham, 1995; Thorson & Powell, 1993) and maintenance (De Koning & Weiss, 2002; Priest & Thein, 2003). However, to date, no theoretical framework exists that explores humor as a communicative phenomenon in and of itself. This dissertation will first outline relevant research literature from communication and extant fields to introduce the various approaches to the study of humor. In addition, a rhetorical humor framework is introduced as an approach to the study of humor in an effort to expand our current understanding from a broader communicative perspective. This suggested approach borrows from two theoretical frameworks, namely Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory (1987) and Buller and Burgoon’s (1996) interpersonal deception theory. Further, results from a study which examines hypotheses and research questions built from the rhetorical humor framework is presented followed by a discussion of implications for future research.
2.1 Defining Humor

Despite the varied research on humor, no one definition of humor exists (Graham, 1995; Moran, 1996; Robinson & Smith-Lovin, 2001). As such, the boundaries of humor and its related concepts (e.g., wit, laughter, sarcasm, sense of humor, joking) become blurred when, at times, it is necessary to distinguish between two or more of these concepts (Wrench & McCroskey, 2001). This lack of formal definition is reasonable given the multifaceted and multifunctional aspects of the term. Humor can refer to the quality attributed to an act, event, object, observation, or utterance. Similarly, humorous characteristics or dispositions of an individual’s personality are referred to as a sense of humor. As a temporary state, an individual’s mood can be described as being in no humor or of ill-humor. Further, as a cognitive ability, individuals can create and enact humor verbally and non-verbally or, reciprocally, appreciate humor.

The word humor itself derives from the Latin term for moisture, umor, which referred to the four main fluids Greco-roman physicians believed internal organs produced to regulate the body: yellow bile, black bile, blood and phlegm (Berger, 1995). When the four humors were in balance, one was considered to be
in “good humor”. However, should one of these humors be in excess or lacking, it was believed that the individual was affected temperamentally and thus, ill-humored. This four-pronged approach to interpreting individual differences in disposition has evolved since first put forth by Hippocrates more than 2,500 years ago into theories of personality and temperament today (Merenda, 1987). Likewise, the word humor has evolved in our vernacular and no longer refers to the bodily fluids that regulate personality, but has shifted to an aspect of personality itself. Use of the term to describe that which is humorous in a modern sense of the word was first found in the writings of Lord Shaftbury’s *Sensus communis: an essay on the freedom of wit and humour* in 1709 (Bremmer & Roodenburg, 1997).

In more recent times, humor scholars Goldstein and McGhee (1972) have declined any attempt to define the concept as, “there is no single definition of humor acceptable to all investigators in the area” (p. v). Interestingly, in examining the literature from a variety of disciplines few studies explicitly attempt to define humor. However, researchers generally attempt to define what aspect of humor they are exploring and typically gravitate towards explicating and operationalizing humor as either a stimulus (e.g., cartoon), a response (e.g., laughter, mirth), or a mental process or disposition (e.g., getting or appreciating a joke) (Chapman & Foot, 1976; Martin, 2001). Summarizing the general definitions purported by linguists, psychologists, and anthropologists, Attardo describes an all-encompassing definition of humor that includes “any event or object that elicits laughter, amuses, or is felt to be funny.” (1994; p. 4). Providing
perhaps the broadest framework for capturing the various elements that constitute humor as a process Apte (1985) argues there must be four experiences: (1) a conscious or unconscious cognitive event that redefines sociocultural reality followed by a mirth response, (2) an external stimulus for the cognitive event (3) a pleasurable emotion from the experience (4) external manifestations of the pleasure (e.g., laughter or smiling).

The last element of Apte’s (1985) definition has a history of contention for researchers of humor and laughter. Although “external manifestations” such as laughter are often linked to humor, a number of researchers have argued that they are not necessary for humor appreciation and, conversely, laughter is not always a response to humorous stimuli as in the case of nervous laughter (Attardo, 1985; Chapman & Foot, 1976; DeKoning & Weiss, 2001; Gervais & Wilson, 2002; Giles & Oxford, 1970; Thorson & Powell, 1993; Zemach, 1959). Laughter researcher Robert Provine and a team of graduate students observed more than 1,200 instances of laughter in naturally occurring conversations and found less than 20% of these laughs to be the result of “anything resembling a formal effort at humor.” (Provine, 1996; p. 39). Nonetheless, while it is noted that the concepts of humor and laughter are distinct, depending on the research problems at hand, there is often rationale to examine both. For example, Miczo’s (2004) security theory of humor attempts to explore the link between humor and laughter as they operate within social relationships. Similarly, research has suggested that even forced laughter, while not an indicator of pure humor appreciation, should be measured along with humorous episodes given the social
functions that laughter can serve during conversation (Bachorowski & Owren, 2001; Provine, 2004) The remainder of this paper will examine research that explores both humor and laughter (as combined and separate constructs) in an effort to provide a rounded picture of the literature.

2.2 Humor Theories

As such a multidimensional construct and one that has been studied from a variety of disciplines, the same difficulty that abounds in defining humor exists in theorizing it. Part of the difficulty in developing an overarching theory of humor, as suggested by Chapman and Foot (1976) and supported by Lynch (2002) is that humor can not be conceptualized as a unitary function or expression. Several scholars have attempted to construct broad categories for various theories on humor (Keith-Spiegel, 1972; MacHovec, 1988; Martin, 1998; Monro, 1963; Piddington, 1963). For the purposes of this paper, three competing categories commonly represented in a number of communication-focused literature reviews are presented (Berger, 1993, Graham, 1995; Lynch, 2002; Meyer, 2000).

Superiority theories Credited as perhaps the one of the oldest theories on humor (MacHovec, 1988), superiority theories date back to Plato’s observation that people derive pleasure from the failings of others (MacHovec, 1988). The 17th century philosopher Thomas Hobbes put forth that “a man who is laughed at is triumphed over.” (Hobbes, 1651/1968) and humor arises from the “sudden glory” of recognizing the inadequacies of others (Lynch, 2002). Superiority theories tend to attempt an explanation of the social and behavioral motivations
behind humor and as a result put downs, ethnic jokes, mockery, satire, and derision have been studied under their aegis.

Application of this theory is seen in the work of Zillman and Cantor (1976) who explored individuals’ appreciation of disparagement humor. Zillman and Cantor’s “dispositional theory” suggests a positive relationship between an individual’s negative disposition towards a group or individual and the level of humor appreciation they report when a joke is made at the expense of that group or individual. In other words, the more that someone dislikes the target of a joke, the funnier they believe that joke is. This suggests humor does provide for a sense of superiority at the demise of someone disliked. However, Zillman and Cantor also found the converse to be true. The more an individual identified with or had a positive disposition towards the “butt” of the joke, the less funny they found disparaging remarks. This finding suggests that superiority theory holds true under certain conditions, but may be countered with issues of empathy.

Relief theories. Relief theories of humor are often associated with Freud’s psychoanalytical assertions that humor operates as a socially acceptable way to alleviate sexual and aggressive tension (Matte, 2001). Freud was largely influenced by the work of Spencer who suggested laughter worked as something of a release valve for nervous energy in the body, similar to Darwin’s (1890/1965) observations of primate facial expressions thought to relieve tension (Lynch, 2002). Laughter and humor are considered to be more socially appropriate release channels than aggressive behaviors. Relief theories, in short, provide an
umbrella for studies examining the pleasurable effects that arise out of humor creation and appreciation as a result of relieving personal stress or social tension.

In an applied setting, the concept underlying relief theory can be viewed in a study of grade school children by McGhee (1979). McGhee found a strong relationship between sense of humor (measured through a combined score of frequency of laughter and communicative attempts, both verbal and nonverbal, of humor during spontaneous play) and behavioral forms of verbal and physical aggressiveness and dominance. This relationship, McGhee & Lloyd (1982) suggest, supports the Freudian perspective – children appear to learn how to rechannel less desirable forms of dominance and aggressiveness into more humorous and appropriate manners sometime between late preschool and early elementary school years.

**Incongruity theories.** Incongruity theories typically explain why something is considered humorous at the cognitive/perceptual level. Incongruity theories attempt to situate humor as the pleasure in the discovery of the unexpected or what Kant (1790, 176) described as “play of thought”. Noted humor researcher John Morreall (1989) has argued that appreciation of incongruity is what sets humans apart whereas other animals perceive incongruity, surprise, or the unexpected to be threats.

Raskin’s script-based semantic theory of humor applies the idea of incongruity as the source for enjoyment in humor. “The punchline triggers the switch from one script to the other by making the hearer backtrack and realize that a different interpretation was possible from the very beginning”(Attardo &
Raskin, 1991; p. 308). This recognition of an alternative meaning is the impetus of the positive affect derived from humorous stimuli.

Clearly, the above theories only touch the surface of various aspects of humor. Additionally, it is understandable that no one single theory can account for all that is humor. To illustrate this point, at first blush, an ethnic joke would fall under superiority theory, as the content of the joke contains derogatory statements about a specific group of people. However, Davies (1982) suggests ethnic jokes can help individuals reduce or make less threatening the ambiguities between the social, geographical and moral boundaries of a nation or ethnic group. This rationale would fall under the Freudian notion of relief. Further, depending upon who was telling the joke, when and where the joke was being told, the audience hearing the joke, and the overall structure of the joke itself, it could very well fall under the incongruity. It seems most appropriate, then to side with Lynch (2002) who has proposed “all three theories must be celebrated and the dismissal of them or unnecessary addition of adjunct motivations confounds the conceptions unnecessarily” (p.425).

2.3 Approaches to study

Lack of definition and absence of theory have not hindered progress in the scientific study of humor. What follows is an overview of the research examining humor at the individual and social level.

*Humor as an individual characteristic.* As previously noted, although humor is recognized as a stimulus for laughter, they are two distinct concepts. However, examining the research on the evolutionary basis of laughter is a
worthwhile endeavor given its close relation to humor. Laughter is a universal behavior found in all humans (Apte, 1985; Lefcourt, 2000; Provine, 2000) appearing in infants from as early as two months of age (Gervais & Wilson, 2005). Humans are not the only mammals to exhibit laughter, although the laughter found in chimpanzees and other primates lacks the full heartiness of human guffaws (Provine, 2000; 2004). It is thought that the evolution to bipedalism gave flexibility in the neuromuscular system which supports breathing and allowed for the vocalization of laughter beyond the breathy pants exhibited in primates (Provine, 2000).

Though other species have the neurological wiring in place for a mirth response, humans appear to be the only species capable of humor detection and appreciation (Moran et al., 2004). Primates and other animals exhibit play behavior and respond with smiling or laughter to tickling (Provine, 2000; Gervais & Wilson, 2004); however, mirth responses to humorous stimuli – through language or visual observation – is decidedly a human activity. Gardner et al. (1975) describes two elements to humor processing. The cognitive element, or humor detection, is the process of understanding that the humorous message is a joke. The affective element, humor appreciation, is enjoyment of the joke. Recent research on the detection of verbal irony in children has explored this process. Particularly, although children can detect verbal irony beginning around the age of 5 or 6, they do not acknowledge the humor in the remark (Dews et al. 1996; Harris & Pexman, 2003). In other words, they understand that the speaker does not mean what they say, but they do not appreciate the humor. In a study of 7- to
10-year-olds, the children tended to identify with the target of the irony, not the speaker and they perceived less humor in irony as a result (Pexman, Glenright, Krol, & James, 2005). Further, the children in this study did not use relationship information (whether the speaker was friends, strangers, or enemies with the target) as a cue for humorous intent. Pexman et al. determined that social knowledge and skill modulates the process of detection and appreciation in irony.

Understandably humor has different effects from person to person when considering sense of humor variations. More than 2,000 years ago, Marcus Aurelius wrote “different things delight different people” (as quoted in MacHovec, 1989, p. 3). Sense of humor has been widely studied since that time and Hehl and Ruch (1985) suggest variations in sense of humor may be a factor of 8 elements including (1) the degree to which a person comprehends jokes and humorous stimuli, (2) the way in which a person expresses humor both quantitatively and qualitatively, (3) the person’s ability to create humor, (4) the person’s appreciation of different types of jokes, cartoons, and humorous materials, (5) the degree to which the person actively seeks out sources of humor, (6) the persons memory for jokes and funny events, (7) their tendency to use humor as a coping mechanism, and (8) the ability to laugh at ones self.

Sense of humor and effects of humor have been examined in regard to physical and mental health. Studies have shown that experiencing humor can decrease sensitivity to pain (Zillman, Dewied, Kingjablonski, & Jenzowsky, 1996), buffer the effects of stressful tasks, (Martin & Lefcourt, 1983), stimulate positive changes in immune system functioning (Lefcourt, Davidson, & Kueneman, 1990),
and lessen the negative affect associated with serious illness (Lefcourt, 2002). Additionally, individuals with higher levels of sense of humor have been found to have higher levels of self-esteem (Kuiper & Martin, 1993) and lower incidence of loneliness (Miczo, 2004). Conversely, interviews with professional comedians found depression, anxiety, feelings of being misunderstood and concern with social approval as prevalent characteristics (Janus, 1975).

Methodological issues arise in the study of effects of humorous stimuli and sense of humor. Martin (2001) presents 41 studies spanning 40 years of research on laughter, humor and physical health leading him to conclude that promotion of humor for therapeutic use with the goal of improving health is “premature and unwarranted.” (p. 516). Nearly every experimental study reported by Martin involved exposing participants to either comedy audio- or videotapes and then measuring physiological changes; rarely were evaluations of the “funniness” of the stimulus reported by participants, nor were observations made in regard to a mirth response. This is an essential element given the aversive effects that could result should the comedic video not match one’s personal taste (Rotton & Shats, 1996).

Measurement of humor appreciation and sense of humor pose an issue for researchers, as well. The reliance on self-report is largely problematic given the social desirability of sense of humor (Martin, 2001; Thorson & Powell, 1993). In one study by Gordon Allport (1961), 94% of participants reported having an average or above average sense of humor. Further, the lack of a widely accepted definition of sense of humor prohibits scale construction suited for analysis.
More recently, researchers have attempted to combat these issues by specifying particular aspects related to humor appreciation. To address, specifically, how to capture the various forms of humor used by individuals and their relation to psychological well-being, Martin and his colleagues (2003) developed a Humor Styles Questionnaire. The HSQ consists of 32 items with four subscales assessing individuals’ tendencies to use aggressive, self-defeating, affiliative, and self-enhancing humor. Similarly, Martin and Lefcourt (1984) developed the Situational Humor Response Questionnaire (SHRQ) to assess individuals’ frequency in displaying mirth across a range of life situations. The scale consists of 21 items spanning 18 specific situations. The response categories ask for level of amusement—from not being amused to laughing heartily.

Communication researchers have developed their own measure of humor use, which has been broadly examined as humor orientation. Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield (1991) define humor orientation as the “predisposition to enact humorous messages” (p. 32). In developing the Humor Orientation scale, Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield sought to explore how people use humor, rather than respond to or appreciate humor. The HOS has been used extensively by communication researchers (see Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield, 1991; Booth-Butterfield, Booth-Butterfield, & Wanzer, 2007; McIlheran, 2006; Merolla, 2006; Miczo, 2004; Miczo & Welter, 2006; Punyanunt, 2000; Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield, & Booth-Butterfield, 1995, 1996, 1997; Wrench & Booth-Butterfield, 2003). These studies have provided great insight into the relationship between humor use and social interaction.
example, Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield, and Booth-Butterfield (1996) examined the relationship between humor orientation, loneliness, and verbal aggressiveness in terms of social attraction. Wanzer et al., found that individuals higher in self-report of humor orientation – or, more likely to enact humor while communicating with others – were significantly lower in levels of loneliness. Extending the self-report measurement, Wanzer et al., examined humor orientation reports from acquaintances of the subjects in their study. Each of the 125 participants distributed copies of the humor orientation measure to two casual or work acquaintances (close friends and family members were excluded). Results indicated that individuals higher in self-report humor orientation were also perceived as more humorous by others. Similarly, those individuals perceived as higher in humor orientation were viewed as more socially attractive.

*Humor in social life.* Given the social nature of humor, it is easy to accept its implications on interpersonal relationships (Graham, 1995), as well as to recognize the importance of studying how individuals use humor, “both interpersonally and intrapsychically, in their daily lives” (Martin, et al., 2003; p. 50.). Humor has been shown to play a role in relationship development, maintenance, and termination (Baxter, 1992). Additionally, a sense of humor has been shown to be connected with higher levels of social attractiveness and act as a catalyst in friendship formation in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood (Fabrizi & Pollio, 1987; McGhee, 1989; Murstein & Brust, 1985; Sherman, 1985).
One explanation for the number of positive associations between humor and social relationships is the multifunctional nature of humor. Within intimate relationships, humor can serve several purposes from enhancing closeness via shared laughter or as a conversational diversion tool as a means to ease tension when in conflict or argument (De Koning & Weiss, 2002). Examining its interplay in long-term, even daily, discourse between two individuals De Koning and Weiss developed and tested a Relational Humor Inventory to explore the different functions humor serves in marital relations. Their findings suggest a positive correlation between the degree to which spouses appreciate their partners’ humor and levels of closeness and overall marital satisfaction. Further, partners perceived as having their own sense of humor as a couple, also ranked their levels of closeness and marital satisfaction higher than partners who did not.

Similarly, Priest and Thein (2003) explored function of humor appreciation and mate selection and the similarity of humor appreciation between a couple and marital affection. Disaffection, as defined by Priest and Thien, is decreased marital satisfaction as determined by at least one of the spouses. In particular, it is typified by the “gradual loss of emotional attachment, a decline in caring and an increasing sense of apathy and indifference towards one’s partner.” (p. 66). Their findings suggest that couples had similar appreciation of humor as well as similar feelings in regard to the extent to which they laughed together as a couple. The length of marriage was not correlated with the degree of shared humor appreciation, suggesting that humor could play a role in mate selection and that shared humor appreciation was not simply a natural
evolution of marital status. Further, Priest and Thein found no correlation with couple similarity in humor and marital disaffection. These findings further illustrate the multifaceted role of humor – as personality characteristic which is admired in one another independently and as a socially constructed reality which is mutually appreciated by each other simultaneously.

Understanding, then, that humor can function as a mutually positive experience helps explain why humor enhances feelings of closeness, liking and similarity. Aron and Aron (1986) suggest that shared humor is a form of self-expanding. “Perceiving something as humorous usually involves stepping outside the practicalities of the situation,” (Fraley & Aron, 2004, p. 63). Further, Fraley and Aron posit that in a shared humorous experience, both parties share some element of the other within themselves whether it is the other person’s thoughts or perspective or the other person’s appreciation of one’s own thoughts or perspectives. Thus, sharing humor is an act of self-disclosure. When one acts humorously or responds positively to the humorous acts of another, certain aspects of each party are revealed (Fraley & Aron, 2004).

Showing evidence of a social function of laughter, Smoski and Bachorowski (2003) examined antiphonal laughter (laughter during or immediately following that of a social partner). Participants in friend dyads showed significantly more antiphonal laughter than those in stranger dyads, Smoski and Bachorowski concluded that laughter may function as a way to reinforce shared positive affective experiences. Overall, however, Provine (1992) found that we tend to laugh more and smile more in response to hearing others
do so. One explanation for this seemingly ‘contagious’ effect of mirth response is suggested by Rosenfeld, Giacalone, and Tedeschi (1983) who found changes in humor rating by participants in the presence of a laughing confederate and reasoned that the expression of humor response in the presence of others may be a matter of impression management.

Humor does not only effect the development and maintenance of social relationships. Social relationships have been shown to impact humor. Specifically, McGhee and Lloyd (1982) found the amount of time spent engaging in social play was the strongest predictor of a child’s sense of humor suggesting that “although the capacity for humor and the initial tendency to produce and enjoy it may be built into humans, social sharing and reinforcement play a central role in building up the habit of initiating humor in the context of social interaction and responding with laughter to the humor initiated by others.” (McGhee & Lloyd, 1982; p. 257).

**Joking relationships.** Another interesting area of research of humor as a social variable is that of joking relationships. In particular, the research on joking relationships provides insight on the way humor can work around hegemonic structures in society and help explain some of the perceived cultural. In his seminal work, *On Joking Relationships*, Radcliffe-Brown (1952) defines a joking relationship as “a relation between two persons in which one is by custom permitted, and in some instances required, to tease or make fun of the other, who in turn is required to take no offense” (p. 90). This definition adds an interesting spin to the concept of power structures that exists because of the joking
relationship itself. Apte highlights a number of studies in which the joking relationship is asymmetrical to traditional societal power roles. For example in a study on West Africa's Mossei, Hammond (1964) found men to have joking relationships with their mother’s brother’s wives. However, within this joking relationship, it is the mother’s brother's wife who has the joker role. As part of Apte’s argument regarding the inability to create a global theory for a joking relationship, he details its complexity, “Many factors determine its form and substance—for instance, social setting, the participants’ role, age, sex, and social status, their conscious and unconscious motivations and expectations regarding the outcomes of joking encounters, the presence or absence of an audience, the collective goals of social groups such as group solidarity and social differentiation and so forth.” (p. 64).

_Humor in context._ The idea of who can joke with whom from a hierarchical standpoint and the consequences of this phenomenon has been explored widely in organizational research (Dwyer, 1991; Kahn, 1989). Coser’s (1960) study of humor use among mental hospital staff revealed humor used more frequently among those in senior positions. In other words, relative power determined humor use. Further, Coser noted, the type of humor used was in the form of ridicule directed at the junior staff members. Conversely, Collinson’s (1988, 1992) studies of shop floor relations suggests humor use influences power relations within a company.

Similar to the work of Coser (1960), Yoels and Clair (1995) collected two years of observations of conversations between an outpatient clinic staff
(including physicians, medical residents, and nursing coordinators) and patients. Within this setting, the dynamic, contextual role of power is highly evident.

Nurses traditionally rank lower than medical residents in terms of overall status within the organization and Yoels and Clair found nurses teasing residents. Further, although lower in social status, nursing coordinators did have a certain degree of control over scheduling and general logistics of the clinic, thus putting the residents at their mercy. As such, Yoels and Clair also found instances of teasing from the residents to the nursing coordinators particularly aimed at their role as “boss”. Thus, Yoels and Clair concluded “humor functions as an organizational, emotional thermostat of sorts. Persons are continually responding to situations in terms of their ease or dis-ease with power and status, two critical dimensions of the organization’s emotional climate.” (p. 58).

**Cultural practices.** Cultural differences need to taken into consideration in the study of humor. Studies have shown cultural differences in the importance of humor creation and generation among American and Spanish individuals (Baquero, Rodriguez, Garces & Thorson, 2006). Specifically, Americans rated the ability to create humor as more important than did the Spanish individuals in the sample. Further, a number of social practices involving humor point to the role that humor serves to address needs of social cohesion. Specifically, in Mexican rancheros communities, relajo is a clearly defined verbal performance (Farr, 2006). Relajo is set off by specific linguistic markers that denote a play frame and “constructs individual people as creative and clever verbal performers who challenge the status quo while entertaining and delighting their immediate
audience” (p. 18). Within this verbal play, social boundaries can be tested and identities are given freedom. Farr explains within the specific rancheros she observed, respectable women were not supposed to swear, but “it amuses people when she does so fluently, even eloquently during relajo” (p. 18).

2.4 Summary

The study of humor is so vast, in fact, that Attardo (1994) has argued it is “not pragmatically possible for any single scholar to cover it in its entirety” (p. 15). Nonetheless, this literature review presents, if nothing else, the magnitude of humor as a concept for inquiry. Despite the absence of a single “working definition” and the simultaneously simplistic and complex theories on humor, much can be gained in the understanding of humor in the broadest sense of the term by exploring it from a communicative perspective. Certainly, past research has shown that a sense of humor exists at the individual level and also varies as a result of individual dispositions, but also life experiences. Further, individuals vary in their use of humor and their appreciation of humor.

Moreover, as Beeman (2000) asserts that of all forms of communication, “humor...is one of the most heavily dependent on equal participation of actor and audience.” (p.103). I suggest examining humor following Raskin’s (1985) proposition to examine humor in the “least restricted sense.” That is to say exploring it for what it is, a universal in human language and one that comes in various forms for various reasons and with a multitude of effects. To do that, it is necessary to provide a framework in which research can be guided. The following
chapter will present a rhetorical humor framework, as well as provide an approach for future research.
CHAPTER 3

RHETORICAL HUMOR FRAMEWORK

Lynch (2002) argued for a communicative approach of the study of humor to link the research from psychology and sociology. This notion is paramount given the emergence of the positive psychology paradigm and recent trends in medical research to explore the role that positive affect plays on quality of life and overall mental and physical well-being (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). In an extensive examination of studies from psychology and medicine exploring the effects of humor on health, Martin (2001) concluded that the promotion of humor for therapeutic use with the goal of improving health is “premature and unwarranted” (p.516). Based on the evidence presented by Martin this cautionary message is appropriate, but also warrants research on humor takes into account its nature as a “quintessentially social phenomenon” (Robinson & Smith-Lovin, 2001; p.123). Researchers of humor need to better integrate various perspectives of humor and appropriate methodologies from closely-related social science disciplines (Graham, 1995). Research of humor from a communication approach can assist with this goal. This chapter introduces the rhetorical humor framework.
for a communicative view of humor in an effort to organize previous research and reveal new areas for communication researchers to explore.

3.1 Politeness theory

As such a multifaceted concept, it is difficult to apply a specific theory to humor largely because one must first define what aspect of humor to examine. Typically, work on sense of humor is imbued with a psychological perspective. Sociologists and anthropologists have examined how humor works to build and maintain relationships. Linguistic analyses of humor focus on the features of humorous remarks to determine what attributes “work” in being funny. Lynch (2002) has suggested “the field of communication is submerged in the realm in which the humor lives and breathes.” (p.443). It is, then, the purpose of this dissertation to present how humor can be explored as a communicative phenomenon. One such theory that can be used to examine humor in this way is Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory. To demonstrate this, an outline of the basic tenets of politeness and suggest ways in which humor research can benefit from a similar approach follows.

Brown and Levinson (1987) position their model of politeness as a tool for describing the quality of social relationships. Further, they posit that the patterns of language use are a “part of the very stuff that social relationships are made of” (p. 55). Underlying politeness theory is the premise that individuals are rational beings and that they use language as a way to achieve certain goals.

Politeness theory is grounded in the Goffman’s (1967) conceptualization of face. According to Goffman, face is the “positive social value a person effectively
claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self-delineated in terms of approved social attributes.” (p. 5). Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that across cultures individuals have positive face needs and negative face needs that they consistently must manage in social interactions. Positive face pertains to the desire for individuals to be liked, appreciated and approved of; negative face is the desire to be left alone or unimpeded keeping their autonomy and rights unimpeded (Brown & Levinson). As such, individuals employ a variety of positive or negative politeness strategies to maintain positive face for themselves and avoid threatening the positive and negative face of others.

Also underpinning politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987) is the assumption that Grice’s (1968) theory of conversational implicature is understood by participants engaging in social interaction. Grice proposed a cooperation principle to which conversationalists must attend to in order to be competent communicators. Four maxims underscore this principle:

(1) Quantity: speaker’s contributions should be neither too brief, nor too verbose
(2) Quality: speakers should be truthful
(3) Relevance: messages should be pertinent to the context of the conversation
(4) Manner: messages should not be obscure or ambiguous

Brown and Levinson (1987) note most utterances do not conform to these maxims. Further, they posit that “the whole thrust of this paper is that one
powerful and pervasive motive for not talking Maxim-wise is the desire to give some attention to face.” (p. 95).

Brown and Levinson (1987) posit that many speech acts inherently impose upon the autonomy of others. Imposing upon another (e.g., asking a favor, making a request), according to Brown and Levinson, is a face threatening act (FTA). FTAs are weighted in terms of the risk they present to the positive face and negative face of both participants in the interaction: the speaker and the hearer.

Not all FTAs create equal risk to the positive face and negative face of the speaker and hearer. Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest three factors influence the perceived weight of the imposition: social distance between the speaker and the hearer (e.g., stranger vs. intimate partner), the situational and cultural perception of the power of the speaker over or under the hearer (e.g., employer vs. employee), and the culturally defined rank of the FTA (e.g., requesting a small favor vs. large favor). The weight of the imposition then influences the message constructed by the speaker. These three factors are represented by Brown and Levinson by the summative model shown in Figure 3.1:

\[ W_x = D(S,H) + P(S,H) + R_x \]

Figure 3.1: Politeness model proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987)
Where $W_x$ is the weight of the imposition, $D$ is the social distance between speaker (S) and hearer (H), and $P$ is the social dimension of relative power. $R$ is the rank of the imposition. The aggregate of these variables helps determine the level of positive or negative politeness one must engage to mitigate the risk of losing face when preparing to attempt an FTA.

Brown and Levinson (1987) claim there are five ways in which individuals can politely manage FTAs. The first politeness strategy would be for the speaker to perform the FTA baldly, with no polite action. The second strategy is to enact the FTA accompanied by positive politeness described by Brown and Levinson as a way to protect the positive face of the hearer, or communicate “one’s own wants (or some of them) are in some respects similar to the addressee’s wants.” (p.101). The next strategy for mitigating the risk with an FTA is to deliver it with negative politeness. Negative politeness attempts to satisfy the negative face of the hearer and is often delivered with an apologetic tone suggesting that the speaker acknowledges the imposition on the hearer. The fourth strategy is to deliver the FTA indirectly, or what Brown and Levinson refer to as “off-record” (p. 69). They elaborate on this strategy as one that can be delivered via equivocal linguistic devices (e.g., irony, metaphor) or “hints as to what a speaker wants or means to communicate, without doing so directly, so that the meaning is to some degree negotiable.” (p. 69). The last strategy is not to perform the FTA at all.

Brown and Levinson (1987) put forth that jokes are a form of positive-politeness arguing that jokes are “based on mutual shared background knowledge
and values” (p. 124). Further, they suggest that joking can help to redefine the variables of distance and risk. Interestingly, however, they do not mention in what ways power can influence this positive-politeness strategy, nor do they elaborate on the type of jokes, nor the target of the joke as a factor in saving face. This is not to say that Brown and Levinson overlooked these nuances of jokes, their focus was politeness not humor. Nonetheless, it does present an interesting starting point for the examination of applying aspects of their framework to the study of humor.

Brown and Levinson’s (1987) work is useful for the study of humor in a number of ways. First, their basic treatment of the concept is compatible for humor. Politeness is presented as a universal language phenomenon that allows individuals to manage quality in social relationships while at the same time achieving specific wants and needs through communication. Humor, similarly has been shown to exist in all cultures and languages and has been shown to foster and maintain social relationships. Further, politeness theory recognizes that strategic use of language, or word choice, is essential in the enactment of politeness. Humor, also, provides a range of linguistic choices speakers can manipulate to achieve their goals.

Politeness theory has been criticized for its assertions of cross-cultural applicability, particularly in its treatment of face. This is an important note because Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest that one of the most essential elements to their model is the intentional derivation individuals make from the Gricean (1968) maxims in an effort to attend to issues of face. This is one
particular area of the politeness model that needs to be modified in to be applied to humor. Specifically, nearly all humor forms (e.g., jokes, witticisms, puns) violate one of the Gricean maxims thought to regulate cooperative communication. As such, individuals can strategically select what form of humor to use to maintain social harmony and yet still achieve their goals. However, where politeness mitigates the risk of an FTA, humor is an FTA.

To explicate this further it is necessary to make an assumption that using humor is inherently a face-threatening act. Depending on the type of humor used, the target of the humor, and the timing of the delivery, the speaker is at risk of damaging their positive face and that of the hearer. For example, if a speaker uses a humorous jab at the expense of the hearer in a public setting, the speaker is at risk of losing face if the remark is deemed inappropriate by the hearer or if the hearer fails to interpret the jab as being non-serious or if the hearer is embarrassed by the jest. This is not to say, however, that only disparaging forms of humor (e.g., teases, putdowns, ironic criticisms) are face-threatening. For example, if the speaker provides a witticism in the middle of a serious discussion, the hearer could interpret this as the speaker not taking him or her seriously.

So, if we assume that humor is a face-threatening act, we can also surmise that individuals must evaluate the risk of enacting humor and thus, damaging the quality of the social relationship. As such, we can also apply the factors Brown and Levinson (1987) propose influence an individual’s weight of imposition: namely, the factors of social distance and power. These factors are important in making hypotheses about when individuals find it appropriate to use humor or
not use humor depending on with whom they are speaking. Further, previous research on humor orientation (Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield, 1991), as well overall communicative competence and skill, suggests that individuals more skilled at “reading” others are more successful at enacting humor (Merolla, 2006).

Although a direct application of the hierarchy of strategies of politeness used in Brown and Levinson’s (1987) model are inappropriate for humor, a similar hierarchical structure could be created to attempt to categorize the levels of face-threat connected to various forms of humor. This seems to be an important and untapped feature in humor research, namely because it demands the examination of the linguistic forms humor can take (e.g., joke), and the content (e.g., ethnic joke), as well as the target (e.g., in-group or out-group). For example, it seems obvious that the telling of a racial joke would be more face-threatening than a knock-knock joke. A number of studies have suggested effects of various forms, content, and targets, but studies that combine these elements together from a production perspective could not be found. This perspective is important in building hypotheses around the link between selection of humor type and intended effects.

3.2 Rhetorical humor framework

Like politeness theory, the rhetorical humor framework could be a tool for describing a social phenomenon. However, the rhetorical humor approach would need to extend politeness theory in two ways. First, it introduces two additional areas politeness theory has overlooked: situational aspects and goals (Dillard,
Anderson, & Brock, 2003). In addition, a rhetorical humor framework would need to incorporate individual differences in perceived humor efficacy. As a result, the proposed rhetorical humor framework model is shown in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: Proposed rhetorical humor framework

As shown in Figure 3.2, the rhetorical humor framework adapts the model for politeness to humor where U is decision to use humor or not use humor and is coupled with type of humor (T). Type of humor is either positive (e.g., playful wordplay, puns) or negative (e.g., teases or sarcasm) and encompasses also the target of the humorous message, or “butt of the joke” (e.g., self, other, object). D and P remain, as in politeness theory, social dimensions of distance and power.
within the relationship. S is the situation of the speech act in which humor is being used and takes into account not only the physical setting (e.g., restaurant, funeral home, living room), but also the social setting (e.g., private vs. others present) and the larger speech event in which the humorous turn will be enacted (e.g., in the middle of a shopping transaction, at the end of an argument, during a mundane conversation). The abundance of research on humor as a trait, orientation, and competence is not ignored with this model; E accounts for the individual’s perception of humor efficacy. It should be noted that humor efficacy is considered in light of all other variables of the model, not as a perceived static personality trait. In other words, how confident the speaker feels about successfully conveying humor in the given situation with the specific hearer. All of these variables are underscored by two additional considerations not within the scope of the politeness model: message goals and relational goals.

The proposed rhetorical humor framework is inherently a rhetorical perspective (Tracy, 2002) on a type of discursive practice. It works under the premise that communication is strategic and goal oriented and that individuals use language to achieve those goals. Further, it emphasizes the relational goals and considerations that the speaker must work through in the decision to use or not use humor, as well as the type of humor appropriate for the situation and the hearer. It is not a theory in that it does not attempt to explain nor predict humor use. Rather, the rhetorical humor framework provides a starting point for deeper investigation into questions regarding the role of humor in relationships through the examination of how individuals of varying humor production skills determine
whether or not to enact humor of different types with various individuals in different situations to reach different goals.

Thinking about humor in such broad terms demands more critical questions to be assessed about the function of humor in social relationships, specifically because it forces examination of the various forms of humor as well as the rational choices individuals must make in enacting humor. Approaching humor in a similar way to politeness does not address the success of a message being interpreted as humorous by the receiver, nor does it consider the perceived humor ability or humor orientation of the message producer although these are aspects that are necessary to examine in an effort to obtain a full scope of humor. The application of features of politeness theory to humor attempts to situate humor as a pervasive form of communication which arises in daily discourse in a variety of linguistic vehicles which can be strategically used by individuals to achieve goals.

3.3 Interpersonal deception theory

Clearly, the application of politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987) to humor as described above is focused largely on the speaker and ignores the hearer as an active participant in the interaction. As such, it is necessary to expand the proposed framework to acknowledge the interactive nature of communication. One such approach to the study of humor that does incorporate the receiver can be derived from the work of Buller and Burgoon (1996) on interpersonal deception. Although, perhaps, not an obvious correlation between the two concepts is apparent, I will first outline the basic principles of
interpersonal deception theory (IDT) (Buller & Burgoon) and provide a suggestion for how this theory can be applied to humor.

Buller and Burgoon (1996) define deception as “a message knowingly transmitted by a sender to foster a false belief or conclusion by the receiver.” (p. 205) Further, they present their model of deception in communication as a representation of “our attempt to develop a theoretical perspective in which individual factors such as goals, motivations, emotions, and cognitive abilities are necessary but not sufficient factors to predict and explain the topography of interpersonal deceptive encounters and their outcomes.” (p. 204).

Buller and Burgoon (1996) put forth a number of assumptions underlying their framework. For the purposes of this dissertation, only those that can be applied to humor will be outlined and discussed. The first set of assumptions purported by Buller and Burgoon pertain to interpersonal communication. Specifically, they posit interpersonal communication requires participation from both the sender and the receiver and that the communication itself is a dynamic activity. Further, Buller and Burgoon address the “multifunctional, multidimensional, and multimodal” (p. 206) aspects of interpersonal communication reminding that interactants are constantly managing a number of goals. In addition, IDT assumes interpersonal communication involves strategic and non-strategic behaviors. The non-strategic behaviors, they explain, “usually reflect perceptual, cognitive, and emotional processes accompanying message encoding and decoding or the communicative situation.” (p. 207). This nonstrategic behavior is referred to as leakage (Ekman & Friesen, 1969). In
addition, Buller and Burgoon assert interpersonal communication relies on credibility being an orienting factor for both the sender and the receiver. Lastly, Buller and Burgoon posit competence and adherence to norms as given factors by interactants. Taken as a whole, the assumptions put forth by Buller and Burgoon (1996) in terms of interpersonal communication can hold true for humor. As they describe, these are “theoretically primitive and require no empirical tests.” (p. 206).

The assumptions of deception presented by Buller and Burgoon (1996) point to three components of deceptive messages: (1) the central message (usually verbal), (2) ancillary messages, or additional information further concealing the central message, and (3) nonstrategic behaviors or leakage (either verbal or nonverbal). From these assumptions, you can exchange humor for deception if you first take humor as a form of deception that is intended to be discovered. The central message would remain false (as in the use of irony, sarcasm, puns, teases, or the story leading up to a punch line of a joke). Rather than ancillary messages working to conceal the deception, with humor they are used to reveal the deception (as in the assertion of, “I’m just kidding.”). Lastly, leakage would pertain to winking, rolling of the eyes, or laughter on the side of the sender to suggest that the central message was not to be taken in truth. Another way to consider humor as a form of deception meant to be detected is to examine the most basic assumption of IDT: senders of deceptive messages attempt to decrease suspicion in receivers. For IDT to apply to humor, we must modify this assumption to senders of humorous messages attempt to increase
humor detection in receivers. In other words, the sender is still deceptive, but he or she wants the receiver to detect it.

To further elaborate on the application of IDT to humor, I will now examine 10 of Buller and Burgoon’s (1996) 18 propositions and describe briefly how humor can be interchanged. The first propositions attempt to address the context and relationship:

**Proposition 1**: Sender and receiver cognitions and behaviors vary systematically as deceptive communication contexts vary in (a) access to social cues, (b) immediacy, (c) relational engagement, (d) conversational demands, and (e) spontaneity.

**Proposition 2**: During deceptive interchanges, sender and receiver cognitions and behaviors vary systematically as relationships vary in (a) relational familiarity (including informational and behavioral familiarity) and (b) relational valence.

Both of these propositions can be directly examined through the rhetorical humor framework. Previous research on humor has suggested differences in humor use, appreciation, and effects depending on contextual and situational factors. For example, Hancock (2004) found differences in individuals’ uses of irony in face-to-face versus computer-mediated environments in terms of both frequency of use by the sender and comprehension in the receiver. Likewise, Pexman and Zvaigzne (2004) found ironic compliments were more readily
interpreted as humorous teasing within friend dyads when compared to dyads containing strangers.

Next, Buller and Burgoon (1996) propose that preinteraction factors such as expectancies, knowledge, goals or intentions influence the behavior of senders and receivers:

*Proposition 3:* Compared with truth tellers, deceivers (a) engage in greater strategic activity designed to manage information, behavior, and image and (b) display more nonstrategic arousal cues, negative and dampened affect, noninvolvement, and performance decrements.

If we reverse negative and dampened affect, noninvolvement and performance decrements to positive affect, hyperinvolvement and performance enhancements, this proposition holds true for humor. Supporting this notion is research by Provine (1996) which found speakers laugh 46% more than receivers, suggesting the laughter was not a response to humor stimulus, but a signal to the receiver. This proposition, in particular, allows for additional research on how senders mark their humorous efforts with nonverbal or linguistic cues (e.g., nudging, changing vocal intonation) (Norrick, 2003; 2004).

Proposition 4 suggests that as interaction increases, deceivers make more strategic moves and display less leakage:

*Proposition 4:* Context interactivity moderates initial deception displays such that deception in increasingly interactive contexts results in (a) greater strategic activity (information, behavior, and
image management) and (b) reduced nonstrategic activity (arousal, negative or dampened affect, and performance decrements) over time relative to noninteractive contexts.

Although no supporting research on this aspect of humor could be found, it does suggest two key ideas for investigation in terms of humor. First, with increased interaction it may be plausible that senders can enact a larger variety of humor forms (e.g., puns, jokes, witticisms) that engage more topics as they rely on the shared history of themselves and the receiver. Second, it is plausible that the need to mark humor attempts decreases as interaction increases.

The next proposition that is useful for consideration for humor is pertains to the individual differences in the way individuals manage message and relational goals.

**Proposition 7:** Goals and motivations moderate strategic and nonstrategic behavior displays.

Sample hypotheses that could relate to this proposition in regard to humor are the overarching impression management and relational goals underlying the interaction. For example, this proposition would be useful for examining the research on the nature of affiliative humor (Miczo, 2006). Similarly, this proposition merits exploration into the use of disparagement humor or ethnic jokes as a means of social bonding (Davies, 1991). Additionally, this proposition urges more research on the use of laughter as a humor marking cue on behalf of the sender and as a humor detection cue on behalf of the receiver.

Proposition 9 suggests the role that skill plays in deceptive interactions:
Proposition 9: Skilled senders better convey a truthful demeanor by engaging in more strategic behavior and less nonstrategic leakage than unskilled ones.

This proposition allows for the abundance of research on humor as a skilled behavior to be examined. In essence, it suggests that skilled senders are perceived as more truthful. In terms of humor, this could be exchanged with a skilled sender being perceived as funnier. Research on humor orientation (see Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield, 1991) supports this relationship.

The next proposition that can be applied to humor suggests that receivers respond to deceptive messages by revealing their suspicion.

Proposition 12: Receiver suspicion is manifested through a combination of strategic and nonstrategic behavior.

Because we are viewing humor as deception that is meant to be revealed, suspicion is obviously not the outcome variable. Rather, humor detection would be the expected response. It should be noted that humor detection is the same as humor appreciation. Just as suspicion is not disbelief, detection does not mean appreciation. This proposition is particularly useful in past research on the link between humor and laughter. Specifically, there has been much debate as to whether laughter is an appropriate indicator of humor appreciation. Research is needed to better explore the use of laughter as a social signal which can either express pure mirth or simply signal acknowledgement of a humor attempt. Grammer and Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1990) found that the more a woman laughed in
an encounter, the greater was her self-reported interest in the man with whom she was interacting.

The next two propositions of IDT (Buller & Burgoon, 1996) that can be parlayed to humor involve the role that suspicion has on the sender's consequent behavior:

**Proposition 13:** Senders perceive suspicion when it is present.

**Proposition 14:** Suspicion (perceived or actual) increases senders’ (a) strategic and (b) nonstrategic behavior.

Hypotheses that could be examined within these propositions would explore how senders perceive humor detection by the receiver and how those perceptions shape more or less humor use, as well as more or less use of nonstrategic humor markers. Further, these propositions demand less reliance on self-reports of humor use, detection, and appreciation and more observational studies and interaction data, a noted need in humor research (Lynch, 2002; Martin, 2004; Miczo, 2004).

The next proposition suggests adaptation of the behaviors of senders and receivers.

**Proposition 15:** Deception and suspicion displays change over time.

This proposition is useful in developing hypotheses regarding the way in which individuals enact humor and react to humor within a given interaction overtime. Buller and Burgoon (1996) suggest that in deception, the sender may become more relaxed throughout the interaction if they feel that their deception has been successful. In a similar vain, it could be argued that as the sender of
humor could become more relaxed (thus, use less markers of humor) as they felt the receiver was in tune with their humor.

Although this paper only connects 10 of Buller and Burgoon’s (1996) propositions for IDT, this is not to say that the other eight are not applicable. Rather, more examination of these propositions are needed and additional propositions are warranted to explore the nuances of humor. Nonetheless, what is presented here provides a foundation from which several testable hypotheses can be derived for future research.

IDT has been criticized by a number of researchers (see Burgoon & Buller, 1996; DePaulo, Ansfield, & Bell, 1996; Stiff, 1996). However, the suggestion of the rhetorical humor framework is not to simply turn IDT into an interpersonal theory of humor. Rather, given the abundance of fruitful findings based on IDT, it seems wise to explore some of the same questions posited regarding deception as they relate to humor. Obviously, the projections of the hypotheses will differ based on a number of differences in the philosophical underpinning of attempting to deceive someone and attempting to humor them. Additionally, the abundance of research on humor will call for additional modifications to the propositions, demand a variety of methodologies to be employed, and derive different interpretations to consequent findings.

In summary, politeness theory gives us a new way to think about humor as a communicative phenomenon and interpersonal deception theory provides a more rigorous guide incorporating interactivity with which we can build hypotheses and work towards a communication theory of humor. It is from these
two theories that the rhetorical humor framework was informed. The following section will describe rationale and hypotheses for a study designed fit within the rhetorical humor framework.

3.4 Study rationale and hypotheses

This study was designed with the rhetorical humor framework in mind. Because the rhetorical humor framework is not a formal model to predict humor use, but serves as a guide for approaching humor as communication this study probes only a few elements of the framework. Broadly, this study is designed to examine the role of situational and contextual variances in humor production, as well as the role of interpersonal motivation.

As outlined in the previous section, researchers in communication have largely approached the study of humor in two ways. First, humor has been examined as either a trait or a subset of other social interaction skills that predetermine behavior (Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield, 1991; Miczo, 2002). The other common approach examines the functions of humor on relationships or other artifacts of its use. As such, the gap to be filled is an examination of humor as communication. The rhetorical humor framework and this study were designed to help bridge this gap. Moreover, in the few studies that analyze humor during interaction, the participants are often primed to engage in activities thought to encourage humorous remarks. Thus, this study set forth to explore humor that naturally arises during conversation.
Several studies of trait-based humor research have called for experimental studies that examine the relationship between self-reported humor orientation and actual humor use (DeKoning & Weiss, 2002; Miczo, 2004; Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield, & Booth-Butterfield, 2005). Further, one of the underlying assumptions behind the work on humor orientation is that individuals high in HO will enact humor more frequently (Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield, 1991). For this reason, the first hypothesis for this study explores the relationship between trait humor and self-reported humor use during an interaction. Similarly, to examine humor as a communication process, as suggested by the rhetorical humor framework, the relationship between one’s perceptions of success in their attempts at humor are also coupled with their trait humor. To summarize:

H1: Trait humor will be positively associated with a) humor behavior and b) perceived humor success.

In order to examine humor as communication it is necessary to explore dynamics of the interaction between the interlocutors of the speech situation in which the communication takes place. Buller and Burgoon’s (1996) interpersonal deception theory is grounded in the notion that within interaction senders and receivers influence one another in a dynamic fashion. The rhetorical humor framework also works within this line of reasoning. In particular, nonverbal cues exhibited by the receiver could moderate the relationship between the talker’s trait humor and actual humor use. Thus the following two hypotheses seek to probe the effects of the dynamic nature of communication interactants:
H2: Dyadic interaction will be associated with higher humor behavior and perceived humor success. In other words, participants in a synchronous environment in which they can interact with their partner will use more humor as well as report higher degrees of perceived humor success than those in an asynchronous environment.

H3: Dyadic interaction moderates the relationship between trait humor and a) humor use and b) perceived humor success. In other words, the relationships between dyadic interaction and humor behavior and humor success would be affected by the interaction of trait humor.

Communication partners are not the only dynamic facet of a speech situation. A prominent theme in communication research is that each interactant brings a set of goals, both functional and relational, to every communication situation (see Berger, 2002 for a comprehensive review of goals in social interaction). Furthermore, these goals help guide the language choices of individuals during interaction and are influenced by contextual variables as outlined in the rhetorical humor framework. The next hypothesis probes the effects of contextual cues and motivation on humor use and consequent perceived success.

H4: Humor behavior and perceived humor success will vary as a result of access to a) contextual cues and b) interpersonal motivation. In other words, individuals with access to defined contextual cues will employ different levels of humor than those without access to defined contextual
cues. Similarly, when provided with a heightened incentive or motivation to be socially attractive, individuals will employ different levels of humor than those who have neutral motivation.

One of the more popular theories of humor is that it is employed to relieve tension among interlocutors (Lynch, 2002). Further, communication researchers have extensively examined the effects of anxiety on communication under the labels of anxiety (Booth-Butterfield, 1990), communication apprehension (Daly & McCroskey, 1984), and social-communicative anxiety (Daly, Caughlin, & Stafford, 1997). Although the constructs vary somewhat conceptually, they do seem to tease out a similar predisposition that has some impact on communication. The rhetorical humor framework suggests a component of humor efficacy. If it is understood that trait-based humor orientation (Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield, 1991) is a self-report of likelihood to use humor, it is necessary to examine under which conditions this trait is expressed or not expressed. Communication anxiety provides an interesting test to the previous notion that humor is used to relieve tension. However, to date, no studies have shown a connection of humor production with trait, nor state, communication anxiety. Accordingly, the following hypotheses and research question explores this association:

H5: There is a relationship between trait communication anxiety and a) trait humor, b) humor behavior, and c) humor success.
H6: State communication anxiety is associated with a) humor behavior and b) perceived humor success.

RQ1: Is state communication anxiety a predictor of humor behavior when controlling for the effects of trait humor?

The rhetorical humor framework is modeled after Buller and Burgoon’s (1996) interpersonal deception theory specifically to explore the mutually dynamic influence of the sender and receiver. While the previous set of hypotheses and research questions examine humor production strictly from the senders’ perspective, the following probe more explicitly into the affect of the sender. Moreover, borrowing from the work of Buller and Burgoon that proposes receiver’s suspicion of deception is manifested through strategic and non-strategic behavior, it is proposed here that receivers will provide nonverbal cues to the sender in regard to humor detection. In other words, receivers will acknowledge the sender’s attempts at humor via smiling, laughing or other non-verbal behaviors. As a result, senders’ will modify their humor behavior and self-report the success of their humor based on partner feedback.

H7: Humor behavior and humor success are positively associated with partner feedback. In other words, the self-reported positive perception of their partners’ feedback (non-verbal behaviors such as smiling or laughing) to humor attempts will be associated with how much humor is used and how successful the humor is thought to be.
Although hypothesis 7 predicts an association between the sender’s assessment of their partner’s feedback and humor production, it is not known how well the sender and receiver agree on the sender’s humor use and success, nor is it known how closely the two assess the amount of feedback leaked by the receiver.

RQ 2: Is there a difference between self and other peer ratings of a) humor behavior, b) humor success, and c) partner feedback?

Again, the rhetorical humor framework borrows from interactive focus of interpersonal deception theory (Buller & Burgoon (1996) in that sender’s will modify their humor behavior based on sender behavior. Tying in communication anxiety from the receiver standpoint, research question 3 asks:

RQ 3: Does perceived partner communication anxiety predict humor behavior? In other words, when a talker senses anxiety in their partner, do they attempt to ease that anxiety with humor?
CHAPTER 4

METHODS

4.1 Design

This study employed a 2 x 2 x 2 experimental design. The experimental
design examines interaction (solo or dyadic), context (lean or rich), and
motivation (neutral or heightened) as the between-subjects factors (see Table
4.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction type</th>
<th>Motivation factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solo</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyad</td>
<td>Context (lean)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Context (lean)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 – Study factorial design
4.2 Procedure

This section will outline the procedure for this study followed by specific descriptions of the measures used. This study was executed in two parts, an online pre-test survey which gathered baseline information and a lab session to conduct an experimental manipulation which concluded with a post-test survey. Students enrolled in large introductory communication courses during the winter quarter at a Midwestern university were recruited for this study. Students were incented with extra credit to participate in the study, however it should be noted other studies were being offered concurrently in which students were also able to participate for credit. In order to receive credit, student participants were required to participate in both parts of the study as detailed below. Students were notified about the study via course websites and provided with a link to the study website for more information.

The website for the study described the two-parts of the study and provided a link to begin the participation process. Students who decided to participate were first directed to an online survey. The landing page of this survey included a consent form, as approved by the Internal Research Board of the university wherein the research was conducted. After providing an electronic signature of consent, participants then completed a short survey with a baseline measure of trait humor as well as interpersonal communication anxiety and to gather basic demographic information. Details of the measures
used in the assessment are expounded below and a copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A of this document.

After completing the online survey, participants were directed to an online registration form to sign up for a lab session. Participants were told they would be partnered with another participant for a short interview. Lab sessions were conducted in a classroom building in a central location on campus. Nearly 130 sessions were available with up to eight openings each. Sessions were available between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday over the course of three weeks. Sessions began on the half-hour and participants were informed each session would take approximately 30 to 45 minutes.

At least 24 hours prior to the time participants registered for the study, registrants received a reminder e-mail of the time, date and location for the study. To ensure participants who could potentially be partnered in the dyadic condition did not have a chance to interact, participants were randomly assigned to conditions as they arrived to the lab session location (in the event that uneven numbers of participants show up at scheduled time, the last subject to arrive was automatically assigned to the solo condition). In the dyadic condition, one participant was assigned the role of “talker” and the other was assigned the role of “listener”. Only participants in the talker condition received further experimental manipulations. No experimental manipulation was provided for dyadic listeners. To summarize, participants were assigned to one of two conditions (solo or dyadic), but one of three possible roles: solo, dyadic talker, or dyadic listener.
Participants assigned to both the solo and the dyadic talker conditions were directed into one of four offices by the researcher. Each office was equipped with two desks with chairs on opposing walls approximately four to six feet apart. In addition, each desk was equipped with a computer and computer monitor. Solo and dyadic talker participants were directed to sit at one of the desks and told to make themselves comfortable while the researcher checked-in other participants. In addition, these participants were told to read the instructions provided for them on a piece of paper on the desk and to begin on the corresponding activity.

The instructions for all solo and dyadic talker participants began the same way informing them that they would be partnered with another participant either face-to-face or over a video conference camera for a short, ice-breaker interview. In addition, all solo and dyadic talkers were provided with a sheet of paper containing a list of eight questions and instructed to put the questions into the order in which they would like to answer them. The questions were derived from standard ice-breaker games and selected for their ambiguous and mostly benign nature such as “How would you describe your hometown to someone who has never been there?” and “If you could be any animal what would you want to be and why?” (see Appendix B of this document for the full list of questions.) The remainder of the instructions for the solo and dyadic talkers varied depending on which context (lean or rich) and motivation (neutral or heightened) conditions they were placed.
Context manipulation. For solo and dyadic talkers in the context lean condition, no additional situational, social or contextual cues were provided. In the context rich condition, however, participants were given one of two randomly assigned situations in which they were told they should frame the answers to the questions they were answering. In the first situation, participants were instructed to answer questions as though they were in a job interview and the person they would be partnered with was to be their potential employer. Participants in the second situation were instructed to answer questions as though they were talking with a fellow classmate as a potential lab partner for a quarter-long course and the person they would be partnered with was a classmate they would want to have as a lab partner. The solo and dyadic talker participants were informed their partners were not being told the nature of the interview in which they would be participating and, as such, the solo and dyadic listeners were instructed to avoid mentioning the situations in which they were answering the questions. However, the participants were told that their partners would be answering questions about them and evaluating them on matters linked to the situation based on their responses after the interview was completed.

Motivation manipulation. For the motivation neutral condition, no additional verbiage was added to the instructions. For participants in the motivation enhanced condition, solo and dyadic talker participants were told their partners would evaluate them on a number of social attractiveness measures. They were told that if their partners gave them higher than average
assessments that they might receive additional extra credit points from their professors.

The contents of the instructions can be found in full in Appendix C of this document.

During the time solo and dyadic talker participants were reviewing their instructions and completing the question ordering task, dyadic listeners were seated outside of the offices out of listening distance working on a word-find distracter task provided to them with instructions for their part of the study. The dyadic listeners were told they would be performing the role of a listener and in a few moments would listen to a fellow participant answer questions about themselves.

Before continuing with the interview portion of the study, the researcher entered the room of the solo or dyadic talker to ensure the questions they had been given were ordered. The researcher reiterated the purpose of the interview based on the context and motivation condition the participant was assigned. In particular, for the context rich and motivation heightened conditions, the researcher stressed the importance of not revealing the nature of the study to their partner.

For dyadic participants, the researcher directed the listener partner into the room with the talker. The researcher asked the talker and the listener if they had a pre-established relationship with one another. In the event that the participants did know each other, they were re-partnered or their data was not analyzed (each instance occurred twice in this study). The participants were
introduced to one another and asked to sit facing each other for the interview. The researcher explained the roles and procedures for the interview. The dyadic talker was informed they would read each question aloud in the order they determined and then give their response. The listener was informed that they were to just listen to the talker’s responses. It was stressed that the listener was allowed to comment on or react to any or all of the responses of the talker if they desired, but they were not required to do so at all. The dyads were told once they finished the interview, they were to turn to their respective computers and take the short online survey which was accessible via a shortcut on their respective computer desktops. Once the surveys were completed, they were told, they could gather their things and quietly leave. After the participants agreed they understood the instructions, the researcher thanked the participants and left the room and closed the door.

For participants in the solo condition, researcher explained to the participant they would be partnered with another participant via a videoconference phone which was on the desk. It was explained that the solo participant would not be able to see or hear the person they were talking to, but that their partner would be able to see and hear them. In addition, the solo participant was asked to move their chair back approximately three feet from the desk and place their feet on a line of duct tape which was on the floor. Participants were informed they would read each question aloud in the order they determined and then provide their answer. Participants were shown by the researcher how to turn the camera off after they finished answering their
questions and instructed to take the online survey when they were done. As with the dyadic participants, solo participants were informed they could gather their belongings and leave when they finished the online survey. When the solo participant agreed he or she understood the instructions the researcher then told them they would check on their listening partner and then come back to the room to let the talker know when they could begin. The researcher thanked the participant and then left the room returning a few moments later to inform the solo participant they could begin. It should be noted that the video cameras were not actually transmitting any data and there was no one watching the interview.

4.3 Measures
Pre-test measures

*Trait Humor.* Trait humor was measured using the Richmond Humor Assessment Instrument (Richmond, Wrench, & Gorham, 2001). Although there is an abundance of research in communication using the Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield (1991) humor orientation scale, the RHAI provides a broader examination of humor use. As Wrench and McCroskey (2001) have noted of the HOS 12 of the 17 items ask only if the individual is likely to use jokes or humor stories. As argued by Wrench and Richmond (2004) jokes and humorous stories do not capture the broad array of humor vehicles. To correct for the issue of construct validity, the RHAI was designed to correct for this issue of construct validity. The original scale consists of 16 items measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree. Due to the nature of this
study, one item “I can easily relate funny or humorous ideas to the class.” was dropped from the survey administered to this sample. In addition, two questions were re-worded for clarity based on comments from a pre-test. A final version of the scale used for this study can be found in Appendix A of this document. The 15 items used for this study yielded an acceptable alpha-level ($\alpha = .78$, $M = 54.8$, $SD = 5.53$).

Trait Communication Anxiety. Trait communication anxiety was assessed using the trait form of the Communication Anxiety Inventory (CAI) developed by Booth-Butterfield and Gould (1986). The Form Trait of the CAI is the pre-test partner to the CAI’s Form State measure which will be detailed in the post-test measures below. The Form Trait of the CAI asks respondent how they generally feel when communicating in dyadic, small group, and public speaking situations. For the purposes of this study, the 7 items assessing interpersonal dyadic interaction were used. The 7 items were measured using a 4-point Likert-type scale in which 1 = Almost never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, and 4 = Almost always. The Form Trait CAI yielded an acceptable reliability alpha-level ($\alpha = .74$, $M = 14.05$, $SD = 3.22$). A copy of the survey used can be found in Appendix A of this document.

Demographics. Five items asked participants to specify their age, gender, income, ethnicity, and level of education.

Post-test measures
*State Communication Anxiety.* State communication anxiety was assessed using the state form of the Communication Anxiety Inventory (CAI) developed by Booth-Butterfield and Gould (1986). The Form State of the CAI is the post-test partner to the CAI’s Form Trait measure detailed in the pre-test measures above. The Form State of the CAI asks respondent how they felt during a specific communication situation. For the purposes of this study, the 18 of the original 20 questions pertaining were used for all participants to rate their own state anxiety during the interview. Dyadic talkers and listeners were also given 10 of the items to assess how they thought their partners seemed to feel during the interview. The 7 items were measured using a 4-point Likert-type scale in which 1 = Not at all, 2 = Somewhat, 3 = Moderately so, and 4 = Very much so. The Form State CAI yielded an acceptable reliability alpha-level ($\alpha = .941, M = 26.88, SD = 12.04$). A copy of the survey used can be found in Appendix D of this document.

*Humor Behavior.* Humor behavior was obtained on two levels, self-perceived humor use and partner rated humor use. First, four-items asked the solo and dyadic talker participants to assess on a scale from 1 (in none of my answers) to 5 (in all of my answers) their own use of humor during their interview (via jokes, witticism, wisecracks, funny stories or other humorous devices), the targets of humor (self, their partner, or another person). These items were added together to obtain a composite score. Higher scores indicate higher frequencies of humor use ($M = 8.68, SD = 3.14$).
Second, four items asked the dyadic listeners to rate their dyadic talking partner’s use of humor using the same rating scale as above ($M = 9.25, SD = 3.17$).

**Perceived Humor Success.** A perceived humor success score was derived by combining two items assessing solo and dyadic talkers’ self appraisal of how funny they were during the interview and their appraisal of how they thought their partner would evaluate their humor. The two items were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale with 1=not at all humorous to 5=very humorous ($\alpha = .74, M = 14.05, SD = 3.22$).

**Partner Feedback.** Partner feedback was assessed through 5 items that measures the dyadic talkers’ perception of humor appreciation exhibited by their dyadic listener partners. In particular, the items asked participants to rate on a 5-point Likert-type scale with 1=Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree the degree to which they felt their partner appreciated their humor through smiling, laughing or showing other signs of appreciation. Higher scores indicate a higher perception of partner appreciation. The items yielded an acceptable alpha level ($\alpha = .885, M = 15.21, SD = 3.34$).

In addition, to evaluate how closely talker perception matched listeners’ behavior, listeners were asked to complete the same items in reference to their own behavior. Again, the items yielded an acceptable alpha level ($\alpha = .826, M = 16.5, SD = 3.07$).
4.4 Summary of planned data analyses

A variety of methods and instruments will be employed in this study. The following summary restates each hypothesis and research question, and the instruments, measures, and analyses used to address them.

- **H1**: Trait humor is positively associated with a) humor behavior and b) perceived humor success. Specifically, individuals who self-report higher levels of humor orientation will self-report more use of humor and higher levels of humorousness.

  This hypothesis is examined with correlational analyses using pre-test participant responses on a trait humor measure and on a self-report of frequency of humor use during an interaction and perceived success of humor (degree of humorousness).

- **H2**: Dyadic interaction will be associated with higher humor behavior and perceived humor success.

  This hypothesis will be explored with an independent samples t-test to compare the means of humor behavior and humor success between solo and dyadic talker participants.

- **H3**: Humor orientation moderates the relationship between dyadic interaction and a) humor use and b) perceived humor success.

  This hypothesis is examined using moderated multiple regression examining the interaction between humor orientation and dyadic interaction on humor behavior and success.
• H4: Humor behavior and perceived humor success will be associated with access to a) contextual cues and b) interpersonal motivation.

This hypothesis will be explored with an independent samples t-test to compare the means of humor behavior and humor success between participants in either context rich or context lean conditions as well as those in a motivation neutral or motivation heightened condition.

• H5: Trait communication anxiety will be associated with a) trait humor, b) humor behavior, and c) humor success.

This hypothesis is examined with correlational analyses using pre-test participant responses on a trait communication anxiety measure and on a self-report of frequency of humor use during an interaction and perceived success of humor (degree of humorousness).

• H6: State communication anxiety will be associated with a) humor behavior and b) perceived humor success.

This hypothesis is examined with correlational analyses using post-test participant responses on a state communication anxiety measure and on a self-report of frequency of humor use during an interaction and perceived success of humor (degree of humorousness).

• RQ1: Is state communication anxiety a predictor of humor behavior when controlling for the effects of trait humor?

This hypothesis is examined with hierarchical multiple regression in which the control variable of trait humor is entered in the first step, followed by the independent variable of state communication anxiety.
• H7: Humor behavior and humor success is positively associated with partner feedback.

   This hypothesis is examined with correlational analyses using self-reports of frequency of humor use during an interaction and perceived success of humor (degree of humorousness) with a self-report of perceived partner feedback.

• RQ2: Is there a difference between self and other peer ratings of a) humor behavior, b) humor success, and c) partner feedback?

   This research question is examined by paired-samples t-tests comparing the responses from dyadic talkers and listeners on the variables of humor behavior, humor success, and partner feedback.
CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics

In all, 312 participants successfully completed the pre-test and experimental parts of this study. Of those in the final analysis, approximately 61% of the subjects were female and 38% were male (2% did not respond to the question). The average age was 20.4 years old ($SD = 3.27$, $min = 18$, $max = 57$) and nearly all participants (98%) indicated having completed at least some college. Almost 80% reported their ethnicity as Caucasian, 9% as African American, 3.5% as Latino/Hispanic, and 1% as of Asian descent. The remaining participants consisted of Native Americans, Pacific Islanders, and other ethnicities. Approximately 22% of respondents reported an income of less than $40,000, while another 29% indicated income between $40,000 and 80,000, and nearly 46% reported income more than $80,000 per year.

The results will be broken into two parts. First hypotheses and research questions related specifically to the solo and dyadic talkers will be addressed,
followed by results exploring the relationship between dyadic talkers and dyadic listeners.

**Solo and dyadic talkers**

This study consisted of 102 solo participants and 105 dyadic talkers. To clarify, individuals in the solo condition were led to believe their interview was being conducted via a one-way video-conference, while dyadic talkers completed their interview with another participant in a face-to-face setting.

This study employed a 2 x 2 x 2 experimental design to examine interaction (solo or dyadic), context (lean or rich), and motivation (neutral or heightened) as the between-subjects factors. Raw means and standard deviations for the factorial designs with humor use and perceived humor success as the dependent variables can be found in Table 5.1 and Table 5.2, respectively. Two 2 x 2 x 2 analyses of variance (ANOVA) were calculated on participants' self-ratings of humor use and perceived humor success. There was a significant main effect only for interaction type (solo or dyadic) on humor use, $F(1, 199) = 20.89, p < .05$ ($\eta^2_p = .095$) and on perceived humor success $F(1, 198) = 55.72, p < .05$ ($\eta^2_p = .22$). No interactions were found to be significant in either analysis as shown in Table 5.3 and Table 5.4. Although the data was drawn from a 2 x 2 x 2 design, the research questions and hypotheses for this study examined targeted contrasts at a 2 x 2 level. Details for these analyses follow.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction type</th>
<th>Solo $M$</th>
<th>Dyad $M$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral Context (lean)</td>
<td>7.08 (1.2)</td>
<td>9.62 (1.18)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Neutral Context (rich)</td>
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<td>9.51 (1.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heightened Context (lean)</td>
<td>8.24 (1.2)</td>
<td>10.38 (1.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heightened Context (rich)</td>
<td>8.27 (1.18)</td>
<td>9.04 (1.14)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1 – *Raw means and standard deviations - humor use*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction type</th>
<th>Solo $M$</th>
<th>Dyad $M$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Neutral Context (lean)</td>
<td>3.28 (.56)</td>
<td>4.96 (.56)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3.15 (.56)</td>
<td>5.04 (.56)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heightened Context (lean)</td>
<td>3.88 (.58)</td>
<td>5.25 (.58)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heightened Context (rich)</td>
<td>3.85 (.56)</td>
<td>4.82 (.54)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 5.2 – *Raw means and standard deviations - humor success*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>ηp²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>236.42&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.77</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
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<td>1722.21</td>
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<td>.010</td>
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<td>.74</td>
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<td>.004</td>
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<td>Context * Interaction type</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>9.25</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>.313</td>
<td>.005</td>
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<td>10.98</td>
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<td>.006</td>
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<td>Context * Motivation * Interaction type</td>
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<td>3.52</td>
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</table>

<sup>a</sup> R Squared = .12 (Adjusted R Squared = .09)

Table 5.3 – ANOVA results - humor use
Hypothesis 1 states trait humor will be positively associated with a) humor behavior and b) perceived humor success. The relationships between the variables were investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. Results suggest support for hypothesis 1 in that there was a positive correlation between both trait humor ($r = .25, p < .001$) as well as a positive correlation between trait humor and perceived humor success ($r = .28, p < .001$).

Hypothesis 2 predicted that dyadic interaction would be associated with higher humor behavior and perceived humor success. In other words, participants in the dyadic talker condition would use more humor as well as
report higher degrees of perceived humor success than those in the solo condition. Independent samples t-tests comparing humor behavior and humor success between solo and dyadic talker participants show support for hypothesis 2. A significant difference in reported humor behavior between solo participants \(M = 7.74, SD = 2.83\) and dyadic talkers \(M = 9.6, SD = 3.17; t(205) = -4.51, p = .000\) was revealed with dyadic talkers reporting more humor use than solo participants. The effect size, \(\eta^2 = .09\), suggests the dyadic interaction accounted for 9% of the variance in humor behavior. Similarly, dyadic talkers \(M = 5.01, SD = 1.35\) reported significantly higher perceived humor success than solo participants \(M = 3.54, SD = 1.49; t(204) = -7.422, p = .000\). The effect size, \(\eta^2 = .21\), suggests 21% of the variance in perceived humor success is attributable to dyadic interaction.

Hypotheses 3 predicted that dyadic interaction moderates the relationship between trait humor and a) humor use and b) perceived humor success. In other words, the relationships between dyadic interaction and humor behavior and humor success would be affected by the interaction of trait humor. Two moderated multiple regression models examined the interaction between humor orientation and dyadic interaction on a) humor behavior and b) perceived humor success. In both models, the independent variable trait humor and the moderated variable dyadic interaction were entered as Step 1 followed by Step 2 which included both the independent variable and moderating variable along with a third interaction variable consisting of the product of the independent and moderating variables.
For hypothesis 3a, the regression on the dependent variable of humor behavior was significant at Step 1, $F(2, 206) = 16.38, p < .001$. Both dyadic interaction and trait humor were significant predictors of humor behavior, together accounting for 13% of the variance in humor behavior. The interaction term was not significant in Step 2 $\beta = .21, t = .31, p = .76$, thus it appears dyadic interaction does not moderate the relationship between trait humor and humor behavior. Full results for this regression are shown in Table 5.5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>Semi-Partial $r$</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction type</td>
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<td>.41</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trait humor</td>
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<td>.04</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction type</td>
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<td>4.13</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait humor</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction type * Trait humor</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Step 1 – Total $R^2 = .14$ Adjusted $R^2 = .13$; $F(2, 206) = 16.38, p < .01$
Step 2 – Total $R^2 = .14$ Adjusted $R^2 = .13$; $F(2, 203) = 10.90, p < .01$

Table 5.5 – *Moderated multiple regression predicting humor use*
Similar results were found for hypothesis 3b. The regression on the dependent variable of perceived humor success was significant at Step 1, \( F(2, 205) = 36.68, p < .001 \). Both dyadic interaction and trait humor were significant predictors of perceived humor success accounting for 18\% and 5.3\% of the variance respectively (semi-partial \( r_s = .43 \) and .23). Again, the interaction term was not significant at Step 2, \( \beta = .24, t = .39, p = .70 \), so dyadic interaction does not moderate the relationship between trait humor and perceived humor success. Full results for this regression are shown in Table 5.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>( \beta )</th>
<th>( p )</th>
<th>Semi-Partial ( r )</th>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interaction type</td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trait humor</td>
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<td>.44</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.43</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interaction type</td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trait humor</td>
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<td>1.94</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interaction type * Trait humor</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Step 1 – Total \( R^2 = .27 \) Adjusted \( R^2 = .26 \); \( F(2,203) = 36.68, p < .01 \)
Step 2 – Total \( R^2 = .27 \) Adjusted \( R^2 = .26 \); \( F(3,202) = 24.40, p < .01 \)

Table 5.6 – *Moderated multiple regression predicting humor success*
In hypothesis 4, it is predicted that humor behavior and perceived humor success will vary as a result of access to a) contextual cues and b) interpersonal motivation. In other words, individuals with access to contextual cues will employ different levels of humor than those without access to cues. Similarly, when provided with a heightened incented, or motivation to be socially attractive, individuals will employ different levels of humor than those who have neutral motivation.

This hypothesis was explored independent samples t-tests to compare the means of humor behavior and humor success between participants in either context rich or context lean conditions as well as those in a motivation neutral or motivation heightened condition. Comparisons of humor behavior means for participants in the context lean ($M = 8.82, SD = 2.95$) to the context rich condition ($M = 8.5, SD = 3.32$) were not found to be statistically different. Likewise, no significance was found in the humor success between context lean ($M = 4.34, SD = 1.55$) and context rich participants ($M = 4.23, SD = 1.65$), thus hypothesis 4a was not supported. Hypothesis 4b did not garner support as no significant differences were found in participants in either motivation neutral or motivation heightened conditions for humor behavior (neutral $M = 8.4, SD = 3.19$; heightened $M = 8.96, SD = 3.08$) nor perceived humor success (neutral $M = 4.12, SD = 1.66$; heightened $M = 4.45, SD = 1.57$).
Hypothesis 5 contends there is a relationship between trait communication anxiety and a) trait humor, b) humor behavior, and c) humor success. This hypothesis is examined with correlational analyses using pre-test participant responses on a trait communication anxiety measure and on a self-report of frequency of humor use during an interaction and perceived success of humor (degree of humorousness).

Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. Results suggest support for hypothesis 5a in that there was a significant medium negative correlation between trait humor and trait communication anxiety ($r = -0.34, p < .001$) suggesting individuals with lower levels of communication anxiety exhibit lower levels of trait humor. Hypotheses 5b and 5c were not supported, however, as no significant relationships were revealed between trait communication anxiety and humor behavior or perceived humor success.

For hypothesis 6, it was predicted that state communication anxiety would be associated with a) humor behavior and b) perceived humor success. This hypothesis is examined with correlational analyses using post-test participant responses on a state communication anxiety measure and on a self-report of frequency of humor use during an interaction and perceived success of humor (degree of humorousness). Results suggest support for hypothesis 6a in that there was a significant small negative correlation between state communication anxiety and humor behavior ($r = -0.16, p < .001$). Moreover, results support hypothesis 6b in that there was a significant medium negative
correlation between state communication anxiety and perceived humor success \((r = .34, p < .001)\).

Although hypothesis 6 predicted associations between state communication anxiety and humor behavior previous research has not explored the predictive power of this relationship after partialing out the effects of trait humor. Thus, research question 1a asked is state communication anxiety a predictor of humor behavior when controlling for the effects of trait humor?

This hypothesis is examined with hierarchical multiple regression in which the control variable of trait humor is entered in the first step, followed by the independent variable of state communication anxiety. The results of the regression did not yield significant results suggesting communication anxiety alone accounts for any variance on humor behavior.

*Dyadic talker and dyadic listener results*

The following hypotheses and research questions explore the relationships between the dyadic talkers and dyadic listeners. Hypothesis 7 asserts that humor behavior and humor success are positively associated with partner feedback. In other words, the self-reported positive perception of their partners' feedback (non-verbal behaviors such as smiling or laughing) to humor attempts will be associated with how much humor is used and how successful the humor is thought to be.

This hypothesis is examined with correlational analyses using self-reports of frequency of humor use during an interaction and perceived success of humor (degree of humorousness) with a self-report of perceived partner
Support for this hypothesis is revealed with a small positive association between partner feedback and humor use ($r = .266$, $p < .001$) and a medium positive association between partner feedback and perceived humor success ($r = .363$, $p < .001$).

Research question 2 asked is there a difference between self and other peer ratings of a) humor behavior, b) humor success, and c) partner feedback?

This question is examined by paired-samples t-tests comparing the responses from dyadic talkers and listeners on the variables of humor behavior, humor success, and partner feedback. Although no significant differences were found between the talkers and listeners on the talker’s humor behavior or humor success, significant differences were found between the dyad participants in regard to the listener’s nonverbal feedback $t(104) = 3.28$, $p <.001$, $\eta^2 = .09$. This suggests that listeners report significantly more ($M = 16.50; SD = 3.07$) nonverbal feedback to talkers than talkers report of listeners ($M = 15.21, SD 3.34$).

The last research question further explores the potential influence of communication anxiety on humor behavior. It asks does perceived partner communication anxiety predict humor behavior? In other words, when a talker senses anxiety in their partner, do they attempt to ease that anxiety with humor. A simple regression model regressing the scores of the perceived state anxiety of the listener by the talker on the talkers’ humor behavior revealed a significant but small result $F(1,104) = 4.18$, $p<.05$ suggesting 3% of the variance in humor behavior attributable to the talkers’ perception of communication anxiety.
CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

The objectives of this study were to examine humor from a communicative perspective, namely by using the rhetorical humor framework approach. Although the study explored only a few elements of the framework, the results support that this is a needed step forward in the understanding of humor as a communicative phenomenon. In particular, the results demonstrate the need to move beyond trait humor explanations for humor use and call for closer inspection of situational and interpersonal variables influencing humor production including the role of context and goals. This discussion will first address the results of the study followed by implications for ongoing research on humor using the rhetorical humor framework.

Overall, the results of the study challenge previous notions of humor orientation as a predictor for humor use. Although there was a significant correlation found between trait humor and humor behavior, the correlation was rather small. This result, however, is in line with standard critiques of trait theories in which Hewes and Planalp (1987) describe “they tell us that individuals are important in the study of human communication but not how or
why” (p. 146). This is not to suggest trait theories of humor have no merit, rather, they should continue to be tested within interaction to help strengthen their accuracy by finding potential moderating variables.

Results from the study demonstrate a clear influence of partner feedback on humor use and perceived humor success as suggested through the rhetorical humor framework approach in that dyadic talkers used more humor and perceived higher humor success than their counterparts who were in the solo condition. Previous studies have examined humor by comparing verbal responses with computer-mediated written responses (Hancock, 2004). However, this study employed a purposely “apples to apples” comparison in that both the solo and dyadic talkers were asked to perform identical tasks. Individuals in both conditions read a series of questions and their corresponding responses aloud. As such, the results indicate a clear influence of interactivity on not only the production of humor but also the perception that the humor was positively received. Specifically, the results here are comparable to conclusions on the effects of interactivity in initial interactions which has shown individuals attend to both verbal and non-verbal elements of communication. As such, in conditions of heightened interactivity, individuals report more positive interaction outcomes as heightened interactivity yields reduced levels of uncertainty (Ramirez & Burgoon, 2004). As Miczo (2004) asserts in his security theory of humor, there is a strong relationship between reduced levels of uncertainty and humor production. The results here support
this line of thought through its direct comparison of verbal humor used in synchronous versus asynchronous environments.

Interestingly the results did not indicate that trait humor and dyadic interaction had any impact with one another in regard to humor production nor on perceived humor success. This suggests again the influence of other confounding variables which could mediate the influence of trait humor and interactivity level with actual humor production.

Similarly, the manipulations for context and motivation did not reveal significance in this study. Two possible explanations exist for this finding. The first explanation is that the manipulations themselves were poorly constructed. Two major goals of the study design were to maintain consistency between the solo and dyadic condition tasks, as well as avoid prompting participants to use humor in an effort to capture humor as it arises naturally during communication. As such, the “interview” scenario was created. However, the challenge was in creating scenarios around the interviews which would be varied enough to possibly induce different responses. Despite past research indicating college student samples are garner similar responses to a more general population (Basil, 1996) the scenarios crafted for the study may not have been appropriate. For example, because the participants were interacting with peers, it may have been impractical to ask them to answer questions as though they were interacting with a potential employer. Similarly, the manipulation for motivation included a possibility of additional extra credit. It is possible that either the students who participated knew this was not possible
or did not find the incentive motivating enough to alter their messages. The second explanation is that contextual cues and motivation simply do not have as strong of an effect on humor production as other latent variables that were not included in the situation manipulation in the study. Further study incorporating additional elements from the rhetorical humor framework are needed to tease out influential variables.

Another interesting result of this study pertains to communication anxiety. Humor theorists have long posited that one explanation for using humor during interaction is to relieve tension. However, experimental data could not be found to test this theory during interpersonal communication in which this theory was tested, let alone supported. In this study, trait communication anxiety was shown to have a negative relationship with trait humor in that individuals who reported that they were less anxious during interpersonal interactions were more likely to use humor. This result is in line with communication research on humor which has found substantive associations between humor orientation or sense of humor and extroversion (Ruch & Deckers, 1993).

Also interesting is the association between state communication anxiety and humor behavior and perceived success. The effect size of the negative relationship between anxiety and behavior was rather small. However the effect size between perceived success and anxiety was greater. This is an important finding in that perceived success was measured by analyzing how individuals rated their own humorousness, as well as how funny they thought their partners
would rate them. This finding, then, suggests that there is an efficacy component in humor behavior. Perhaps this points less to a proclivity to use humor, as trait theories would posit, than to a confidence in using humor which is more in line with a skills and knowledge-based approach.

Communication anxiety also had a significant relationship in regard to humor production when the sender perceived higher levels of anxiety from their partner. When senders rated their partners higher in communication anxiety, they also tended to use more humor. Again, this finding is significant as there have been no behavioral tests of this phenomenon, although several scholars have speculated this possibility (Merolla, 2006).

**Limitations**

A major limitation with this study is the lack of video or audio documentation. All of the interaction, both solo and dyadic, took place behind closed doors. As such, triangulation of self, peer and outside coder assessment is not possible. Future studies would benefit using this approach. Next, this study did not control for same sex versus mixed sex dyads. Although some research has pointed to gender playing a role in the kinds of humor used, as such further analysis of the data from this study should be conducted to examine differences in humor production between same-sex and mixed sex dyads. Also, a major limitation of this study was its rudimentary capture of humor behavior. As outlined in the suggested approach for humor in the beginning of this study, humor exists in a variety of linguistic forms. This study did not tease out any
specific types of humor but attempted only to capture a perceived amount of humor used. Future research should focus on capturing more explicit types of humor, as well as quantity.

Another limitation is the lack of manipulation checks for the contextual and motivation conditions. Although O'Keefe (2003) argues against manipulation checks for message modifications, as posited earlier, there is reason to believe that the scenarios crafted for this study were either irrelevant or incompatible with the sample population.

Although the rhetorical humor framework proposed herein urges examination of the types of humor used, this study did not capture that data which is a limitation of this study. In addition, this study employed an overly rudimentary measure of humor use and humor success. Future work is needed to create more accurate and diverse measures for both humor use and success to better understand the kinds of humor individuals employ in various situations with various interactants. This is of paramount importance to explore “risky” humorous behavior such as racial or sexually charged humor, teasing, and aggressive humor.

Implications for future studies on humor

Aside from the limitations, this study did have several strengths which serve as implications for future research particularly taking the approach suggested by the rhetorical humor framework. As mentioned above, this study provided an “apples to apples” comparison of verbal humor. Given the research on both verbal humor features and text-based humor features, it was important
to keep the focus of this study streamlined to one or the other. This approach should be considered when designing studies meant to analyze humor production.

Similarly, this study did not prime participants to use humor. Past studies have asked participants to engage in a variety of tasks specifically designed to elicit humorous responses. However, this study examined humor as it occurred, or did not occur, naturally. Further studies of this type are warranted to better understand the various kinds of humor employed during different situations.

This study examined stranger-dyads. A replication with friend-dyads or family-dyads is also needed. This aspect is particularly important for studies that employ outside coders. Humor is sometimes subtly nuanced and often cloaked through standard linguistic vehicles. As such, an outside coder may not pick up on a particular humorous jab between two interlocutors. Similarly, as past research has shown, smiling and laughter are not always indicative of “getting” a joke and not even a requirement for getting a joke. Thus, by employing methods in which both members of the dyad rate themselves and their partner coupled with outside coder assessments, a broader expanse of the humor landscape can be explored if not explained.

Given the correlations revealed between partner feedback and humor behavior and perceived humor success, it seems necessary to deepen the investigation into humor being a kind of intentionally exposed deception. In particular, the interplay between the message sender’s leakage of humorous
intent and the receiver’s leakage of humor appreciation should be a focus for future research. This line of inquiry is important given the potential that humor has to offend. If we consider incidents of sexual harassment or racial slurs, particularly in the workplace, this is particularly valuable. It could be argued that a message sender interprets the receiver’s smile or laugh to a racy joke or comment as acceptable. In fact, the leakage displayed by the receiver in this instance could be one contrary to amusement. Although the results of this study suggest a similarity in perceived humor use and success between the talker and the listener, it is not known how the results would vary if the interlocutors were co-workers instead of classmates. Similarly, due to the contradictory results of a true laughter-humor connection, evaluating more specific nonverbal reactions to humor during interaction seems warranted.

In summary, this dissertation presented a rhetorical humor framework which provides a foundation from which future research on humor from a communicative perspective can be built. By approaching humor in a similar manner to the way in which Brown and Levinson (1987) has positioned politeness, researchers in communication can explore new facets of social interaction. Similarly, the rhetorical humor framework draws much of its influence from Buller and Burgoon’s (1996) interpersonal deception theory. Chiefly, the rhetorical humor framework asserts that the study of humor necessitates exploration of the dynamic interaction between sender and receiver over time and across situations.
At present, the rhetorical humor framework is inchoate. Unlike interpersonal deception theory (Buller & Burgoon, 1996), it does not yet hold its own testable propositions as it is still in a developmental state. Nonetheless, as the results from this study suggest, it shows promise. To date, it serves as a “picture on the box” so to speak for the puzzle that is humor, allowing researchers to see what pieces of the puzzle have been completed and what pieces still need to be positioned in order to have a more complete picture.
LIST OF REFERENCES


Radcliffe-Brown, A. (1940). *On joking relationships*


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APPENDIX A

PRE-TEST SURVEY
Communication Partner Study - Phase 1

1. The Ohio State University Consent to Participate in Research

Study Title: Communication Partner Study
Reseacher: Natalie M. Guimler

This is a consent form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate. Your participation is voluntary. Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to admit this form and can print a copy of the form.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to examine different ways in which individuals communicate with one another.

Procedures/Tasks: This study is in two parts. The first part is an online survey. The second part involves coming to a research room on campus and talking with another participant.

Duration: The online survey should take about 20 minutes. The in-person portion of the study should take no more than 60 minutes.

You may leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with The Ohio State University.

Risks and Benefits: There are no anticipated risks with this study. Your professor may provide you with extra credit after the study is completed.

Confidentiality: Efforts will be made to keep your study-related information confidential. However, there may be circumstances where this information must be released. For example, personal information regarding your participation in this study may be disclosed if required by state law. Also, your records may be reviewed by the following groups (as applicable to the research):
- Office for Human Research Protections or other federal, state, or international regulatory agencies;
- The Ohio State University Institutional Review Board or Office of Responsible Research Practices;
- The sponsor, if any, or agency (including the Food and Drug Administration for FDA-regulated research) supporting the study.

Incentives: Your professor may provide you with extra credit after the study is completed.

Participant Rights: You may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you are a student or employee at Ohio State, your decision will not affect your grades or employment status.

If you choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. By signing this form, you do not give up any personal legal rights you may have as a participant in this study.

An Institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects research at The Ohio State University reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research.

Contacts and Questions: For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact Natalie M. Guimler at guimler.1@osu.edu.

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-578-6251.

If you are injured as a result of participating in this study or for questions about a study-related injury, you may contact Natalie Guimler at guimler.1@osu.edu.
Communication Partner Study - Phase 1

1. I have read (or someone has read to me) this form and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by submitting this form. I can download and save or print a copy of this form.

First name
Last name
GSI ID (lastname, A)
2. Welcome to the Communication Partner Study

Thank you for participating!

For this portion of the study, we want to know how you feel about the way you communicate with others in a one-to-one situation. You are asked to respond in terms of how you "generally" feel about this kind of communication. Be sure to give the response that best describes how you "generally" feel:

1. I think I communicate effectively in one-to-one situations.
   - Almost never
   - Sometimes
   - Often
   - Almost always

2. I avoid talking with individuals I don't know very well.
   - Almost never
   - Sometimes
   - Often
   - Almost always

3. I enjoy talking with someone I've just met.
   - Almost never
   - Sometimes
   - Often
   - Almost always

4. My body feels tense when I talk with someone I don't know very well.
   - Almost never
   - Sometimes
   - Often
   - Almost always

5. My heart beats faster than usual when I talk with someone I've just met.
   - Almost never
   - Sometimes
   - Often
   - Almost always

6. I would like to have a job that requires me to talk __________ with others on a one-to-one basis.
   - Almost never
   - Sometimes
   - Often
   - Almost always

7. When conversing with someone on a one-to-one basis, I prefer to listen rather than to talk.
   - Almost never
   - Sometimes
   - Often
   - Almost always
The following statements apply to how people communicate humor when relating to others. Indicate the degree to which each of these statements applies to you.

1. I regularly communicate with others by joking with them.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

2. People usually laugh when I make a humorous remark.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

3. I am not funny or humorous.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

4. I can be amusing or humorous without having to tell a joke.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

5. Being humorous is a natural communication orientation for me.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

6. I cannot communicate an amusing idea well.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

7. My friends would say that I am a humorous or funny person.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

8. People don’t seem to pay close attention when I am being funny.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

9. Even funny ideas and stories seem dull when I tell them.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

10. I would say that I am not a humorous person.
    - Strongly Disagree
    - Disagree
    - Neutral
    - Agree
    - Strongly Agree

11. I can not be funny even when asked to be.
    - Strongly Disagree
    - Disagree
    - Neutral
    - Agree
    - Strongly Agree

12. I relate amusing stories, jokes, and funny things very well to others.
    - Strongly Disagree
    - Disagree
    - Neutral
    - Agree
    - Strongly Agree

13. Of all of the people I know, I am one of the "least" amusing or funny persons.
    - Strongly Disagree
    - Disagree
    - Neutral
    - Agree
    - Strongly Agree
14. I use humor to communicate in a variety of situations.

- Strongly Disagree  - Disagree  - Neutral  - Agree  - Strongly Agree

15. On a regular basis, I do not communicate with others by being humorous or entertaining.

- Strongly Disagree  - Disagree  - Neutral  - Agree  - Strongly Agree
Communication Partner Study - Phase 1

4. About you

You're almost finished!

Please answer the following questions:

1. What is your age?
   
2. What is your gender?
   - Female
   - Male

3. What is your ethnicity? (Please click on all that apply)
   - African American
   - Asian American
   - Caucasian
   - Latino/Hispanic
   - Native American
   - Pacific Islander
   - Other (please specify):

4. What is your approximate yearly family income?
   - Under $20,000
   - $20,001-$40,000
   - $40,001-$60,000
   - $60,001-$90,000
   - $90,001-$100,000
   - More than $100,000

5. What is your highest level of education?
   - Some High School
   - High School Graduate
   - Some College
   - College Graduate
   - Graduate or Professional Degree
APPENDIX B

QUESTIONS FOR SOLO AND DYADIC TALKERS
Rank the order in which you will answer questions 1 through 8.

_____ Describe your perfect day.

_____ What has been your favorite class at OSU and why? What has been your least favorite class at OSU and why?

_____ How would you describe your hometown to someone who has never been there before?

_____ If you had an all-expense paid 5-day trip to the destination of your choice, where would it be and why?

_____ What famous person, real or fictional, dead or alive, would you most like to have dinner with and why?

_____ If you found $500 in the middle of the Oval what would you do with it? Why?

_____ If you could be any animal, what would you want to be and why?

_____ What is the best advice you have ever been given and why?
APPENDIX C

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SOLO AND DYADIC TALKER PARTICIPANTS
Communication Partner Study

Welcome and thank you for participating.

Before we begin, please take a few minutes to get comfortable. Your cell phone should be turned to “silent” mode and put away until you leave this room.

This part of the study examines how people talk about themselves in different situations with different people. In a few moments, you will be partnered with another study participant either face-to-face or via a videophone.

You will be given 8 “ice-breaker” questions to answer about yourself. After you answer all 8 questions, you will complete a short online survey. Your partner will listen to your responses and also take an online survey.

The questions you are to answer are on the sheet you’ve been provided. Take a moment to read through each question and decide the order in which you choose to answer them. Write in the numbers 1 through 8 in the spaces provided to assist you in answering all of the questions during your interview.
Communication Partner Study

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Your partner’s survey will consist of a number of questions about his or her impression of you based on the answers you give during this interview. Your partner will evaluate how well he or she likes you based on your responses as well as other aspects of social attractiveness. If your partner gives you higher than average scores on these assessments, you might receive additional extra credit points from your instructor.

The questions you are to answer are on the sheet you’ve been provided. Take a moment to read through each question and decide the order in which you choose to answer them. Write in the numbers 1 through 8 in the spaces provided to assist you in answering all of the questions during your interview.
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Your partner’s survey will consist of a number of questions on his or her opinion of you based on your responses. In particular, you partner will be asked a series of questions about whether or not they would hire you for a job based on the way you answer the questions during this interview.

Please note: During the interview, it is not appropriate to mention the job because your partner will not be told to listen to your answers as if this was a job interview until after your responses. However, you should answer the questions as though this was a job interview.

The questions you are to answer are on the sheet you’ve been provided. Take a moment to read through each question and decide the order in which you choose to answer them. Write in the numbers 1 through 8 in the spaces provided to assist you in answering all of the questions during your interview.
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Please note: During the interview, it is not appropriate to mention the job because your partner will not be told to listen to your answers as if this was a job interview until after your responses. However, you should answer the questions as though this was a job interview.

In addition, your partner will evaluate how well he or she likes you based on your responses as well as other aspects of social attractiveness. If your partner gives you higher than average scores on these assessments and indicates they would most likely hire you for a job, you might receive additional extra credit points from your instructor.

The questions you are to answer are on the sheet you’ve been provided. Take a moment to read through each question and decide the order in which you choose to answer them. Write in the numbers 1 through 8 in the spaces provided to assist you in answering all of the questions during your interview.
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You will be given 8 “ice-breaker” questions to answer about yourself. After you answer all 8 questions, you will complete a short online survey. Your partner will listen to your responses and also take an online survey.

Your partner’s survey will consist of a number of questions on his or her opinion of you based on your responses. In particular, you partner will be asked a series of questions about whether or not they would select you as a lab partner for a class for an entire quarter.

Please note: During the interview, it is not appropriate to mention the lab partner selection because your partner will not be told to listen to your answers as if this was an interview for a lab partner until after your responses. However, you should answer the questions as though this was an interview with a classmate you would like to have as a lab partner.

The questions you are to answer are on the sheet you’ve been provided. Take a moment to read through each question and decide the order in which you choose to answer them. Write in the numbers 1 through 8 in the spaces provided to assist you in answering all of the questions during your interview.
Communication Partner Study

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Your partner’s survey will consist of a number of questions on his or her opinion of you based on your responses. In particular, you partner will be asked a series of questions about whether or not they would select you as a lab partner for a class for an entire quarter.

Please note: During the interview, it is not appropriate to mention the lab partner selection because your partner will not be told to listen to your answers as if this was an interview for a lab partner until after your responses. However, you should answer the questions as though this was an interview with a classmate you would like to have as a lab partner.

In addition, your partner will evaluate how well he or she likes you based on your responses as well as other aspects of social attractiveness. If your partner gives you higher than average scores on these assessments and indicates they would most likely select you as a lab partner, you might receive additional extra credit points from your instructor.

The questions you are to answer are on the sheet you’ve been provided. Take a moment to read through each question and decide the order in which you choose to answer them. Write in the numbers 1 through 8 in the spaces provided to assist you in answering all of the questions during your interview.
APPENDIX D

POST SURVEYS
Post-Interview - S

1. Video survey

* 1. Select the code that appears on the top right corner of your instruction sheet and questions page.
   - N: 0
   - 3: 0
   - P: 0
   - XL: 0
   - J1: 0
   - P1: 0

2. Video self-assessment

* 1. For the following statements, choose the answer that best describes how you felt during the interview you just completed.

   I felt tense and nervous.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   I felt self-conscious while talking.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   While talking, I was afraid of making an embarrassing or silly slip of the tongue.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   I worried about what my interviewer thought of me.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   I felt sick when I was talking.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   I felt ill at ease when I used gestures while I spoke.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   I could not think clearly when I spoke.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   I felt nervous and I could not control while I was talking.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   My body felt stiff and tense when I was speaking.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   My words became confused and jumbled when I was speaking.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   I felt relaxed when I was talking.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   My fingers and hands trembled when I was speaking.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   I felt I had nothing worthwhile to say.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   I had a “deadpan” expression on my face when I spoke.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   I found myself talking faster or slower than usual.  
   - Not at all  
   - Somewhat  
   - Moderately so  
   - Very much so

   While speaking, it was easy to find the right
Post-Interview - S

1. I used jokes, witticisms, wisecracks, funny stories or other humorous devices in my responses.

- Not at all
- In less than half of my answers
- In about half of my answers
- In more than half of my answers
- In all of my answers

2. I made humorous remarks about myself during my interview.

- Not at all
- In less than half of my answers
- In about half of my answers
- In more than half of my answers
- In all of my answers

3. I made humorous remarks about my interviewer during my interview.

- Not at all
- In less than half of my answers
- In about half of my answers
- In more than half of my answers
- In all of my answers

4. I made humorous remarks about other people during my interview.

- Not at all
- In less than half of my answers
- In about half of my answers
- In more than half of my answers
- In all of my answers

5. When I made a humorous remark, I smiled, winked, or made other non-verbal gestures to indicate that I was joking.

- Never when I made a humorous remark
- In less than half of my humorous remarks
- In about half of my humorous remarks
- In more than half of my humorous remarks
- Every time I made a humorous remark
- I did not make any humorous remarks

6. Overall, I would rate how funny or humorous I was during this interview as:

- Not at all humorous
- Somewhat humorous
- Very humorous

7. Overall, I think another person would rate how funny or humorous I was during this interview as:

- Not at all humorous
- Somewhat humorous
- Very humorous
1. Based on the responses you provided during your interview, do you feel your partner would select you as a lab partner in a class for an entire quarter?

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely
- Neither unlikely nor likely
- Likely
- Very likely

2. Based on the responses you provided during your interview, do you feel your partner would hire you for a job?

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely
- Neither unlikely nor likely
- Likely
- Very likely

3. Based on the responses you provided during your interview, what kind of impression do you believe your partner has of you?

- Unfavorable
- Slightly unfavorable
- Neither unfavorable nor favorable
- Favorable
- Very favorable

4. What kind of impression do you have of your partner?

- Unfavorable
- Slightly unfavorable
- Neither unfavorable nor favorable
- Favorable
- Very favorable

5. To receive extra credit for this study, please provide:

- First name
- Last name

6. OSU e-mail

e.g., lastname.#@osu.edu

3. Class for which extra credit is being sought:

- Communication 101 with Dr. David
- Communication 200 with Dr. Hertel
- Communication 311 with Steve Watanabe
- Communication 423 with Steve Watanabe

Thank you for your participation.

During this experiment, you may have been told the answers you provided "might" result in additional extra credit points. This was part of an experimental manipulation. In other words, some participants were told that this was a possibility while others were not to assess whether or not individuals would alter their responses based on the incentive of additional extra credit.

All students, regardless of answers, will receive the same amount of extra credit as designated by your professor.

Several hundred students will be participating in this study. For that reason, we ask that you do not discuss the specific tasks you participated in today with fellow classmates until after the end of the quarter.

For more information about any aspect of this study, contact Natalie Grunder at grunder.1@osu.edu
Post-Interview - T

1. Face-to-face survey

1. Select the code that appears on the top right corner of your instruction sheet and questions page.

   - P
   - P1
   - P2
   - P3
   - P4

2. Self-assessment

+ 1. For the following statements, choose the answer that best describes how you felt during the interview you just completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Moderately so</th>
<th>Very much so</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt tense and nervous.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt self-confident while talking.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>While talking, I was afraid of making an embarrassing or silly slip of the tongue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I worried about what my interviewer thought of me.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt calm when I was talking.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt at ease using gestures when I spoke.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could not think clearly when I spoke.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt nervous and in control while I was talking.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My body felt stiff and tense when I was speaking.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>My words became confused and jumbled when I was speaking.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt nervous when I was talking.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My fingers and hands trembled when I was speaking.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I felt I had nothing worthwhile to say.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had a &quot;deadlock&quot; expression on my face when I spoke.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I found myself talking faster or slower than usual.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>While speaking, it was easy to find the right words to express myself.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I felt awkward when I was talking.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My heart seemed to beat faster than usual.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Partner assessment

1. For the following statements, choose the answer that best describes the way your partner seemed to feel during the interview. If he or she did not make any comments during the interview, you can select N/A for the questions that reference talking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Moderately so</th>
<th>Very much so</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My partner seemed tense and nervous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner seemed self-confident while talking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner seemed worried about what I thought of him or her</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My partner seemed fidgety when he or she was talking</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My partner seemed poised and in control while he or she was talking</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner’s body seemed stiff and tense when he or she was speaking</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner’s words became confused and jumbled when he or she was speaking</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner’s fingers and hands trembled when he or she was speaking</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner seemed to be talking faster or slower than most people do</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>While speaking, my partner appeared to easily find the right words to express himself or herself</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.

Recalling the interview you just completed, answer the following questions to the best of your ability:

1. I used jokes, witticisms, wisecracks, funny stories or other humorous devices in my responses.
   - [ ] Not at all
   - [ ] In less than half of my answers
   - [ ] In about half of my answers
   - [ ] In more than half of my answers
   - [ ] In all of my answers

2. I made humorous remarks about myself during my interview.
   - [ ] Not at all
   - [ ] In less than half of my answers
   - [ ] In about half of my answers
   - [ ] In more than half of my answers
   - [ ] In all of my answers
3. I made humorous remarks about my interviewer during my interview.

- Not at all
- In less than half of my answers
- In about half of my answers
- In more than half of my answers
- In all of my answers

4. I made humorous remarks about other people during my interview.

- Not at all
- In less than half of my answers
- In about half of my answers
- In more than half of my answers
- In all of my answers

5. When I made a humorous remark, I smiled, winked, or made other non-verbal gestures to indicate that I was joking.

- Never when I made a humorous remark
- In less than half of my humorous remarks
- In about half of my humorous remarks
- In more than half of my humorous remarks
- In all of my humorous remarks

- N/A - I did not make any humorous remarks

6. Overall, I would rate how funny or humorous I was during this interview as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Not at all humorous</th>
<th>Somewhat humorous</th>
<th>Very humorous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. My interviewer understood my sense of humor.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

8. My interviewer smiled when I said humorous things.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

9. My interviewer laughed when I said humorous things.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

10. My interviewer showed other signs of appreciating the humorous things I said.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

11. Overall, I think my interviewer would rate how funny or humorous I was during this interview as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
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</table>

5. Based on the responses you provided during your interview, do you feel your partner would select you as a lab partner in a class for an entire quarter?

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely
- Neither unlikely or likely
- Likely
- Very likely
3. Based on the responses you provided during your interview, what kind of impression do you believe your partner has of you?
- Unfavorable
- Slightly unfavorable
- Neither unfavorable nor favorable
- Favorable
- Very favorable

4. What kind of impression do you have of your partner?
- Unfavorable
- Slightly unfavorable
- Neither unfavorable nor favorable
- Favorable
- Very favorable

6.

* 1. To receive extra credit for this study, please provide:
   - First name
   - Last name

* 2. OSU e-mail
   e.g., lastname.#@osu.edu

* 3. Class for which extra credit is being sought:
   - Communication 101 with Dr. David
   - Communication 200 with Dr. Evank
   - Communication 311 with Elise Woolley
   - Communication 420 with Steve Wittenberg

7. Thank you!

Thank you for your participation.

During this experiment, you may have been told the answers you provided "might" result in additional extra credit points. This was part of an experimental manipulation. In other words, some participants were told that this was a possibility while others were not to assess whether or not individuals would alter their responses based on the incentive of additional extra credit.

All students, regardless of answers, will receive the same amount of extra credit as designated by your professor.

Several hundred students will be participating in this study. For that reason, we ask that you do not discuss the specific tasks you participated in today with fellow classmates until after the end of the quarter.

For more information about any aspect of this study, contact Natalie Gurziel at gurziel.1@osu.edu
## Post-Interview - L

### 1. Self-assessment

*1. For the following statements, choose the answer that best describes how you felt during the interview you just completed. If you did not speak at all, you can click on N/A.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>I felt tense and nervous.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I worried about what my partner thought of me.</td>
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<td>I felt at ease using gestures when I spoke.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I could not think clearly when I spoke.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I felt posed and in control while I was talking.</td>
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<tr>
<td>My body felt stiff and tense when I was speaking.</td>
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<td>My words became confused and jumbled when I was speaking.</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had a &quot;sleepy&quot; expression on my face when I spoke.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I found myself talking faster or slower than usual.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While speaking, it was easy to find the right words to express myself.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt awkward when I was talking.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My heart seemed to beat faster than usual.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Post-Interview - L**

### 2. Partner assessment

*1. For the following statements, choose the answer that best describes the way your partner seemed to feel during the interview.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Moderately so</th>
<th>Very much so</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My partner seemed tense and nervous.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner seemed self-confident while talking.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner seemed worried about what I thought of him or her.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner seemed calm when he or she was talking.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner seemed poised and in control while he or she was talking.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner’s body seemed stiff and tense when he or she was speaking.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner’s words became confused and jumbled when he or she was speaking.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner’s fingers and hands trembled when he or she was speaking.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My partner seemed to be talking faster or slower than most people do.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While speaking, my partner appeared to easily find the right words to express himself or herself.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recalling the interview you just completed, answer the following questions to the best of your ability:

1. The person I interviewed used jokes, witticisms, wisecracks, funny stories or other humorous devices in their responses.
   - [ ] Not at all
   - [ ] In less than half of their answers
   - [ ] In about half of their answers
   - [ ] In more than half of their answers
   - [ ] In all of their answers

2. The person I interviewed made humorous remarks about themselves during their interview.
   - [ ] Not at all
   - [ ] In less than half of their answers
   - [ ] In about half of their answers
   - [ ] In more than half of their answers
   - [ ] In all of their answers

3. The person I interviewed made humorous remarks about me during their interview.
   - [ ] Not at all
   - [ ] In less than half of their answers
   - [ ] In about half of their answers
   - [ ] In more than half of their answers
   - [ ] In all of their answers

4. The person I interviewed made humorous remarks about other people during their interview.
   - [ ] Not at all
   - [ ] In less than half of their answers
   - [ ] In about half of their answers
   - [ ] In more than half of their answers
   - [ ] In all of their answers

5. When my partner made a humorous remark, he or she smiled, winked, or made other non-verbal gestures to indicate that they were joking.
   - [ ] Never when they made a humorous remark
   - [ ] In less than half of their humorous remarks
   - [ ] In about half of their humorous remarks
   - [ ] In more than half of their humorous remarks
   - [ ] Every time they made a humorous remark
   - [ ] NA - My partner made no humorous remarks

6. I understood my partner’s sense of humor.
   - [ ] Strongly disagree
   - [ ] Somewhat disagree
   - [ ] Neither disagree nor agree
   - [ ] Somewhat agree
   - [ ] Strongly agree

7. I smiled when my partner said humorous things.
   - [ ] Strongly disagree
   - [ ] Somewhat disagree
   - [ ] Neither disagree nor agree
   - [ ] Somewhat agree
   - [ ] Strongly agree

8. I laughed when my partner said humorous things.
   - [ ] Strongly disagree
   - [ ] Somewhat disagree
   - [ ] Neither disagree nor agree
   - [ ] Somewhat agree
   - [ ] Strongly agree

9. I showed other signs of appreciating the humorous things my partner said.
   - [ ] Strongly disagree
   - [ ] Somewhat disagree
   - [ ] Neither disagree nor agree
   - [ ] Somewhat agree
   - [ ] Strongly agree
**Post-Interview - L**

10. Overall, I would rate how funny or humorous my partner was during this interview as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Not at all humorous</th>
<th>Somewhat humorous</th>
<th>Very humorous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Based on the responses your partner gave during their interview how likely is it that you would:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rare item or her as an employee</th>
<th>Very unlikely</th>
<th>Unlikely</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Very likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select them as a lab partner in a class for an entire quarter</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. What kind of impression do you believe your partner has of you?

- Unfavorable
- Slightly unfavorable
- Neither unfavorable nor favorable
- Favorable
- Very favorable

13. What kind of impression do you have of your partner?

- Unfavorable
- Slightly unfavorable
- Neither unfavorable nor favorable
- Favorable
- Very favorable