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PH.D. THESIS

Humor in Visual Mode

A study exploring composition and reception of humorous videos by hearing and deaf population

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Abstract

Humor studies have interested researchers since the times of ancient scholars like Plato and Aristotle. Scholars from varied disciples like, psychology, linguistics, philosophy, etc. have been making attempts to understand the phenomenon of humor and its impact on humans. While most research in this field of study examines humor produced in the verbal mode, in other words, humor generated with the help of language, there are relatively fewer studies examining humor in the visual mode. As a result of that there are further limited number of studies that explore humor in purely visual mode, i.e. humor generated in videos without any use of language. Recognizing the need for examining humor that is produced visually alone, without any use of linguistic cues, this study aims to explore the territory of Silent humorous videos. Thus, this thesis is dedicated to examining the mechanisms of humor generation and reception in silent humorous videos. To study the ways in which humor is generated and appreciated in humorous videos we chose to have two sets of target groups: hearing and deaf.

It is important that questions such as, how humor is produced in the visual mode, what the elements that contribute to humor in a video are, whether the established theories of humor also lend themselves to generation and/or comprehension of humor in the visual mode, etc. are explored to better understand the phenomenon of humor. Towards this motivation, this thesis aspires to make some contributions that would provide a platform to future research in the area of visual humor and also to professionals who are creators of such content. The primary objectives of this thesis are as follows:

- o To examine the anatomy of humorous videos focusing on finding the elements in a video that contribute to the humor effect and also explore which elements are more prominent than others in generating humor.

- To examine if theories of humor are modality independent and are also applicable to humor in the visual mode.
- To understand if and how hearing and deaf population differ in reception and appreciation of humorous videos and if the differences are influenced by the modality of language they use, i.e., verbal or signed.
- To explore the relationship between humor and its compositional elements contributing to humor in the visual mode and memory.

The above-mentioned objectives of the thesis were addressed with the help of studies designed within the framework of Participant Observer Research. Firstly, a selected number of humorous videos were analyzed in details to understand the generation mechanisms employed by the makers of the videos. Further, a set of participants, from both the target audience groups (hearing and deaf), was selected to watch some humorous videos and their opinions were taken on the humorousness of the videos, their compositional elements and their reception was analyzed. A similar study was then conducted after a certain time to address the examining of memory-humor relationship with respect to humorous videos.

Based on the studies, we could confirm that the theories of humor are largely modality independent and visual humor too can be analyzed within the frameworks often used to examine verbal humor. But certain mechanisms of humor generation reach out to people across modalities whereas others appeal more to a particular group of people than others. We also found evidences that confirmed that a person's language modality influences a person's humor appreciation.

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Introduction

Humor is a special key that allows us to see other people's perspectives in life, their way to gain knowledge, their world view, that other form of communication (spontaneous or performed) might not give to us. Humor is the tendency of particular cognitive experiences to provoke laughter and provide amusement. Though several studies have explored and discussed humor in verbal mode, humor in the visual mode (videos in particular) have not been studied as much. There are some studies discussing aspects of humor in images (Spotts, et al., 1997; Tsakona, 2009; Takahashi and Inoue, 2009), but studies examining humor in videos are fewer (Cantor, 1976; Moran, et al., 2004; Vineberg, 2005; Gelkopf, et al., 2006). Hence, the objective of this study is to explore this territory and attempt to provide an understanding of generation and reception of humor in the visual mode with a focus on humorous videos.

The present study has the following broad objectives:

- o   To examine the anatomy of humorous videos focusing on finding the elements in a video that contribute to the humor effect and also explore which elements are more prominent than others in generating humor.

- To understand if and how hearing and deaf population differ in reception and appreciation of humorous videos and if the differences are influenced by the modality of language they use, i.e., verbal or signed.

- To examine if theories of humor are modality independent and are also applicable to humor in the visual mode.

- To explore the relationship between humor and elements contributing to humor in the visual mode and memory. In other words, to explore which elements of visual humor are retained in the viewers' short term (immediate) memory and further, if the same elements are remembered the same way after a certain span of time, i.e. retained in long term memory. As compared to some of the other memory and humor research (Schmidt, 1994; Lippman and Dunn, 2000; Schmidt and Williams, 2001; Hansen, Strick van Baaren, 2009), the focus of this study is to explore various elements of visual humor and how they are retained and remembered by viewers, and not on how humor impacts memory in general. We would also like to examine the similarities and differences between verbal and sign language users in this regard.

Before we began to address the objectives for the study, we conducted a pilot study that helped us narrow down a set of humorous videos that were later used in the following studies. For that a larger set of videos were presented to participants (verbal language users and sign language users) to rate as humorous or not humorous. The videos chosen for the pilot were a mix of humorous as well as neutral videos. The participants were also asked to provide a list of elements they believed contributed to the humorousness in the videos they watched. This pilot study provided us with a set of videos that were chosen to be humorous by majority of participants and also a compiled list of elements that contribute to humor generation in videos. The selected videos and the list of elements were then used as stimulus for the more focused studies.

The first two objectives were explored in Study 1. This study was threefold. At first participants (verbal language users and sign language users) were asked to rate previously selected videos (from the pilot study) as highly or moderately humorous. Further, keeping in mind the objective of exploring the anatomy of humorous videos, i.e. the elements that contribute to humor generation in a video, after rating the video's humorousness, participants were asked to rate a list of elements

presented to them for their contribution in making the video humorous. In the third part of the study participants were asked to retell the contents of a video they were shown providing an insight into aspects and parts/sections of the video they felt significant enough to retell.

For this study, our general hypothesis was that deaf and hearing people would focus on different elements to recognize and appreciate humor in the visual mode. Below are the section-wise hypotheses for the study based on some studies that are relevant to the objective:

- o Part I: As humor and especially sense of humor in a person is believed to provide an understanding of a person's personality (Stump, 1939; Craik and Ware, 1998; Martin, 2003; Proyer, et al. 2010; Ruch, 2010; Greengross, et al. 2012; Heint, 2017) and the present study makes an attempt in highlighting the similarities and differences in recognition and reception of humor in videos between different groups of people who use different modality of language. Hence, the rating of high humorousness in a video would be different for verbal language users and sign language users. A video not rated as highly humorous by speakers could be rated as highly humorous by the deaf participants.
- o Part II: Bouchauveau (1994) gave a description of the ways in which humor is generated in sign languages. One of the most prominent of those ways is imitation or role-play. This particular element is not an essential requirement in generation of humor for verbal language users. Also, the visual experience influences the deaf knowledge, opinion and creativity, thus reception of humor and its processing is also greatly influenced by the visual-manual modality (Sutton-Spence and Donna Jo Napoli, 2012). Thus, the sign language users would rate the aspects of physical comedy, i.e. gestures, facial expressions, etc. as higher contributors in humor generation as compared to verbal language users.
- o Part III: Based on the studies on deaf culture and humor (Baldwin, 1982; Hall, 1991; Johnson, et al., 1994; Bienvenu, 2001), we understand the world of deaf culture and how it influences the understanding and reception of humor. Few studies also explore the modality dependent uniqueness of production and appreciation of humor in sign languages (Sanders, 1986; Rutherford, 1993; Napoli and Sutton-Spence, 2011; Sutton-Spence and Napoli, 2012) and focus on the use of classifier expressions in narratives. Hence, while retelling the contents of a video sign language users would use classifiers for anaphoric

references and also focus more on role playing than focusing on the punch line of the video plot.

Keeping our third objective in mind we analyzed the selected videos in details to find instances, at the script level as well as the execution of scenes by actors, that confirmed the established theories of humor. As most of these theories have been extensively found to lend themselves to humor in the verbal medium our aim here is to focus on the major theories of humor and attempt to find their realization in the visual mode for humor generation. We also examine the reception of those representations by the two sets of viewers, i.e. verbal and sign language users to explore if groups of viewers show a preference towards a certain kind of humor representation in videos.

The fourth objective was explored in the Study 2. Hypothesis for that study are as follows:

- o The videos that were rated as highly humorous by a viewer would be better remembered than those they rated as moderately humorous.
- o As viewers focus on certain elements more than others (concluded from study 2) they should also remember, after a certain period of time, the presence of those elements more than elements they believed hardly contributed to the overall humorousness.

Also, as the long-term objective of this study is to provide suggestions and guidelines to better understand humor in the visual mode and production of humor in the most effective ways in the visual mode, we thus obtain inputs from a diverse population who have access to such content Lastly, we also intent to report all the other findings we stumble upon during the course of objective-specific studies being conducted. We expect to contribute to the understanding of humor generation in the visual mode and mechanisms to make its reception more effective for people, focusing both on aspects that get influenced by the modality of language one uses and also those that are not modality dependent and more universal in nature.

We hope that our findings would provide a basis for future studies in the area of visual humor and also offer a set of guidelines for all those who aspire to create and produce videos with some element of humor that is appreciated by the target audience in the right spirit.

The organization of chapters

Below is presented the organization of chapters. The thesis is divided into seven chapters including this chapter which provides an overall introduction to the thesis.

Chapter two provides an overview of studies on humor from different perspectives that served as a platform to the present study. In this chapter, we also present and discuss the prominent theories of humor with the help of examples. Additionally, we discuss some humor research that is dedicated to understanding humor within the deaf communities and the different ways in which humor is generated in sign languages.

In the third chapter, we report our pilot study that helped us select a set of humorous videos and generate a consolidated list of elements that contribute to humorousness in a video.

In chapter four we take a deeper look at a smaller number of humorous videos that served as a prototype and were selected for the studies after the pilot study and examine the mechanisms and elements exploited in each of the videos to generate humor.

Chapter five focuses on the reception and appreciation of humorous videos, i.e. the elements that contribute in humor generation and their reception by hearing and deaf participants (verbal language and sign language users). This chapter reports a survey-based study that is divided into three parts focusing on appreciation, reception and composition of humorous videos by our target groups of participants. This study reports if and how sign language users differ from verbal language users in choice of humorous videos and also the elements that contribute to humor in a video. To understand this difference better we also present analysis of retold narratives by the participants after watching a humorous video. Additionally, we discuss the reception and appreciation patterns of the two target groups. We analyze the responses of participants while watching humorous videos to find any similarities or differences. Further, we present our findings regarding the different mechanisms of humor generation and how they are appreciated by the signers and speakers.

The sixth chapter focuses on the relationship between humor and elements contributing to humor in the visual mode and memory. We report a study we designed to examine if for humorous videos and the elements that were found to be greater contributors to humorousness by a viewer also impact their memory.

Finally, in chapter seven we present our conclusions based on all the survey-based studies. We also discuss some of the pointers of failure with respect to generation and reception of humor in the visual mode that we came across during the observations and analysis of the studies discussed in the previous chapters. As an endnote, we close the thesis with an acknowledgement of the limitations of our overall study and propose some future research ideas we would like to explore further in the field of humor studies.

2

An overview of humor research

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Understanding Humor

2.3 Jokes

2.4 Theories of Humor

2.5 Humor Vs Comedy

2.6 Humor for the Deaf and Humor in Sign Language

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we present an overview of the various studies available in the broad area of humor research with special attention given to those studies that helped us understand the subject matter and provided guidelines to determining the objectives for this study. Firstly, we would discuss the concept of humor in general and continue to explore the ways in which a content becomes humorous. We also examine the established proposals by researchers regarding ways to understand the reception of a humorous content by the audience or receiver. We then proceed exploring the different mechanisms employed to generate humorous content and present in details some of the prominent theories of humor proposed by scholars since the beginning of humor research.

As one of the objectives of this thesis is to understand how humor is received and appreciated by audiences who use sign language as their first language and also in what ways they are similar or different from those who use verbal languages, i.e. deaf and hearing people respectively, we would also discuss some of the research done in the domain of deaf humor and how it is influenced by the deaf culture.

2.2 Understanding Humor

In the simplest words, humor is present in any experience that causes amusement. It is widely believed that something is humorous only if it is received and followed with laughter. Though, it is true for some forms of humor, like for a stand-up comedian the amount and intensity of laughter he/she receives indicates the success of the performance. But, humor is not restricted to just laughter as a response. Anything that elicits happiness and amusement is humorous. The physiological manifestation of that emotion could be a smile, laughter, feeling of relaxation, etc.

Humor is also considered universal to all humans across cultures (Monro, 1963; Keith-Sipegel, 1972; Alford and Alford, 1981; Apte, 1985; Lefcourt, 2001). According to Raskin (1985; 2), "Responding to humor is part of human behavior, ability or competence, other parts of which compromise such important social and psychological manifestations of homo sapiens as language, morality, logic, faith, etc. Just as all of those, humor may be described as partly natural and partly acquired." Also, Bergen and Binsted (2004; 79) state, "Humor, like communicating and instructing, is one of a small number of pervasive and universal language functions.". Although,

humor is accepted as universal, cultural influences can be widely seen in the ways humor is expressed and appreciated. Addressing this issue, Schmitz (2002) presented three categories of humor:

- o Universal
- o Culture-based, and
- o Linguistic.

Humor is universal when it can be appreciated by all across gender, class, age, language, etc. Whereas, culture-based humor is more restrictive in nature and is shared by only those who belong to similar cultural background. This could be culture based on shared language, shared world experiences, shared social class, etc. Any person or group of people not familiar with a certain culture should then differ in their humor generation mechanisms as well as reception and appreciation. Similarly, linguistic humor is more rooted in language specific unique features that can only be shared amongst those who have competence in a specific language. Competence here can be a matter of detailed investigation. For instance, should people who have learnt a foreign language at a later stage in life or even in case of second language/s, be considered to never be as familiar with humor styles in that specific language. It should be possible for a person to be as competent in humor generation or appreciation in a second or foreign language as those who use that language as their first language. Though we do agree that knowing the culture associated with a certain language plays a significant role compared to only having structural and sematic knowledge to be able to appreciate humor in any language.

In this regard, according to Bienvenu (1994; 16), "Humor is a difficult aspect of culture to study. One needs to have deep knowledge of the culture, with a full understanding of the people and the situations that the humor represents. You see, humor is integrally related to culture. Humor is based on people's perceptions of the world, and it is shared between groups of people who share similar values and belief systems."

Since the subject of this thesis is visual humor, in particular humorous videos Ermida's view point is of significant importance to mention. According to her, "Humor can either be verbal or non-verbal; it can be a subjective experience or serve communicative purposes; it can draw upon

common everyday reality or consist of fiction and imagination; it can charm or attack, be created spontaneously or be used as a well-prepared technique of personal and professional interaction; it can be a simple joke told among friends or amount to the sophistication of Shakespeare's plays." (Ermida, 2008; 2)

Hence, humor is not just subject to verbal realization or expression. Humor can be present in almost every event taking place around us and even those that are our imagination. Also, the mode in which humor is realized or expressed too cannot be modality specific. Humor can as much be expressed in actions (real or imagined) as in words. But there has not been much studies focusing humor purely in the visual domain hence, we would continue to explore humor studies in verbal languages.

Attardo, Pickering, and Baker (2011) propose two ways in which a speaker turns a conversation humorous:

- o A canned joke which is a short narrative ending with a 'punch line'
- o Conversational witticism, also referred to as 'jab line', which is a one-liner embedded in a narrative

Dynel (2009) suggests that canned jokes are the prototypical form of verbal humor that is either produced verbally or in written form. We would dedicate a separate section on 'Jokes' later in this chapter as it is the most common form in which humor is generated and also because of its accepted familiarity to almost all those who appreciate humor.

Although we have established that jokes are the most common form of humorous content it is also of utmost importance to take a look at the second category proposed by Attardo et.al. mentioned above. Conversational witticism is not a complete structure in itself, rather it is a smaller sub-section of a larger linguistic unit. This category can include both spontaneous as well as pre-rehearsed humorous content that is embedded within a larger discourse. They are different from jokes as they are structurally different. Any linguistic unit within a discourse could fall in this category be it a single word, a phrase or a full sentence.

Once a humorous content is produced in any form the audience determines its level of

humorousness and with the help of some reaction measures. Hay (2001) in this regard, proposed a list of different ways in which the target audience reveals their positive reception in support of humorous utterances:

- o Laughter
- o Contribute more humor
- o Echo (repeating of the last turn in conversation)
- o Offer sympathy or contradiction in case of self-deprecating humor
- o Overlap and heightened involvement in conversation

Hence, according to Hay one of the primary ways in which humor appreciation is revealed by an audience is laughter which also has attracted the attention of many researchers. According to Attardo, 1994, "what is funny make one laugh and what makes one laugh is funny."

Bergson (1901) and Freud (1905) also believed that humor and laughter are somehow interdependent. Laughter is also believed to be innate to all humans (Ruch and Ekman, 2001). But, Piddington (1933), believed that most studies on 'laughter' do not make a clear distinction between being ludicrous and laughter. Also, as pointed out by several scholars, laughter could be response to many other aspects in a conversation/discourse hence there is a need to revisit the relationship between humor and laughter. Furthermore, there can also be other experiences that result in laughter like, embarrassment, surprise, etc.

Olbrechts-Tyteca (1974) takes a stand in this regard and discussed at length the possibility of the use of laughter alone as a criterion of humor and finds the following reasons to make its applications difficult:

- o Difference between physiological laughter and that originating from humor
- o Instance of Africa where laughter is more a sign of embarrassment or bewilderment than amusement
- o Laughter not being directly proportionate to the intensity of humor. There are remarkable differences amongst individuals regarding their attitude towards laughter, age and education also plays a role (Aubouin, 1948).
- o Humor could sometimes elicit laugher whereas sometimes a smile.

Based on the above-mentioned reasoning by different scholars, laughter alone should not be considered a marker to identify humor appreciation. But we must admit that in most cases, we can identify and agree with all the proposed strategies. If we try to recollect our reaction when we came across a humorous event or utterance we can confirm that our reactions can fit into either one of the proposed strategies. Hence, we can safely say that Hay's pointers are not restricted to humor that is generated verbally but also other modalities in which humor can be potentially generated. Thus, later in our studies when we focus on humor reception we would accept any one of these pointers as appreciation of humor by our participants.

Humor research is not restricted to a certain field of study and has interested scholars from various disciplines. It has been examined from a psychological, sociological, anthropological as well as linguistic perspectives. Humor is usually explored as a phenomenon but linguists also focus on its structure as well as the cognitive, social and pragmatic aspects. For linguists, prosodic and multimodal markers of humor are also as important as the linguistic structure of humorous content. Attardo, Pickering, and Barker (2011) in an experimental study analyzed the speech rate, pause, pitch and volume of conversational humor and arrived at many interesting findings. One of their findings were that the above-mentioned prosodic features were not significantly different for narratives, conversational or ironical humor. The study also suggested that humor is signaled by pauses and emphatic prosody.

Further, in another significant study, Martin et.al. (2003) provided a categorization of different humor styles adopted by speakers. They are as follows:

- o Affiliative: enhancing one's relationship with others while being kind to oneself. A person who uses this style of humor in social setting would make people laugh by telling funny stories about themselves.
- o Self-defeating: enhancing one's relationship with others while being detrimental to oneself. A person who uses this style of humor in a social setting would make attempts to make people laugh by highlighting their weaknesses or mistakes made in the past.
- o Self-enhancing: enhancing oneself while being kind to others. A person who uses this style of humor frequently would try to find humor in situations and/or life in general without focusing on any specific person or group of people.

o Aggressive: enhancing oneself while being detrimental to others. A person who favors this style of humor tends to not be concerned about how others might feel by their humor and in the process, might offend or hurt some specific person or a group of people in a social setting. Sexism, racism, etc. are highly favored mechanisms for this style of humor.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned humor styles and after gaining a deeper understanding of each one of them we found that these styles are also not just confined to humor that is verbally produced in forms of speech or writings. Rather, they appear to be more universal in nature and must serve themselves to humor in the visual mode too. This factor interests us intensely as we intend to find humor generation mechanisms in the visual medium through videos.

Other than linguists, psychologists too find studies in humor to their interest. The difference being the core of investigation, for a linguist the unit that generates humor forms the core of research whereas for a psychologist the recipient of a humorous content is more central to explore. One of the concepts introduced and discussed extensively in the field of psychology *Gelotophobia*. This concept is noteworthy to those who intend to explore humor from a psychological or sociological perspective. It would include us too as our work too involves the analyzing of viewers' reception of humorous videos. This phenomenon was first identified by Dr. Michael Titze (1996), who observed that some his patients almost changed their overall behavior and became awkward even by the thought of being laughed at. Since then many studies have been conducted to better understand and figure out mechanisms to help people suffering from this condition (Ruch, et al. 2008; Ruch and Proyer, 2008; Ruch, 2009). Other such behavioral phenomena are *Gelotophilia*, i.e. joy of being laughed at, and *Katagelasticism*, i.e. joy of laughing at others (Ruch and Proyer, 2009; Samson and Meyer, 2010; Renner and Haydasch, 2010; Proyer and Ruch, 2010).

We would like to mention here that none of these conditions were considered for our studies as all the participants willingly participated and gave written consent. Also, none of the participants showed any signs of discomfort or awkwardness while watching humorous videos or performing other activities.

2.3 Jokes

With a better understanding of what is humor and what qualifies as humorous content we would

like to discuss 'Jokes' in more details as many scholars have found interest in this domain of humor. A better understanding of 'jokes' would also provide us a clearer insight into how an utterance is turned to become humorous.

As mentioned above a discussion on different aspects of humor would be incomplete without taking a look at *Jokes*. Jokes are one of the most studied tools for humor generation (Bing, 2007; Davies, 2012; Giora, 2003; Attardo and Pickering, 2011; Du, et al., 2013; Biegajło, 2014). Jokes make almost everyone laugh. Jokes mostly serve certain specific purposes, of which relief from boredom or oppression, and achievement of a certain kind of intimacy or community, can be considered to be the primary purpose. But jokes can also show disrespect, divert, amaze, distract, insinuate, and educate. Cohen (2008; 2013) discussed jokes and their different functions which we would discuss in details in forthcoming paragraphs.

One of the most accepted definitions of joke is based on its composition. According to Hockett (1972) any linguistic unit can be considered a joke if it is comprised of two parts; a build-up and a punch. This compositional requirement of a unit to qualify as a joke is also supported by Sherzer (1985) with just a minor change in the terminology. According to him a joke is a discourse unit that is made up of two parts, a set-up and a punchline. A build-up or set-up is a linguistic unit, typically a dialogue or a narrative and a punchline is the final section of a joke that arouses amusement. And a punchline is the section that contains the humor effect. It usually has an element of surprise or incongruity that makes a joke humorous. We would discuss the concept of incongruity in a later section dedicated to it.

One of the varieties of joke that we have already mentioned and discussed is the Canned Jokes. Apart from Canned jokes there are other sub-categories of jokes proposed by other scholars that are different in nature and thus should be treated differently. Few of them are as follows:

o Shaggy-dog stories: These are relatively longer linguistic units, in forms of a discourse without a punchline as described by Chiaro (1992). An example illustrating this variety,

> Gandhi walked barefoot everywhere, to the point that his feet became quite thick and hard. Even when he wasn't on a hunger strike, he did not eat much and became thin and frail. He also was quite a spiritual person. Furthermore, due to his diet, he

ended up with a very bad breath. He became known as a super-calloused fragile mystic plagued with halitosis (Dynel, 2009)

- Riddles: A humorous riddle would typically have two parts, a question that is followed by an unpredictable answer (Chiaro, 1992; Dienhart, 1999). For example,

    Question: Why is Europe like a frying pan?

    Answer: Because it has Greece at the bottom.

- One-liners: When a joke is reduced to a single line and the punchline is only a single word or may be a few words they fall into this category (Chiaro, 1992; Norrick, 1993). An example being,

    I can't believe I got fired from the calendar factory: all I did was take a day off!

From the examples mentioned above, we can see that one of the most significant mechanisms used by jokes is the use of ambiguity. It could be lexical as well as structural ambiguity that generates the amusement factor in a joke. Also, it is important to highlight that both riddles and one-liners follow the structural requirements of a joke. They also have the characteristics of a Canned Joke. But, One-liners also share some properties with Conversational Witticism discussed in the previous section.

As already pointed out, Cohen identified a number of distinctions among jokes and joke mechanisms that are valuable apart from the generalizations in which they figure. Jokes, Cohen suggests, are verbal constructs "meant to make us laugh". Jokes, according to him, can be divided into *story* jokes and *formula* jokes, and they always exhibit *concision*. Cohen gives the example of a Story Joke with the help of the following joke,

    An Irish golfer hooked his drive into the woods. When he went to look, he couldn't find his ball, but he captured a leprechaun.

This joke according to him could be a golfer joke, an Irish joke or a leprechaun joke all embedded in form of a story. Further, one of the kinds of formula jokes identified by him are ethnic jokes.

Jokes also have a conditionality element. According to this supposition, they can be of two kinds;

Hermetic and Affective (Cohen, 1999/2008). When a joke presupposes that the audience has some knowledge or belief regarding the its theme, the joke is *hermetic.* In most cases this is shared world knowledge of some particular culture, but it could also include certain ideas/viewpoints that are supposed to be conventional or widespread. When, on the other hand, a joke presupposes some feeling, attitude or preference in its audience, the joke is *affective.* It is important to note that when a person telling or creating a joke does not share the required relevant background with the audience there can be a gap in proper appreciation and the joke-telling could fail. In such situations, there could be a possibility of the joke to be understood differently than intended and in some cases, have a completely opposite effect. Also, jokes cannot be demonstrated to be funny. But, when a failed effect arises, it could sometimes come across as absurd. And absurdity, as is often remarked, is at the root of most humor. Cohen ventures into this suggestion on the humorous appeal of the absurd. In his words:

"When we laugh at a true absurdity, we simultaneously confess that we cannot make sense of it and that we accept it ... this laughter is an expression of our humanity, our finite capacity, our ability to live with what we cannot understand or subdue". (Cohen, 2008; 41)

On the other hand, regarding the interrelationship between absurdness and humor we must also consider Olbrecht-Tyteca's (1974) belief that there is hardly any distinction between something being humorous and ridiculous

Moving into another aspect of jokes we would now discuss the semantic aspect of them. There have been various attempts by researchers to explain jokes from a purely semantic point of view. Two of the theories that attempt to explain jokes from a semantic point of view are:

- o Isotopy-Disjunction Model (IDM)
- o General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH).

GTVH will be discussed later in this chapter when we focus on different popular theories of humor. So, here we focus on understanding the IDM of understanding jokes.

According to Attardo (2015), IDM was designed along the guidelines of some work on structural semantic in the early 1960s. This model was based on Greimas' (1966) definition of isotopy. His

central idea was to select a set of abstract features from words in a sentence or a discourse, which were called the *isotopy*. He uses terminologies like Semes, Sememes and Classemes. Explaining this concept, Attardo takes the example of 'a dog' belonging to the classeme 'animal' and the isotopy 'bark' forms around the classeme which excludes another possible meaning of 'bark', i.e. surface of a tree.

Based on the various researches on Jokes as a humor generating mechanism we understand that any humorous content that follows the structure of a joke can potentially be humorous. As the requirement of a set-up and a punchline can be fulfilled even in a humorous video we can analyze the humor component in them too based on the same structural pattern. Most humorous videos should ideally have a counterpart of a set-up as well as a punchline. There could be some differences that are unique to the modality difference, i.e. a joke being verbal and a video being visual. We can explore those difference, if any, and conclusively understand the structure a humorous content should have for a better appreciation by its audiences.

2.4 Theories of Humor

To understand humor, we must also explore and discuss the different ways in which humor can be generated, i.e. the different mechanisms identified by researchers, what is recognized as humorous by people and also the different ways in which we respond to humor. For this, we discuss below the different theories proposed by scholars investigating humor. Thus, this section is dedicated to few of those prominent theories of humor.

There are several theories of humor that attempt to understand what humor is, the various social functions humor plays and how to determine something to be humorous. One of the proposed categorizations of the types of humor theories by Attardo (1994; 2010) is as follows:

a. *Essentialist theories* strive to provide the necessary and sufficient conditions for the phenomenon to occur, and these conditions are taken to define the essence of the phenomenon.
b. *Teleological Theories* describe what the goals of the phenomenon are and how its mechanisms are shaped and determined by its goals.

c. *Substantialist Theories* find the unifying factor for the explanation of the phenomenon in the concrete contents of the phenomenon.

To make it more understandable he uses the analogy of a bicycle and the different ways in which it can be analyzed. He exclaims that a bicycle would be described by an essentialist theory in part, as a lever and a mechanism to redistribute force, a teleological theory would describe it as a means of transportation whereas a substantialist theory would describe it as an arrangement of wheels, pedals and a frame.

According to Attardo, linguistic theories of humor are mostly either Essentialist or Teleological in nature whereas sociological and psychological theories are Substantialist in nature like the superiority theory (discussed in later section). He also claims that Incongruity theory (to be discussed later in section 2.3.2) is an exception as it has inherent cognitive mechanisms that mostly fall within the scope of Essentialist theories. The general difference between the three categories of theories focus on the audience/recipients' attitude.

Attardo also points out that different disciplines treat and focus on different aspects of humor while analyzing humorous content. For instance, a literary study on humorous content would most likely focus on the structure of the content whereas a psychologist might be inclined to understand the effects humor or humorous content has on the recipients. Also, literature and linguistics as a disciple tend to study the differences between different genres of humorous content, like jokes, stories, conversations, anecdotes, etc. Hence, it is important for all researchers interested in humor studies to carefully understand the scope of their study and choose a domain. For instance, in literature, 'comic' or 'comedy' are used in a sense to denote the 'humorous content' or dealing with 'humorous subjects' (Attardo, 1994: 5).

Attardo and Raskin (1991) claim that a general theory of humor requires to consider six different and unrelated knowledge resources at the same time later discussed in details in Section 2.4.6. They propose a General theory of Humor establishing and identifying features and properties that make a situation, text or an object humorous or funny.

We would not discuss some of the theories of humor that are important to humor research and also provided a basis for our analysis and studies later reported in subsequent chapters. The prominent theories of humor are discussed below.

2.4.1 The Superiority Theory

The superiority theory of humor traces back to Plato and Aristotle, and Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan*. The central belief of the proponents of this theory is that when a person laughs they usually intend to express a feeling of superiority. This feeling of superiority is usually over others but could also be about oneself, either presently or some past experience. For instance, we often laugh at ourselves, being a certain kind of personality or being in certain situations either presently or sometime in the past. One of the everyday experiences for some people can be in looking everywhere for their eyeglasses while it being on their head all the while and once they realize it they find the search being humorous.

One of the reasons why this theory started losing popularity could be when Francis Hutcheson (1750) criticized Hobbes' claims on laughter being related to superiority. Hutcheson claimed that the feeling of superiority cannot for many reasons be taken as a necessary component for humor generated laughter as believed by scholars until Hobbes. He also claimed that feeling superior cannot even be considered enough in itself. Further, he maintained that a person could laugh not only on other people or a previous state of themselves people as different figures of speech like irony, metaphors, etc. too sometimes trigger a humorous response. Hence linguistic structures of different kinds and creative use of those linguistic structures by themselves too could be found to be humorous by people.

Moving ahead one of the more recent humor researchers, Attardo (1994), claimed that Bergson (1911) can be considered as the most influential proponents of the Superiority theory as Bergson claimed that humor functions as a social corrective used by society to correct deviant behavior and hence a hint of superiority exists in his understanding of humor as a phenomenon. Also, one of the contemporary proponents of this theory is Roger Scruton (1982). Also, according to Morreall (1987) one of the reasons why people do not appreciate being laughed at is that it suggests that the person laughing is devaluing the person they are laughing at. Another study by Duncan (1985) in this domain was conducted with task-oriented groups to examine if superiority theory applies to

formal and informal status structures by analyzing conventional joking behavior in workplace environment. He found that professionally trained groups of people displayed humor patterns different from those predicted by the superiority theory.

Since our study is focused particularly in humor generated in the visual medium we can take an example from humorous videos to understand the above-mentioned claim regarding superiority. Sometimes people laugh when a comic character shows surprising skills that they lack. In the silent movies from the black and white era or animations such as Tom and Jerry, etc., we find that a character often stuck in strange and absurd situations. When the audience laughs at such scenes usually do not suggest a feeling of superiority over the characters rather the reason for laughter could be the absurdity of the situation. Though, we do not deny that the sense of superiority could be one of the reactions for some audiences. In our analysis of humorous videos reported in the fourth chapter we would look into such scenes in details to find the extent to which superiority prompts humorous response.

2.4.2 The Relief Theory

Relief theory suggests that laughter is release of pent up nervous energy (Morreall, 2014). Hence, according to this theory humor aids in overcoming certain sociocultural and/or personal inhibitions. As there are not enough contemporary studies investigating humor within the frameworks of this theory we relied on an entry in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2012) that provides a detailed and extensive description of the Relief theory and its origin and development. Most of the references and their explanations made in this section are influenced by that entry as a source.

When this theory was accepted as a way to understand response to humor via laughter by Shaftesbury (1709) in "An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humor", he proposed laughter as a mechanism that releases human being's animalistic instincts that build pressure inside their nerves. Later when the nervous system was more studied and a better understanding was provided by researchers, thinkers such as Herbert Spencer and Sigmund Freud further examined the biological aspect of the Relief Theory keeping intact the understand that laughter relieves pent-up nervous energy.

In his essay On the Physiology of Laughter (1860), Spencer suggested that a person's emotions can get transformed into nervous energy. Also, John Dewey (1894) believed that laughter is a marker of a suspense or un-expected ending. In his opinion laughter is mostly a sudden relaxation of strain that manifests through the vocal tract. He also believed that laughter and a sign of relief are the similar phenomenon.

Freud in *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious* (1905), analyzed three laughter situations: *der Witz* (often translated into "jokes" or "joking"), "the comic," and "humor." Freud's discussion on how suppressed negative energy is vented-out with the help of humorous use of language or action, required more clarity to deal with cases of those people who do not repress feelings of hostility or sexuality can still laugh at jokes that have these as their central themes. In fact, studies about joke preferences by Eysenck (1972) have managed to establish that usually it is the other way around, where those who express hostile or sexual emotions enjoy such humor relatively more compared to those who suppress such emotions.

In more recent studies exploring humor, very few researchers who fully accept that there is relation between humor and the release of one's nervous energy. And there are fewer contemporary scholars who find Spencer and Freud's understanding of humor and laughter to be dependable. Although, since our study is aimed at exploring humor in the visual medium where audience experiences events and situations along with characters in a video it would be interesting to find if humorous videos exploit such emotional responses to elicit laughter and positive response by viewers.

2.4.3 The Incongruity Theory

The Incongruity theory was another theory of humor proposed and discussed by scholars to examine the phenomenon of humor. This theory too came as a response to superiority being treated as the sole basis for all humor as believed by most scholars before that time. This approach towards understanding of humor was accepted by scholars like James Beattie, Immanuel Kant, Arthur Schopenhauer, Soren Kierkegaard, etc. This theory is now considered as the most reliable understanding of humor and studied by psychologists, linguistics and sociologists to examine instances of humor. While discussing humor, Aristotle in *Rhetoric* (3, 2), without using the term *incongruity*, suggested the significance of the concept for humor generation.

One of the realizations of this approach to humor is exploited by stand-up comedians today who use this technique of incongruity to generate humorous content for their audience. Their routines are composed of the *set-up* and the *punchline.* As discussed in the section on *Jokes,* a set-up is the first section of a joke that establishes a premise based on which the hearer expects the next part of the narrative to be. But then the sentence that follows violates the expectation making it the punchline of the joke that results in amusement. So, a punchline that is incongruous with the set-up is humorous according to this theory. The same structure is adopted by stand-up routines where the punchline happens to be incongruous in some way and thus generates humor. But, the scope of incongruity theory is not restricted to stand-up comedy routines and can be applied to many other genres of humorous contents such as pictures, anecdotes, videos, etc.

Beattie (1779) proposed that laughter arises from one's encounter with incongruous things, situations or in forms of conversations. Immanuel Kant who was a contemporary of Beattie's addressed the relationship between finding something humorous and derailed expectations without using the term, *incongruous*. In "The Critique of Judgement" (1790; 177), Kant states,

"Laughter is an affectation arising from the sudden transformation of a strained expectation into nothing".

Soren Kierkegaard also believed that humor is primarily dependent on incongruity. He uses the term "contradiction" to discuss the concept of disparity between what is expected and what is experienced. Kierkegaard (1846) claims that the violation of one's expectations is central to tragedy as well as comedy.

Arthur Schopenhauer (1966) discussed the Incongruity theory in more detail. He suggested that humor arises when one notices the incongruity between a concept and a perception. He illustrates his notion of incongruous with the help of a joke. The joke states that a person declares that he is fond of walking alone and an Austrian proposes that he too likes walking alone and thus they should go for walks together. The proposal is incongruous which makes the joke humorous because the premise of the joke contradicts the proposal of going for a walk together.

Based on the classical studies and their understanding of the concept of incongruity we can say that incongruity is the violation or contradiction of our standard expectations or mental patterns.

The traditional understanding of the theory was that the perception or recognition of incongruity is sufficient for humor. This understanding was later countered by few scholars who claimed that when a person's mental patterns or expectations are violated or contradicted he/she could have many emotional responses to it which are not restricted to amusement alone. For instance, one could experience fear, disgust, anger, etc. that are emotions far removed from humor.

One of the newer additions to the incongruity theory that takes care of the above-mentioned limitation of the theory, is the aspect of 'resolution'. For instance, theorists such as Thomas Schultz (1976) and Jerry Suls (1972, 1983) claim that humor is not based on the incongruous encounter with concept a more key component is the resolution of such incongruity. According to Schultz, after a certain age (age seven) we need to fit anomalous elements into some conceptual schema to make sense of the incongruity in a humorous content. And thus, when we find a resolution to the incongruity presented we understand the intended humor and respond positively. Following this claim, Schultz proposed a newer category of "nonsense" which is the result of unresolvable incongruity which by itself is a domain of study for humor researchers.

Let us consider the following joke:

> Nurse: "Doctor, there is a man in the waiting room with a glass eye named Brown."
>
> Doctor: "What does he call his other eye?" (jokesoftheday.net)

This joke uses structural ambiguity for humor. When we read the joke, we are faced with incongruity at the doctor's statement and are forced to take another look at what the nurse said. We then realize that the nurse's statement can be structurally parsed to have two distinct meanings, i) that there is a man in the waiting room who has a glass eye and his name is Brown and ii) there is a man in the waiting room who has a glass eye which is called Brown. Clearly the doctor considered the second interpretation and hence asked what his other eye is named as. Or, it could also mean that the doctor intended to point out the structural ambiguity in the nurse's statement and hence asked the question. Whatever be the reason for the doctor's statement, the reader/listener of the joke finds it amusing when he/she resolves the incongruous statement made by the doctor.

When a person is faced with an incongruous statement in any form they tend to resolve the incongruity which results in amusement generating humorous response. Some notable work

exploring incongruity and resolution in humor generation in more recent times are Forabosco (1992), Veale (2004), Brock (2004), Ritchie (2009), Fearman (2014), Hull et.al. (2017), to name a few.

Although most studies that establish and analyze humor within the framework of incongruity and its resolution are restricted to examining verbal humor (humor generated with the help of some linguistic unit) we would like to believe that is not restricted language alone and humorous videos too exploit this mechanism of humor generation.

2.4.5 Semantic Script Theory of humor (SSTH)

The Semantic Script theory of humor primarily interests linguists in exploring humor and humorous content. Within the scope of generative grammar, in the late seventies researchers found themselves to be inclined towards understanding contextual semantics and new subfield of study within linguistics emerged which was termed as Pragmatics. A number of theories came into existence that were interested to analyze the ways in which meanings can be extracted beyond structural semantics and syntax. Since one of the most important aspects examined by these theories was the "script" of a linguistic unit as a whole they were often referred to as "Script theories." The Semantic Script Theory of Humor (SSTH) was first outlined in Raskin (1979) and later discussed at length in *Semantic Mechanisms of Humor*, published in 1985. The SSTH shares its foundation with transformational generative grammar and believes that SSTH is meant to account for the native speaker's humor competence (Chomsky 1965). According to Raskin, competence is not just restricted to structure of a language but also extends to identification of intended humor. This, if a speaker of a certain language can determine that a sentence is grammatical within the scope of that language they should also be able to judge the humor in a linguistic unit.

The SSTH is primarily centered around analysis of jokes, i.e. verbal humor. But if we take the general guideline that formulates the theory it is based on the basic principal of a recipient's ability to identify a content to be humorous or non-humorous. Thus, based on this assumption we can expect this theory to not be limited to just verbal humor and apply to also humorous *scripts* in visual humor.

2.4.6 General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH)

The General Theory of Verbal Humor was first presented by Attardo and Raskin in the year 1991 and was an extension of Raskin's (1985) SSTH. Brone et.al. (2006) claim that SSTH and GTVH are the two most influential linguistic theories since the last few decades. The use of the term 'general' was intended to highlight the basic difference between SSTH and GTVH. Hence, as STVH was purely semantic in nature GTVH was more inclusive and extended itself to phonological, morphological as well as structural information including sociological and cognitive information in a humorous text.

In 2001 Attardo published a study where he provided evidence to all kinds of texts being within the scope of GTVH. He further elaborated the phenomenon and continued discussing the concept in his collaborations with Hempelmann, 2008 and Taylor, Raskin and Hempelmann, 2010.

The GTVH used jokes as examples to expand and explain the concept. But the scope of GTVH is not limited to jokes and expands through all kinds of texts in fact also attempting to examine non-linguistic content. In Attardo (2001) he claims that GTVH can also be used to analyze humor in conversations and some studies positively contributed to strengthen this claim of his (Antonopoulou and Sifianou, 2003; Archakis and Tsakona, 2005 and 2012; Tsakona, 2003, 2009, 2013, 2015).

The theory in its inception presented six 'knowledge resources' and also claimed that it is not an unordered set. There is a hierarchical organization of the set according to the authors. The six knowledge resources (Attardo, 2017) in the hierarchical order are as follows:

- o *Script Opposition*: This resource includes themes in a humorous text, such as real vs. unreal, actual vs. artificial, possible vs. impossible, etc.
- o *Logical Mechanism*: This resource accounts for the resolution of incongruity and thus justifying its presence in a text. It is possible to have a humorous text without the presence of this resource, for instance non-sense humor mostly have no resolution.
- o *Situation*: This resource concerns itself with the overall macro-script of a humorous text which involves the background in which the events mentioned in the text take place. This is not the same as context.

- *Target*: This resource addresses the phenomenon of humorous jokes being aggressive in nature and that it needs a target to vent out the aggression on. This target is known as the "but" of the joke and are mostly either humans or some human activities.

- *Narrative strategy*: This resource focuses on the way a humorous text is organized. So, a humorous text can be in many formats. Some of the formats are dialogue form, riddles, conversations, etc.

- *Language*: This resource contains a full phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical description of a humorous text. It also contains the statistical frequency of each of the units and their frequency of occurrence.

This hierarchy was empirically tested[1] by Ruch, Attardo, Raskin (1993) and managed to conclude its validity. Hence, two narratives only differing in narrative strategy or language would still be considered more alike than those who differ in script opposition or logical mechanism.

Though the GTVH is almost thorough with its understanding and explanation of humor there have been issues raised by Kirkmann (2004, 2006, 2009), Ritchie (2004) and Ruiz-Gurillo (2012) regarding the theory and its overall claims.

Another aspect of GTVH that has been criticized in the scope of hearer's contextual knowledge in particular by Relevance theorists like Solska (2012). This criticism was triggered by the treatment of puns within the scope of GTVH. Solska pointed out that the processing of puns relies on individual context available to the listener. As we have reached a mention of the Relevance theory we take the opportunity to take a look at it too. One of the prominent cognitive theories, i.e. Relevance Theory, too has interested scholars in recent years to investigate humor along its lines of reference.

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[1] A set of 534 participants were presented with three sets of jokes, each consisting of an anchor joke and comparison jokes in which variations in one and only one of the six Knowledge Resources were present. Participants were asked to rate the degree of similarity between the anchor joke and the six comparison jokes. The results supported the hierarchy proposed by the GTVH.

2.4.7 Relevance-Theoretic Treatments of Humor

Relevance Theory (RT) is a cognitive pragmatic theory of communication by Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1993) aiming to identify underlying mechanisms rooted in human cognition that explain how humans communicate with each other. Some of its ideas are inherited from Grice. The theory focuses on the inferences that hearers make trying to understand the speakers' communicative intensions based on the verbal and nonverbal codes used by the speaker (Yus, 2016).

The cognitive principle of relevance claims that human beings have an evolved cognitive mechanism that helps us focus on what is relevant and dismiss the rest (communicative principle of relevance). When a hearer comes across an utterance they expect it to be relevant enough for the inference effort. In case of humorous utterances, the content is usually irrelevant in terms of information weightage and require some extra effort on the hearer's end to decode the communicative intensions of the speaker. But the hearer still makes the effort as the expected outcome is assumed to be rewarding in the form of amusement, entertainment, etc. In instances of humor, the speaker can assume the inferential strategies the hearer will operate upon and also the contextual information he/she would require to access to understand the intended humoristic information.

Human mind is capable of assessing all the possible interpretations to an utterance and opt for the most relevant of those in the given context. This process takes place spontaneously by the hearer without first finding all the possibilities and then choosing one to be most relevant. This ability is exploited in instances of humor where the hearer reaches for the most obvious interpretation and then after not reaching the expected reaction reexamines the utterance for the more unlikely but appropriate-for-the-context interpretation.

Another crucial component for humor within the Relevance Theoretic framework of analysis is decoding and inferring. As in most communicative instances, there is a potentially substantial gap between what the speaker says and his/her intention and what the interlocutor hears and eventually interprets. The first process is that of decoding; where the linguistic units are identified and then follows the process of inferring; where the codes are contextually examined and then the intended inference is made. Disambiguation, free-enrichment and conceptual adjustments are made respectively to fully understand the communicative intensions of a speaker.

Within the RT framework several attempts have been made to classify jokes. Here we would be focusing on Yus (2012) where he made a broad classification, and divided jokes into two categories:

- o Jokes that rely on manipulating the hearer's inferential steps towards implicature or explicature with access to available contextual information.
- o Jokes that play with some social or cultural information mostly stereotypical in nature.

Further he proposed another classification for different kinds of jokes namely *Intersecting Circles Model* (Yus, 2013). According to this model there are three pointers that provide a platform to creating jokes of different kinds. He calls each of these as *Circles* and combining them in different ways yields seven types of jokes. The three Circles are as follows:

- o Utterance interpretation. The manipulation of the inferential strategies carried out to get an interpretation of the utterance (reference assignment, disambiguation, concept adjustment, etc.).
- o Make-sense frame. It basically refers to the effort-saving construction of a suitable situation or scenario for the interpretation of the joke. This term comprises similar labels typically used in previous research for how the hearer builds up a mental situation for the utterance being processed, such as frame, schema or script.
- o Cultural frame. Collective representations regarding society or culture, typically made of stereotypical information about one's nation, gender roles, professions, etc.
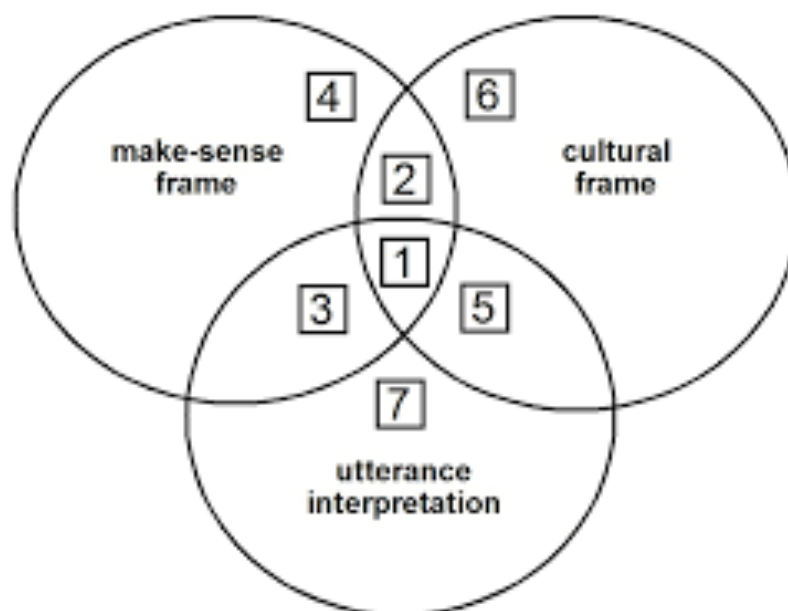
Figure 2.1. The intersecting circles model (Yus ,2013)

The figure above is Yus' pictorial representation of the model and the numbers represent the seven different kinds of jokes he claims can be created with the overlaps between the three individual circles. Below we provide examples from Yus (2016) for each of the seven possible combinations:

Type 1: Make-sense frame + cultural frame + utterance interpretation

> Example: As an airplane is about to crash, a female passenger jumps up frantically and announces, "If I am going to die, I want to die feeling like a woman." She removes all her clothing and askes, "Is there someone on this plane who is man enough to make me feel like a woman." A man stands up, removes his shirt and says, "Here, iron this." (Yus, 2016; 126)

Type 2: Make-sense frame + cultural frame

> Example: Late one night, a mugger wearing a mask jumped into the path of a well-dressed man and stuck a gun in his ribs. "Give me your money", he demanded. Indignant, the affluent man replied, "You can't do this. I am a politician!" "In that case", replied the mugger, "give me MY money!" (Yus, 2016; 127)

Type 3: Make- sense frame + utterance interpretation

Example: A customer enters a sports shop and asks the man in charge: "Excuse me, but do you have the balls to play tennis?" "Yes, of course!", replies the man. The customer says: "Then, tomorrow at 10." (Yus, 2016; 128)

Type 4: Make-sense frame

Example: A man was drinking in a bar when he noticed this beautiful young lady sitting next to him. "Hello there," says the man, "and what is your name?" "Hello," giggles the woman, "I am Stacey. What's yours?" "I am Jim." "Jim, do you want to come over to my house tonight? I mean, right now??" "Sure!" replies Jim, "Let's go!" So, Stacey takes Jim to her house and takes him to her room. Jim sits down on the bed and notices a picture of a man on Stacey's desk. "Stacey, I noticed the picture of a man on your desk," Jim says. "Yes? And what about it?" asks Stacey. "Is it your brother?" "No, it isn't, Jim!" Stacey giggles. Jim's eyes widen, suspecting that it might be Stacey's husband. When he finally asks, "Is it your husband?" Stacey giggles even more, "No, silly!" Jim was relieved. "Then, it must be your boyfriend!" Stacey giggles even more while nibbling on Jim's ear. She says, "No, silly!!" "Then, who is it?" Jim asks. Stacey replies, "That's me before my operation!!" (Yus, 2016; 132)

Type 5: Cultural frame + utterance interpretation

Example: Following a bitter divorce a husband saw his wife at a party and sneered, "You know I was a fool when I married you." The wife simply sighed and replied, "Yes, dear, I know, but I was in love and didn't really notice." (Yus, 2016; 132)

Type 6: Cultural frame

Example: Matt's dad picked him up from school to take him to a dental appointment. Knowing the parts for the school play were supposed to be posted today, he asked his son if he had got one. Matt enthusiastically announced that he had. "I play a man who's been married for twenty years." "That's great, son. Keep up the good work and before you know it they'll be giving you a speaking part." (Yus, 2016; 133)

Type 7: Utterance interpretation

> Example: I stopped at a fast food restaurant recently. I was fascinated by a sign which offered fat free French fries. I decided to give them a try. I was dismayed when the clerk pulled a basket of fries from the fryer which was dripping with fat. He filled a bag with these fries and put them in my order. "Just a minute!", I said. "Those aren't fat free." "Yes, they are. We only charge for the potatoes. The fat is free." (Yus, 2016; 134)

The scope of RT is not just restricted to examining jokes but it can also be applied to examining puns[2]. One such study within the domain of puns is Solska (2012) who discussed this figure of speech by suggesting certain uses that could illicit humor. They are as follows illustrated with the help of examples,

o Puns based on homonymy

  Example: Being in politics is just like playing golf: you are trapped in one bad lie after another.

o Puns based on polysemy

  Example: There was a sign on the lawn at a drug re-hab center that said "Keep off the grass"

o Juxtaposing metaphorical and literal reading

  Example: Never invest in funerals, it is a *dying* industry.

o Puns based on perfect homophony

  Example: Everybody *kneads* it. (an advertising slogan for Pillsbury flour)

o Puns based on imperfect homophony

  Example: *Mud*, Sweat and *Gears*. (the name of a bicycle repair shop) [mud/blood, gears/tears]

o Puns based on paronymy

  Example: The Crime of Pun-ishment. (title of an essay on puns)

o Puns based on homography

  Example: Poland Polishes off US Volleyball Team (The Daily Herald: June 17, 2011)

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[2] The main difference between Pun and Joke is that, Pun is a figure of speech whereas Joke is a something spoken, written, or done with humorous intention. Puns are a form of wordplay that exploit multiple meanings of a single word for intended humorous effect where the ambiguity is usually intentionally generated with use of homophonic, metonymic or other such mechanisms. Jokes on the other hand are well-defined narrative structures in forms of a story or dialogues and ends with a punchline. A joke can have a pun as a punchline but jokes need not always use a pun as a punchline as there can be other ways a punchline can be created for humorous effect.

Yus (2004) also examined stand-up comedy performances through RT. In this regard, he suggested that a stand-up comedy monologues' effectiveness depends almost entirely on how much the audience's personal and collective mental representations are strategically exploited by the performer. Stand-up comedy performers deliberately choose to either reassure or contest certain stereotypes that manages to catch the attention of their audience. The feeling of collective belief system or thought processes are thus significant to have a positive impact in such performances. This leads to the audience being amused by coming to a realization that his behavior, habits, beliefs, etc. are not as exclusive as they believed them to be. Hence, according to Yus, "the enjoyment of the performance comes from individual vs. collective interface."

RT for visual and multimodal communication has been examined by Forceville (2012). He claims that an artist always aims to be relevant to his/her audiences. An image in a book, cartoon, an advertisement, etc. all intend to grab the audience's attention and convey some message, hence be of relevance. In case of images, explicature and implicature play a significant role. As a hearer, unfamiliar with a language can face difficulties in decoding what the speaker intended to convey, so can a person unfamiliar with an artist's style of representing objects and/or events.

Thus, RT too, like the three other theories discussed before primarily focused on humor that is generated in the verbal mode, i.e. humor with the help of language. But some researchers have also found interest in the certain visual manifestations of humorous contents such as pictures and Stand-up Comedy, as discussed above. Though, neither of the two categories are comparable to humor generated purely in the visual mode. For instance, a humorous picture used in a cartoon or an advertisement is different from humorous videos with respect to the element of motion and multiple simultaneous mechanisms for humor generation. And stand-up comedy too, though a performance based humorous content relies heavily on language use. Even the prosodic features of speech have more prominence in such performances than gestural components including facial expressions and body language.

If we try to examine humorous videos (without the use of language) within the framework of RT the outcome would certainly suggest that RT need not be limited to analyzing linguistic data. As the cognitive mechanisms of decoding the intended humor in a video is the same as that done with jokes or puns, i.e. a humorous video too usually does not make any valuable contribution to

knowledge base of the recipient but he/she still makes the efforts to engage and understand the plot of the video as the reward is amusement/entertainment.

It appears that the shared requirement of 'element of surprise' is common to Incongruity Theory and Relevance Theory. But Incongruity Theory explains how a content can be created that would incorporate an element of surprise and result in humorous response by a recipient whereas the Relevance Theory examines the reasons behind the recipient finding a content humorous. Thus, the Incongruity theory can be considered a framework to providing mechanisms to generate humor and Relevance Theory provides a cognitive explanation to why a certain humorous content is considered to be humorous by the recipient.

2.5 Humor Vs Comedy

Another terminology relevant to this study is Comedy as humorous videos heavily rely on actors performing comedy. Hence, having explored the established definitions of humor and also the different ways in which humorous content can be examined we must also understand the difference between the terms humor and comedy. This is of utmost importance for us as our main objective is to understand humor in videos, the medium where the two terms can be confused as being referring to the one single variety of humorous content.

Though many times we come across people who use the two terms interchangeably, the two are not really the same. Comedy is the well-intended and well-designed set of acts whose purpose is to make people laugh. Humor, on the other hand is more innate phenomenon that relies on observations from the world around us. Jokes, stories, movies, stand-up routines can all have elements of humor either with the help of comedy or by just exploiting peculiarities in a situation. Also, comedy is a skill that can be studied and practiced for better outcomes. Humor, being part of a person's composition[3] can either be highly present or absolutely absent. There have been several studies with a focus on comedy and also comedy in videos. Stott (2014) explores the many aspects of comedy and the different elements that have the potential to generate comic content.

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[3] A person's humor as a concept, termed as *Humorism* was adopted by ancient Greek and Roman physicians as a system of medicine to understand the working of human body. There were four kinds of humors identified that are present in a person; blood, yellow bile, black bile and phlegm. Each of the four kinds have a unique characteristic. A person's personality and style of humor was believed to be highly influenced by either one or a combination of one or more humors.

Mast (1979) focused on comedy in movies with a special attention given to actors who are considered masters of this art. Some other notable studies exploring comedy are Horton (1991), Vandaele (2002), Karlyn (2008), Paulus and King (2010), etc. All of these studies discuss comedy in films/movies that provides important platform to our study as the domain of study is the same for us too.

Hence, as we have set out to examine humorous videos and their reception we need to understand that a video is a combination of humorous elements as well as comedy performed by the actors. The choice of actions as part of comic performance that generates humor are of particular interest for us. When a viewer watches a humorous video he/she simultaneously appreciates the comedy by actors as well as the underlying humorousness in the plot that are executed by the actors with the help of some comic actions. So, when we analyze humorous videos later in the upcoming chapters with respect to their generation and reception we would consider comedy as a crucial contributing factor and one of the elements though which humor is generated.

2.6 Humor for the Deaf and in their language

All the studies discussed above are explorations within the domain of verbal languages. Considering the discussion on culture being a critical component in understanding humor and that language influences a person/group's culture, in order to explore the ways in which a sign language user appreciates humor we must also explore the humor studies exclusive to sign language and its users. Also, one of the objectives for our present study is to understand the humor appreciation and to some extent generation by sign language users (deaf population). Hence, it is important that we take a look at some of the studies that are specific to humor in sign language and humor-culture of the deaf community.

For this section, we would not focus much on the general structure and semantics of sign languages which happens to be popularly explored by more researchers. We would primarily focus only on those aspects of deaf culture and language that influences humor generation and reception within the community as well as sign language humor's interaction with the hearing population. Humor investigation in sign languages is a relatively recent topic of study for researchers. During the last few decades, a number of studies focusing on deaf culture their folklore have been studied that motivated several studies by linguists as well as those who find interest in culture studies. Baldwin

(1982) discussed the different ways in which deaf people are represented in folklore narratives. Hall (1989, 1991) examined and introduced the concept of Deaf Social Clubs by ASL (American Sign Language) users that provides an insight into the deal culture and in-group folklore. Such studies took a deeper look into sign language narratives and in the process stumbled upon the humor generating mechanisms and the culture of humor styles within the deaf community. Hence, a number of studies then followed that were interested to explore humor generation and their reception specific to deaf people and also understand the similarities and differences between verbal and signed humor. Some of the more recent studies are discussed in the following paragraphs.

"The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture" (1994) edited by Erting et. al., documents many studies in this subfield that were discussed in July 1989 with participation by thousands of deaf people from around the world who had gathered at the Gallaudet University to celebrate and discuss Deaf culture. This volume is divided into ten independent sections: Deaf Cultures around the world, Deaf History, The Study of Sign Language in Society, Diversity in the Deaf Community, Deaf Clubs and Sports, The Deaf Child in the Family, Education, Deaf/Hearing Interaction, Deaf People and the Arts, and Deaf People and Human Rights Issues. Two of the papers in the volume were dedicated to humor in sign languages.

Guy Bouchauveau in his paper "Deaf humor and culture" from the first section of the book, i.e., Deaf cultures around the world, discussed in particular humor within the deaf community and the reasons behind such humor style's existence. He talks about how such humor style, unique to the deaf culture gets realized in the sign language they use for communication. He claims that the deaf community heavily relies on humor as a means of communication within their closed groups and with the development of Visual Theater (IVT), humor within the deaf community got exposure and reached out to even those who never had the opportunity to interact with and understand the deaf culture and their language. Guy also suggested that signers belonging to different generations of age groups need to co-exist if they desire to understand the inter-generational knowledge and perception of the visual world and deaf culture, that is essential to the humor styles unique to the signing communities. As the central themes of humor are significantly different for people belonging to different age groups it becomes very important that the different generations interact with each other to adopt and enjoy a wider variety of humor. He claims that youngsters primarily

rely on mockery of others, gender-based humor, and humor that highlights physical changes while growing up. Though this is true of this age group across cultures and certainly not applicable to only deaf youngsters. Similarly, as people grow older they become more creative and explore into other territories of social life, like politics, deaf-hearing culture, etc. like most adults irrespective of being deaf or hearing. One aspect of humor in sign language revolves around making fun of the hearing people in some way or the other to show their emotional outburst towards treatment as disabled by the hearing according to Bouchauveau.

Further, he also gives a description of the different ways in which sign language humor is created.

- A funny narrative ending with a funny punchline
- Imitations and caricatures
- Describing imaginative, absurd images that do not exist in reality
- Humor that is part of deafness experience

Another study, by M.J. Bienvenu (1994, 2001) also presented in the 1989 conference discusses her personal observations about Deaf humor within the American culture. She identifies four categories in sign language humor:

- The visual nature of humor: Bienvenu claims that the most important aspect of a deaf person's life is the visual world around them. A deaf person's world view is largely influenced by their visual interaction with people, objects and events around them Hence, according to her, sense of humor in a deaf person is representative of his/her experience with the visual world.

- Can't hear: Being deaf is not seen as a disability within the deaf community and they do not believe that they are any less capable than the hearing population they live with. They believe that deaf culture is not just about the inability to hear but also the shared world experiences that are unique to only people who are part of the inner circle. This could also include those hearing people who either have close family or friends who are deaf or even those who learnt a sign language and closely work with the deaf community. Hence, they do not like being treated with pity for being unable to hear and humor influenced by this feeling highlights the uniqueness and special abilities of the deaf.

o Linguistics: Linguistically speaking, sign language humor that is created by manipulating the grammar of the language belongs to this category. The example used to demonstrate this category is the 'Giant joke' which displays how linguistic humor being visually influenced and thus linguistically funny. This joke is based on the large opinion of 'oralism' within the deaf community.

> A huge giant is stalking through a small village of wee people, who are scattering through the streets, trying to escape the ugly creature. The giant notices one particularly beautiful blonde woman scampering down the cobble-stoned street. He stretches out his clumsy arm and sweeps her up, then stares in wonder at the slight, shivering figure in his palm. "You are so beautiful," he exclaims. The young woman looks up in fear. "I would never hurt you, he signs, "I love you! We should get MARRIED." Producing the sign MARRY, he crushes her. The giant then laments, "See, oralism is better"(Erting, 1994).

o Response to oppression: The author pointed out that the deaf community being subjected to oppression deals with the situation with the help of humor. As, also pointed out in the previous categories, deaf population struggles to be recognized as 'normal' by the hearing population in the society they live in. She also provides an example based on a true story that demonstrates how humor comes to aid when a deaf person manages to outsmart a hearing person. The story suggests that a group of deaf people at a restaurant on being mimicked and mocked by a group of hearing people, one of the deaf used the telephone to pretend to have a complete conversation which confused the hearing group (Bienvenu, 2001). This experience, can become a source of humor for the deaf people that they would probably use in future as an in-group joke. The humor style that is influenced by this theme highlights the ignorance of the hearing population.

Another study on British and American deaf communities and their humor patterns; "Deaf Jokes and Sign Language Humor" by Sutton-Spence and Donna Jo Napoli (2012) highlights the significance of humor in a minority culture of the deaf community. The study explores that ways in which the visual experiences of the deaf influence their world knowledge, forms their opinion

about the world and their overall creativity. As we have already discussed in the previous paragraphs, deaf humor in any form is heavily influenced by the visual experience of the deaf people. The Study is divided into three sections discussing different aspects of deaf humor. The first section the authors discuss the role of humor within the deaf community and sociological and psychological aspects of humor. Martineau (1972) and Meyer (2000) also looked into those aspects of humor. These aspects of humor play a significant role in developing a sense of understanding amongst those who interact mostly with the hearing population and are also educated within the scope of oralist tradition. According to the authors deaf humor also aids in creating a solid in-group culture for the deaf people. The second section of the study is focused on discussions regarding humor generated with the help of language, i.e., sign language. Sutton-Spence and Donna Jo Napoli (2012) propose three categories of humor generation possible with the manipulation of sign language structure in different ways. They are as follows:

o **Humor by creating new signs**: This is also considered the classic traditional humor within sign languages. The funny signed stories do not require a great plot or resolution. Rather, the scenes and characters created for the story themselves are the source of amusement. The use of classifiers, facial expressions, role shifts, impersonation, etc. in a story themselves can generate humor (Hall, 1989; Risler 2007). During characterization, sometimes assumes to be the entity which could be human, animal or objects (Sallandre, 2007). For instance, when the signer assumes to be an animal, audiences readily accept that animals can sign but the insufficiency of actions as perfect as humans create the visual amusement. In case of inanimate objects, they too are sometimes allocated handshapes or the signer themselves assume to be the object enabling it to sign.

Facial expressions are also an essential part of humor generation and it is considered funnier if there is over-exaggeration and the characters are caricatured (creating new signs). In fact, caricature is a highly-valued part of humor in sign language folklore (Rutherford, 1993; Bouchauveau, 1994)

o **Humor created by playing with the internal structure of signs**: Signs are made up of handshape, location of articulation and movement pattern. Klima and Bellugi (1979) suggested that with a slight change in even one of the compositional element of a sign can

lead to something being humorous or amusing. One of the examples in this regard is the sign for UNDERSTAND (Sutton-Spence and Donna Jo Napoli (2012; 320), that is traditionally signed in ASL with the index finger placed next to the forehead of the signer. But when keeping the same place and manner of articulation and only replacing the index finger with the little finger there is a small alteration in the meaning (understand a little) which leads to amusement. The same way, instead of creatively altering the handshape a signer could make minor changes in the position of sign and generate humor.

o **Humor stemming from bilingual blend of verbal and sign languages**: The pre-requisite to create humor by blending sign and verbal language is to know both. The humor generated in such a manner can only be appreciated by those who understand the bend that is made. Sutton-Spence and Jo Napoli suggest that the blending could be done in two ways. Either by directly signing jokes taken from a verbal language that could lose its humor component in sign language or by humor created within the deaf community based on their interactions with the hearing community. Those humorous jokes or narratives are mainly about deaf people's interactions with doctors, teachers, shopkeepers, or other such people and the misunderstandings that could be generated.

An example for the first style of humor is the following English riddle,

Why did the skeleton cross the road? To get to the Body Shop (Sutton-Spence and Donna Jo Napoli (2012; 328)

When this riddle in signed, the amusement is not caused by the punchline rather the signs used to represent the skeleton crossing the road with the help of classifiers or role-playing.

Further, a study by Susan D. Rutherford, "Funny in the Deaf. Not in Hearing" (2014), focuses on the importance of culture in deaf humor which also includes the knowledge of sign language and its structure. This factor is discussed with the help of an example from ASL. The joke, as mentioned below can be appreciated only by those who know the particular sign language and would be lost on those who do not understand ASL. The ASL joke's English translation is as follows:

One time a man, well a person, a Deaf person, was driving along and stopped at some train tracks because the crossing signal gates were down but there was no train going by. So, he waited for a long time for a train to go by, but nothing. The person decided then to get out of the car and walk to the control booth where there was a man who controlled the railroad gates. He was sitting there talking on the phone. The Deaf man wrote in his very best way (elegantly), "please b-u-t," and handed the paper to the controller. The controller looked back at the Deaf person quizzically, "Please but? Huh?" He didn't understand that. (Rutherford, 1983; 312)

The humor impact of the joke is dependent on the knowledge that ASL sign for 'BUT' and 'RAIL CROSSING GATE' are very similar other than the palm orientation. The sign language users would find the joke to be humorous as they would understand the ambiguous use of the sign but like the control room person, any other hearing person would not understand the joke.

Another study exploring the reasons for differences between deaf and hearing groups with the treatment of humor (Cancio-Bello, 2015), exhibits how the humor-style for deaf people, irrespective of their other social backgrounds, are more similar than varied. The study claims that the shared world experiences and the mode of language (signed) are more influential in developing a humor style, for both generation as well as reception.

There are also several studies that explore sign language humor not as directly as the above-mentioned studies but within the domain of different figures of speech in sign languages. For instance, the different uses of metaphors in ASL by Wilcox (2002). As metaphorical uses in a language amuses the recipients such studies too, though not directly, provide an insight to scholars interested in sign language humor. There are also several discourse analysis studies that help in forming the basis for humorous narrative understanding in sign languages. For example, Liddlle and Metzger (1998) studied the use of gestures in sign language discourses specific to ASL. As gestures play a significant role in humor generation the study is of utmost importance. There are few other studies exploring gestures in sign languages that are also worth mentioning here. Such as, Liddell (2003), Wilcox (2004), Nandy, et.al. (2010), Emmorey and Reilly (2013), etc. Winston (1999) discusses the different story-telling mechanisms in sign languages and highlights the differences between sign and their counterpart verbal language strategies in conversation and

story-telling which also sheds some light on discourse in sign languages.

Based on the studies exploring humor for the deaf and in sign language we can understand the importance of the visual world to be one of the most important components for Deaf Humor. With a closer look at the above-mentioned studies we can conclude that though there are many shared features between humor for deaf and hearing people in their respective language modalities but deaf humor requires a strong visual motivation and deep understanding of Deaf culture for it to be fully appreciated. Hence, we can presuppose that the reception and appreciation for humor should display some differences between the users of sign and verbal languages.

2.7 Conclusion

As discussed above, humor being a universal phenomenon and as a good sense of humor is considered one of the most desired qualities in a person (Cann and Calhoun, 2001; Polimeni and Reiss, 2006; Lippa, 2007) it deserves to be analyzed and investigated in as many ways as possible. The prominent theoretical frameworks along which humorous contents are evaluated and examined have been presented in this chapter. We have also understood how proponents of each theory claim that their theory is capable of explaining all cases of humor. If that holds to be true the mode in which humor is presented should not make a difference and these theories and definitions of humor should hold true also for visual humor. Though, we do not contest that there needs to be some broadening of the guidelines to analyzing humor in order to incorporate humorous contents in modalities other than strictly linguistic.

The studies reported and discussed here lent us the basic platform that helped us determine the objectives of this study and also influenced the hypotheses for each of the studies. The next chapter would report the pilot study we conducted to select the stimulus for our more focused studies.

The next chapter reports the first study towards our objectives. We present the pilot study we conducted with our special group of participants that helped is choose the stimulus material as well as provide some data to proceed further.

3

Pilot Study

Selection of Humorous Videos and elements that contribute to humor

3.1 Introduction

Humor generation in any modality, i.e. verbal or visual, follow some universal techniques though some modality dependent methods cannot be denied. Also, from the discussions on different theories of humor in the previous chapter we can claim that theories of humor can be considered modality independent and they can be equally applied on verbal and visual modality for generating humorous effect. As there are various aspects of humor that are specific and unique to the visual modality and not available in other modalities, we here aim to explore the various elements that can contribute to humor effect in videos. For example, color schema of a visual scene is very specific to visual modality. Even though a scene can be described in words providing details of the colors of characters' attire, objects around, etc. but they do not usually prove to be as effective as their visual representation. Similarly, movement of a character in a scene is also visual modality specific. Consider a walking character in a scene. His/her movement and style are visual in nature, which can generate humor by itself independent of the plot. Verbal modality requires additional description of these features if it matters in a joke. We assume that these visual aspects play a significant role in visual humor. As one of the goals of this thesis is to explore those modality specific aspects of humor generation and reception, we intended to explore the differences between speakers of verbal languages and sign language users in their perception of different aspects of visual humor. To do so in we first needed a set of humorous videos that were chosen by our target groups as a representative set and also compile a list of elements that contribute to humorousness in videos.

This chapter is dedicated to the pilot survey-study done for the selection of humorous videos by a representative set of participants. The videos that are chosen by the participants as humorous are further used in later studies to address the objectives of this thesis. As the broad aim of this thesis is to examine and understand humor in the visual medium we needed to begin with selection videos that are considered humorous by a diverse set of viewers. Also, keeping in mind the objective of exploring the similarities and differences that are language modality dependent we ensured that the participant group for the pilot study includes both sign language and verbal language users.

3.2 Pilot Study

The purpose of the pilot study was to select a smaller number of short videos that were humorous and also create a list of elements that viewers believe contribute to humor-effect in a video. Hence, the study was two-fold: a) the selection of humorous videos from a pool of a larger set that included humorous as well as neutral videos, and b) the participants providing a free listing of elements that they personally felt and believed contributed in some way or the other to the overall humorousness of the video. the videos that would get higher ratings were then selected as representative humorous videos for this thesis to address our objectives. Also, the elements listed by each of the participants were compiled together and those elements that were frequently listed by most participants were arranged to create a final list of elements. This list was then used in the first study to explore and understand how a humorous video is created and which elements contribute more to humorousness than others.

3.2.1 Study material

40 videos from various online sources were chosen for this study. The videos used for the pilot study was a mix of humorous videos as well some neutral videos. All the videos were available on YouTube and downloadable as well as shared on different social media portals. Some of the popular humorous content creators like, Charlie Chaplin, Mr. Bean, Benny Hill, Buster Keaton and Harold Lloyd were specifically looked up to be included in the list of videos. But the list was not restricted to only these creators and few contemporary videos by small production houses too were selected. We would also mention here that some videos were deliberately excluded for the study, in particular by the above-mentioned actors. Those were videos that are most frequently shared as their best work, for example: Charlie Chaplin's scene from the movie Modern times at the factory, Mr. Bean's 'staining the Whistler's Mother painting with ink', etc. we excluded these videos because most of the participants were expected to be too familiar with the scenes and that could have led to a bias.

The primary selection criterion was the absence of any form of dialogues amongst characters. The first search listed a number of short movies and video clips that were animations by production houses like Disney and Pixar. But we decided to not include them for this particular study. Such videos were excluded from further studies as a clear bias towards that category could be observed.

People usually tend to favor the animated videos as humorous even before they watch the whole video. Also, the presupposition that certain production houses only make humorous content or that films produced by certain companies would certainly have humorous elements in their videos is very apparent for most viewers.

Hence, all the 40 videos that were selected for the pilot study were non-animated and silent. Although they did have background music. For the purpose of this study, when the videos were shown to the hearing participants the music was not muted. The average duration of video was 6.11 minutes. The longest video was 10.32 minutes and the shortest video was 1.9 minutes.

3.2.2 Participants

Two sets of 105 participants were chosen for this study. The first set included 80 verbal language users (48 males and 32 females) with an average age of 24 years. All 80 (43 female and 37 male) participants were ensured to have at least a B2 level fluency in English to ensure that they clearly understood the instructions given prior to participating in the survey. Out of the 80 participants, 20 had English as their first language and the rest were a mix of other first languages, for example: Hindi, Bengali, Italian, Polish and Spanish. Participants were graduate students from Jagiellonian University, Alicante University, and University of Cagliari. The second set of 25 participants included users of sign languages (10 female and 15 male) with an average age of 26 years. Out of 25 participants 9 were Polish sign language users (PJM), 6 were Spanish sign language users (LSE), 8 were Italians sign language users (LIS) and 2 were Indians sign language users (ISL). The interactions with the sign language users were always in company of an interpreter to ensure that the participants are clear with the instructions and also ask questions if they need to clarify any doubts while performing the tasks.

Though we understand the role language plays in humor reception (Johnson, 1992, Erdodi and Lajiness-O'Neill, 2012) we chose to have a more diverse population than focusing only on a mono linguistic or mono cultural group for the study for two reasons. Firstly, as the purpose of this study was not to examine the culture specific humor reception amongst people using the same modality of language, i.e., for example; how people with English as first language differ from those who use Italian as first language, but to understand the differences in humor reception between people

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with different modality of language, i.e., how sign language users and verbal language users differ in humor reception. Secondly, having views and responses from only a specific language users' perspective cannot not be taken as representative of all people using that modality of language. For instance, if all the participants were users of a specific language, humor reception patterns shown by them could be specific to that group alone. Hence, a more diverse set of participants with different language backgrounds within the same modality provided insights that could be generalized for the specific modality. Also, the videos chosen for the studies do not have language use, i.e., there are no dialogues exchanges between characters nor are there any linguistic cues are in use. Few videos from the black-and-white era that used narrative connectors were edited out before shown to the participants.

3.2.3 Procedure and Tasks

For this study, stimulus material was divided into two sets. Each set containing 20 videos randomly selected. Half of the participants (both verbal language users and signers) watched one set and other half watched another set. These two sets were created so that a participant does not get tired of watching the videos and see only 20 videos. The study was conducted through an online google form. Participants were called in and were seated in front of a laptop. They were given clear instruction and a brief introduction to the purpose of the study. The participants then provided their personal details (age, gender, linguistic background, languages known). They were shown 20 videos randomly chosen. After watching each video, they were asked to perform two tasks:

- o Task 1: Rate the video for its humorousness on a scale of 1-5 (1 being less humorous and 5 being highly humorous).
- o Task 2: List the elements that you think contributed to the humor of the video. They were asked to be imaginative and provide as many reasons as possible.

The participants were allowed to take few minutes of break between watching two videos if they asked for it.

3.3 Outcomes

Based on participants' ratings ten videos were selected out of the total 40 videos shown. These videos got an average rating of 4.7 by both groups of participants (verbal language users and signers). Additionally, one of the videos got an average rating of 3 with some participants finding it to be highly humorous and the others rating it as only moderately humorous. That video too was selected for the next series of studies as a neutral video. But any of the videos that was rated below 3.0 were not considered for the further more focused studies as they could not be taken as representative humorous videos. Hence, a total of eleven videos were selected as stimuli for further studies. The videos are mentioned in table 3.1.

Video	*Description*
The Elevator	A short comedy film by Greg Glienna, the creator of Meet the Parents, A Guy Thing and Relative Strangers. The film is produced by An Either Way Works Production (2010).
Hitchhiking	This is a scene from the movie "Mr. Bean's Holiday" (2007).
The lion's cage	This is a scene from Charlie Chaplin's movie "The Circus" (1928).
First Class	This is a scene from the movie "Bean: The Ultimate Disaster" (1997).
Safety Last	A scene from Harold Lloyd's silent film "Safety Last" (1923).
One cookie left	Source: Not available.
Noodles	A short film by Big Productions and directed by Jordan Feldman (2003).
Joggers	A silent segment by Benny Hill (1988).
Stapler	A short film is directed/co-written/shot/cut/visual-effects by Oscar Garath and produced (co-written) Luke Davies (2016).

The black hole	A short film by Future Shorts and directed by Phil Sampson and Olly Williams (2008).
Boxing	This is a scene from Buster Keaton's film Battling Butler (1926).

Table 3.1. List of selected videos.

As the second part of the task, the participants were asked to provide a free listing of elements that they thought contributed to humorousness of a video. The study produced a long list of features and elements that participants thought were contributing to the humor in a video. A total of 4290 responses were collected. These responses were then listed in ascending order based on their frequency. To prepare the final list, we chose only those elements that were listed by at least 25 participants. Based on participant's agreement, a total of eighteen elements were finalized to be used in the first study (reported and discussed in the next chapter). It is not an exhaustive list as different participants also mentioned some highly subjective components such as familiarity with the actor, familiarity with the film maker or character, relatability of a particular scene or actor with some previously watched humorous videos. For better understanding and organized analysis, we further categorized these elements into two broad categories namely: Actor based and Plot based elements.

A final list of elements categorized into the two broad groups that contribute to humor generation provided by the participants along with their frequency is provided in Table 3.2.

Plot or Actor	No.	Elements	Frequency
Actor based elements	1	Acting of the lead actor	78
	2	Acting of other actors	63
	3	Facial expressions of the lead actor	71
	4	Facial expression of other actors	51
	5	Body language/gestures of the lead actor	71
	6	Body language/gestures of other actors	41
	7	Dressing of actors	35
	8	Energy of Actor	49
Plot based elements	9	Background music	53
	10	Sequence of actions/scenes	55
	11	Unexpected ending	49
	12	Overall presentation	48
	13	Script/plot of the video	74
	14	Camera movement	57
	15	Background setup/location of the video	49
	16	Colors used in the video	37
	17	Duration of the video	35
	18	Expectation from humorous videos	59

3.2. Elements contributing to visual humor

Table 3.2 includes responses from both verbal language users and sign language users without making any distinction. Based on this list the second study is conducted to understand and explore the similarities and differences in appreciation of each of these elements and the overall reception of humor in the visual modality in the following studies by the two groups (verbal language users and signers).

The elements that were purely visual in nature are as follows:

- o Facial expressions of lead character/s and supporting characters
- o Body language of lead character/s and supporting characters
- o Costumes of the characters

o   Camera movements

o   Location or background

o   Colors used

These elements are particularly interesting because they differentiate humor in the visual mode from those in verbal modes. For instance, however descriptive a humorous verbal narrative is it cannot be comparable to a visual piece of humor that includes not only information about the actions of a character but also manage to show *how* those actions are carried out. This aspect of visual humor adds an extra layer of humorousness to the same action described in words. Also, each actor has their own style of expressions and reactions that certainly adds to the overall humor effect of a plotline. We would also like to mention that the first two elements listed above are part of the *comedy* in a video. As discussed in the previous chapter we understand that comedy is just one of the ways in which intended humor is realized in the visual mode. But, it certainly appears to be the most important element in the visual mode and that was also confirmed by the outcome of the pilot study.

In addition to facial expressions and body language, the camera movements and the way a scene is shot is extremely crucial and unique to the visual mode. Language, when creatively used has a lot of power to paint a visual image for its readers or listeners but the same things can be done more efficiently and simultaneously with the help of camera positioning and other techniques. For instance, certain angles in which a scene is shot or the way a character or event is highlighted with the help of zooming in adds significant value to the impact of the scene (discussed in details in the next chapter).

Few participants also reported choice of dresses for characters to be an element that contribute to humorousness which too is purely visual in nature. Even the best of jokes does not provide any information on what a character is wearing and if it is complementary to his/her actions or incongruous/inappropriate. This kind of information could be added in a longer humorous narrative but certainly not mandatory for the writer/speaker to provide such details. The same is true for the color schemas used in a video. The tone of a video is depicted with the help of color schemas by creators of visual humor but this element too is restricted and exclusive to this modality.

3.4 A note on videos not selected

As the forty videos that were shown to participants included few neutral (non-humorous) videos too, it was expected that those videos would receive lower ratings for humorousness by viewers. But some videos that were labeled as humorous by the production houses and also found listed as humorous videos at different online portals too did not receive as high ratings as expected. For instance, not all the Charlie Chaplin video clips made it to the final list of selected videos.

Hence, we also chose to examine the videos that did not get higher ratings for humorousness and attempted to look for some common elements and properties they might share. As anticipated, few common properties could be deduced once each of these videos were closely analyzed. For instance, videos that were too long consistently got lower ratings. However, the videos that were too short too did not get much appreciated. None of the videos shorter than 2.5 mins received high rating for humorousness. We also noticed the significance of plot in a humorous video. When a video lacked a clear plotline, and left the resolution or climax to the viewer's imagination, they did not get as appreciated as other videos with a clear plotline and a climax equivalent to a punchline in a humorous text. Additionally, excessively repetitive plotline, i.e., a particular when a particular scene is dragged for too long by being repeated, also was not appreciated by viewers. Abstract open-ended last scene in a video too earned lower ratings for the video. Participants preferred humorous videos that did not require much analysis or afterthought once the video ends. Melodramatic and over exaggerated acting that goes closer to slapstick comedy was also not as appreciated. Though at least one of the videos selected did have some slapstick comedy which we would discuss in detail in the next chapter.

A silent movie that has been used for several sign language research, especially for discourse analysis, titled "The Pear Story", that was considered having some moments of humor was not rated as humorous as many other videos that got selected for the second level studies. Later when asked most participants reported that they could not relate to the storyline and did not understand some parts of the plot. The video is based in rural background where the central theme of is a boy stealing a man's box full of pears he was collecting under a tree. As most of the participants were young students living in cities, they did not find the theme as relatable as other videos.

Based on the videos selected after this study and the list of elements that contribute to humor generation to various degrees, we designed a more focused study with a smaller number of participants that not only included rating of humorousness of videos but also finding the differences and similarities between signers and speakers regarding their opinion on the elements. This study would be reported in Chapter 5. But in the next chapter we would focus on the selected humorous videos and analyze them to explore the different humor mechanisms employed in each one of them. Although, most scholars acknowledge that each theory of humor is absolute in itself and takes care of a humorous content, intuitively there must be many instances of humor that fall within the scope of more than one theoretical framework. In the next chapter, we would focus on the prominent theories of humor and attempt to find its instances in the selected humorous videos.

4

Exploring Humorous Videos

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Humor generation in videos

4.3 Discussion and Conclusion

4.1 Introduction

To understand the composition of videos we first need to understand how these videos differ from linguistic humorous content. With language, humor is generated in forms of jokes, narratives, stand-up comedy routines, etc. Videos too, that generate humor with the help of dialogues between characters or monologues are different from silent videos that are analyzed for this thesis. Hence, they can also be treated along with other linguistic forms of humorous content. There have been many studies to understand the composition of jokes (Hetzron, 1991; Vaid, et.al., 2003; Dynel, 2009; Attardo and Pickerning, 2011; Biegagło, 2014;) as well as longer narratives in many forms (Mintz, 1985; Roberts, 2000; Yus, 2016).

Therefore, this chapter aims to understand the composition of humorous content in the visual mode, focusing only on silent humorous videos, looking for instances of established theories and mechanisms of humor generation as discussed in the previous chapter. Based on the studies we discussed in the second chapter we can propose a categorization of the popular theories of humor. They are the following:

- o Traditional theories: This category includes the Superiority Theory, Relief Theory and Incongruity Theory
- o Linguistic theories: This category includes the Semantic Script Theory and the General Theory of Verbal Humor
- o Cognitive theory: The relevance theory belongs to this category.

We could like to assert that the first category, i.e. Traditional theories can be predominantly considered as providers of guidelines for mechanisms to generate humor in any medium. Thus, these theories are not modality dependent and should apply to humorous videos as much as in case of jokes or any other linguistic examples. The Linguistic theories on the other hand are largely exclusive to humor generated in the verbal/linguistic mode. SSTH's principal of humor being a matter of recipient's competence to identify intended humor and GTVH considering all the components that come together including the structure and sociological and cognitive information do not provide any information regarding how humor is generated. The Relevance theory too, as pointed out in the second chapter revolves around reasoning for humor reception by a recipient. Though some scholars have made attempts to analyze humorous linguistic units within the

framework of RT, generation of humor in videos do seem to fall within the scope of RT. Thus, in this chapter we would focus on the three theories from the first category to analyze humorous contents in the visual mode. For practical purposes, we also had to restrict the videos we would use as a reference for the study as there are numerous videos available in the social media that claim to be humorous and it would not be possible to study each and every video. Hence, we restricted ourselves to the eleven humorous videos selected from the pilot study.

4.2 Humor generation in videos

Before we begin to analyze the selected humorous videos we first need to understand how a humorous video is created. In the making of a humorous video, like any other creative production, a number of considerations need to be made. The primary requirement of any video is to have a plot that would convey the intentions behind making it. In case of a humorous video, where the director, writer and producer intend to amuse the audiences many other factors become as important as the plot. The execution of the humorous plot by a suitable actor/s who is believed to be most efficient to play the role should be selected to ensure the on-screen impact of the humorous plot. The actor/s with the help of his facial expressions, gestures and overall body-language makes additional efforts in generating humor. It is not only the central character of a humorous video but also the supporting cast and their reactions that create the overall humorous impact that makes its audiences laugh or amused.

Though the actors might appear to be the most important element in a humorous video we cannot deny that the plot should be humorous too with a climax that can be considered the counterpart of a punchline. Humorous videos could have an element of surprise that amuses its audiences or it could be a video that was expected to be humorous from the very first scene itself. This could depend on the familiarity a viewer might have with the actor/s or the expectation from certain directors, writers or production houses.

Further, a video adds humorous effects with the help of some film making techniques too. For instance, use of music that provides pointers for amusement within a scene or use of camera in creative ways that would highlight the humorous sections of the plotline. Camera work, typically zooming in or out, can play a crucial role in enhancing the humor effect. Sometimes while editing a video, use of slow motion or fast forwarding too is used to create a certain kind of humor.

Some other factors that contribute to humor in a video are costumes worn by the characters, the location where the plot is designed around, etc. The costumes too can be humorous either by being inappropriate or too suitable for the character played by an actor. Apart from these techniques of humor generation in a video there could be other unique mechanisms used by certain creators that are exclusive to their style.

Keeping in mind the above discussion, we now examine the eleven humorous videos selected after the pilot study and explore the mechanisms used in them for humor generation. A detailed scene-by-scene description is provided in Appendix1. We first briefly discuss the plot-line of each of the videos and then examine the different mechanisms and elements exploited in each one of them to generate humor and receive desired response by its viewers. As not all elements in a video play as prominent a role as others we would discuss only those that contribute the most to humor generation. We would also include a discussion on background music for videos where it plays a significant role for humor effect. Music is used in a very prominent way for most humorous videos indicating change of plot line, suggesting humor in certain scenes and also climax, it is worth making a mention of that element. Further, we would explore to find instances of any of the traditional theories at work either at the plot level or in the actions of the actors involved. Based on the discussion on the structure of Jokes we would be using the term *punchline* to refer to the scene/instance in a video that carries the core of humor.

The format we followed for the analysis of videos is as follows:

- o   Summarized plotline of the video
- o   The elements and factors that contributed to humor generation
- o   The mechanisms of humor generation employed by the videos keeping in mind the traditional theories of humor

Now we proceed to discuss one video at a time following the above-mentioned steps.

The Elevator

In a nutshell: The video is about a man who wants to go the top floor of a building by an elevator. It is a regular day for him as he is dressed very casually. As the elevator moves upwards more and more people come in making the man worried about his and the elevator's safety. At one point, he

just gives up and comes out of the elevator hurriedly. He then goes to the second elevator to continue his travel to his desired floor and is relieved that this one is not as loaded as the other. But his relief does not stay for too long and he soon realizes that he has endangered his life anyways. When he is finally left alone at the elevator he looks perplexed and just subtly laughed at his own situation. But he still has two more floors to cross before he reaches his destination and the viewers are left to wonder if he reached there safe and alone or is he met with more trouble in the next floor.

For humor:

- o Use of background music: The video uses music as an indicator of plot change and climax. All the emotions the lead actor is going through is complimented by the music.
- o Use of expressions: The lead actor expresses all his mental states with the help of his expressions. The viewers could clearly understand when the man was anxious and when he left a sense of relief. Even at the end when the man just smiles, he could convey that he was just amazed and laughed at his own situation. All the supporting actors show no expressions, which also contributed to the plot. As for them it was just a simple elevator ride. The straight faces of the supporting cast enhanced the worriedness of the lead actor.
- o Costume: the lead actor is shown wearing casual clothes whereas all the people in the first elevator are dressed in casuals and beach wear (loose fitting floral print shirts and shorts).
- o Punch line: The punch line of the video comes at the very end when the lead actor's attempt to find a safer place for himself turns futile and he lands in another tricky situation, just the nature of danger changed.
- o Camera: the camera movement, especially when the view from top is focused to show how trapped the lead actor is in the elevator is interesting. There are also some use of camera showing the elevator shaking, the zoom in on people coughing on the actor, the slow motion when the final man walks towards the camera and prompts the actor to leave the elevator, that contribute to humor generation in the video.
- o Stereotypes: The use of many fat people, in trying to make the lead character uncomfortable is a conscious effort by the makers of the video. The same effect could be attained by increasing the number of people instead of fewer very fat people.

Humor theories:

- o Superiority: The lead character considers himself to be more superior than all the fat people who enter the elevator. It is reflected clearly twice, once when he feels comfortable that a thin young boy is standing outside the elevator and also when he has a sigh of relief when he looks at the people in the second elevator. The sense of superiority is the main theme of the entire video as the main plight of the lead character is that he feels superior to others and that produces humor.

- o Relief: The final punch line of the video is drawn from the relief theory when the lead actor, along with the audience is relieved that he is finally alone and safe in the elevator.

- o Incongruity: The scene where the lead actor feels that the elevator has fallen to the ground because of the excess weight of all the passengers is an example of incongruity. The fear that the elevator would fall was not supported by actual facts but his imagination and tentative estimation of each of the passengers' weight. Also, the scene showing the fall was incongruous as it was not clarified if that actually happened or was just the lead actor's imagination as none of the other people reacted when the lift was shown to fall to the ground floor.

Figure 4.1. A scene from the video Elevator showing interesting camera angle

Hitchhiking

In a nutshell: The scene shows Mr. Bean stranded at a lonely highway trying to get a lift from someone who is coming on a bike. An old man suddenly appears riding a bike which gives Mr. Bean a chance to take a lift. The man stops to help him but he is riding an old and very small bike. Mr. Bean tries to take advantage of the opportunity by tricking the man and escaping with his bike. But the bike being too slow gets him nowhere as the man could catch up to him by just walking. The man just grabs the bike and pushes Mr. Bean off and goes away leaving Mr. Bean stranded on the road side again. As we can see that they are the only two people around and no other vehicles or people crossed them we can assume that it would not be very easy to get any help or lift from another person any time soon.

For humor:

- o Actors: There are just two actors in the scene one of which is Mr. Bean who is known to be funny and silly all the time. The other actor is an old man with hardly any expressions on his face. This contrast is really good and helps get some humorous impact. Mr. Bean uses all his facial expressions to convey his thoughts and feelings whereas the old man just does everything with a straight face.
- o Set-up: The location where the scene is set-up is really interesting. The fact that it is a breezy summer afternoon and a very lonely place adds to the impact of the plot.
- o Punch line: The scene ends with a punch-line when the man pushes Mr. Bean off the bike leaving him stranded and frustrated.
- o Camera: The camera movement is handled very nicely revealing the kind of motorcycle the old man was riding with a side view. Also, when the man catches up to Mr. Bean the audience is taken by surprise and the camera did not reveal the speed of the bike when Mr. Bean steals the bike leaving the man behind.

Theories of Humor:

There is no clear theory of humor used in this video. The humor is derived more from the situation and acting than any formal tactics. Though we can find traces of Superiority when Mr. Bean thought he could fool the old man stealing his bike but failing at that when the bike did not support his intentions. Also, there is a certain incongruity in the kind of motorbike the old man was riding as it certainly did not appear the kind of vehicle one should be riding on a long-deserted highway like road. But neither of the instances can be considered a clear or strong manifestation of the two theories as other plausible explanations could be provided for the behavior of the lead actor as well as the choice of vehicle.

Figure 4.2. A scene from the video Hitchhiking hinting at superiority

The Lion's Cage

In a nutshell*:* This video is about a man who gets accidentally trapped in a lion's cage. He tries to make no mistakes and safely escape from the cage but nothing is working in his favor. It is when the lion wakes up and does not attack him. He gets confident and tries to impress a woman for being brave and befriending a lion. But then he gets scared with just one roar from the lion and saved by the woman who unlocks the gate for him to escape. At the end he manages to impress the woman by his casual gymnastic moves.

For Humor:

- o Actor: The lead actor of the video, Charlie Chaplin, is one of the most popular and globally known actors in the genre of humor and comedy. His every expression and his unique style of overall acting contributes to humorous effect.
- o Background music: The video belonging to the era of silent movies used background music as a powerful aid in communicating the changes in mood and events in every scene. The music greatly contributes to identifying the subtle cues to humor intended in each scene.
- o The plot: The plot of the video is very interesting and has elements of humor like being trapped in a cage with a lion, a barking dog, etc. that are not entirely performance dependent. Hence there are continuous equivalents of a punchline throughout the video to generate humorous response by viewers.
- o Stereotype: The stereotype against women for being emotionally weak is used for humorous effect.

Theories of humor:

- o Incongruity: There are multiple instances of incongruity in the video both at the level of the plot as well as in actions of the lead actor. The lion not attacking a man trapped in its cage, the man getting too relaxed as confident when the lion does not attack and believes that he has befriended the lion, etc. are clear examples of incongruity in the video.
- o Relief: This video greatly relies on relief mechanism of humor generation. Every instance when the lion could have woken up to attack the man trapped in the cage, like dropping a huge vessel and the barking dog evoke a sense of relief and results in laughter or amusement by the viewers. Also, the scene where the lead actor comes face to face with a tiger in the connected cage also plays with the same emotion.

o Superiority: When the lead actor does not get attacked by the lion and it just walks away after sniffing him, he feels a sense of superiority which is clearly shown by the facial expressions and his following actions. He dares to believe that the lion is harmless and he is safe inside the cage. He even extends his feeling of superiority when he invites the woman into the cage pretending to be not scared of the animal at all.

Figure 4.3 Scene from the video Lion's cage showing (a) superiority and (b) relief

First Class

In a Nutshell: Mr. Bean is travelling in a plane where after boarding he realizes he is travelling business class. He then enjoys his journey and makes an error of judgement trying to entertain a child. After de-boarding the plane he misleads the security people at the airport that he is carrying some weapon which makes them question his sanity.

*For humor***:**

o Actor: The lead actor being the character Mr. Bean, who is renowned for being one of the most popular comic/humorous characters ever in history is the main source of humor. The established characteristics of Mr. Bean is used to generate humor.
o Plot: The continuous plot with the lead character exploring and creating confusion is humorous.
o Punch line: The video clip does not have a single punch line as it is a series of events. The final scene where the head of security questions his sanity could be considered as the punchline to all the events.

Theories of Humor:

o Incongruity: The behavior of the lead actor is extremely incongruous.

   a. A person would never do anything to mislead airport security to believe that he/she is carrying a weapon and can be dangerous. Even though he managed to draw their attention, one would normally just clarify that they were playing or acting out rather than running away from them to alert them.

   b. A passport being the most important identification document a person could be carrying while travelling is unlikely to have a photograph where the person is making funny faces. It would be highly improbable that a person can travel anywhere with that kind of document let alone taken lightly after being detained for suspicion of carrying a gun.

Figure 4.4. Scenes (a) and (b) from the video First class showing incongruity

o Superiority: When Mr. Bean is told that he is carrying a business class ticket he just feels too superior to all the people in the economy class. He even tries to mock them by showing off his boarding pass. His body language changing with this feeling of superiority is one of the main humor elements in the video.

Figure 4.5. Scene from the video First class showing superiority

Safety last

In a nutshell: This video is about a man struggling to climb up a tall building and all the hurdles he faces on the way that stops him and blocks his way to the top. He is greeted by many instances that could have resulted to be fatal but he manages to somehow safely reach the roof of the building and meet with a woman with whom he seems to be in love.

For Humor:

- o Actor/s: All the actors in the video played their character very well and with ease. The lead actor having the responsibility of carrying on the actions in the plot that must have been physically taxing contributed to the humor in those events.
- o Facial expressions: As the plot of the video is heavily dependent on exaggerated physical activities it was important for each of the actors to have a synchrony between their actions and facial expressions. Every scene where the lead actor is supposed to be tired, or trapped in a situation that could be dangerous the facial expression is complementary.
- o Use of props: The video is totally dependent on the plotline for humor. The scenes were cleverly written to match the objects available as props for each of the events to appear as

natural as possible. Every scene seems as real as possible and each of the objects that make the climbing up difficult are placed in the most efficient manner. For instance, the huge clock being right next to a window where the lead actor loses his balance was a conscious decision made by the filmmakers and the script writers.

Theories of Humor:

- o Relief: This video can be seen as one of the best examples of relief being used as a mechanism in the visual mode. As the video is a compilation of scenes where the audience is constantly worried and anxious for the safety of the lead character, every instance of "back to safety" gives them a sense of relief and results in amused or nervous laughter.
- o Incongruity: The very theme of the video is incongruous as any sane person would not suggest his friend to climb up a tall building nor would any sane man accept such a proposal. Also, the huge crowd that had gathered at the road watching the man climbing up and witnessing each and every potential accident that could have almost killed the man and still not making any attempts to save him is also conceptually incongruous. This includes the people who were inside the building. The two construction workers who pushed the log almost making the man fall off the building did not make any efforts to save him nor pull him into the building.

Figure 4.6. Scene from the video Safety last showing incongruity

One Cookie left

In a nutshell: The video clip is about a girl and a boy, probably brother and sister who are running about the whole house trying to con each other to get a bite of the last cookie left in the kitchen, finally to lose the cookie to a man casually standing in the kitchen.

For humor:

- o Era: The movie is made in black and white with a fact pace run mode. The style is copied from the times of classic silent comedy movies when the pace of the video was faster than real time movement pace including the music.
- o Punch line: The video's punch line comes at the end when the man standing in the kitchen gets the cookie without making any efforts to win it.

Theories of humor:

- o Incongruity: The fact that an adult boy and a girl are running about the house, chasing and conning each other to just get a bite of a cookie is extremely incongruous. They could have split the cookie or usually grown-ups can sacrifice a chocolate chip cookie for someone. Them behaving like children over a cookie is incongruous, which is the main source of humor in the video.

Figure 4.7. Scene from the video One cookie left showing incongruity

Noodles

In a nutshell: This video is about a typical scene in a restaurant full of people. There is a man who seems to be very bored when he came in, but after a woman walks in, he feels happy and he wants to admire her beauty. He is unable to look at her comfortably as there are too many people in the restaurant and especially because of a man who is too huge and blocks his view.

For humor:

- o Actor: This video works with a very simple and straightforward plotline for humor generation. The actors are crucial to the plot and the responsibility is mostly on them to execute the humor elements.
- o Stereotype: The body image stereotype is used in the video very effectively. The man who comes and sits next to the lead character could have been of any size but the film makers decide to have a huge man play that character.
- o Camera: The use of camera is creatively done in this video to enhance the humor effects. After a series of focused frames on the lead actor and the woman, the camera suddenly zooms out to show how every single man at the table was doing the exact same thing the lead actor was doing to get a view of the woman.

Theories of Humor:

- o This video does not appear to use any of the traditional theoretical mechanisms for humor generation. Though a slight hint of superiority can be sensed in the use of stereotype mentioned above with the help of expressions by the lead actor as seen in figure 4.8.

Figure 4.8. A scene from the video Noodles

Joggers

In a nutshell: This video is about a day in a city where every single person on the street is jogging. People are doing their regular chores while jogging and more and more people join in.

For humor:

- o Actor: The video's lead actor, Benny Hill is a very popular actor of his time and was most popularly known for his television show that had many humorous and comic sketches well appreciated by the audiences. The actor known for his style and unique expressions can alone generate humor even with absence of a strong plotline.
- o Plotline: This video relies on the basic plotline that all people are jogging on the streets. This very concept is humorous as it is not normal to encounter such a sight.
- o Slapstick Comedy: This video is also a great example of slapstick comedy (Christopher, 2002; Kort and Richards, 2014). The actions in every scene by each of the characters is exaggerated physical activities that go beyond normal physical comedy.

Theories of Humor:

- o Incongruity: The running theme of the plot is heavily conceptually incongruous. One does not usually walk out on the streets finding every single person jogging. In one of the scenes a woman enters her house jogging and continues with her household chores while jogging too. Also, an old woman who is supposed to be on a wheelchair too is willing to make extra efforts to jog faster than others. All the people on the street are so focused on jogging that they do not even notice an old woman roll off a cliff, a great case of incongruity as no human being can survive such a fall. Even first scene where a man leaves his newly wed wife to get dressed and jog is incongruous.

- Relief: There are also some instances of relief mechanism used in the video for humorous impact. For instance, the old woman whose fall should have been fatal, casually standing up gives a sigh of relief to the audience.

Figure 4.9. Scenes from the video Joggers hinting incongruity and relief

Stapler

In a nutshell: The short film is about two people stuck in a mundane job trying to bring some drama and thrill into their lives.

For humor:

- Actors: There are two actors in the video and neither of them could be labelled as the protagonist. The actors bring in elements of humor by exaggerated expressions and actions, like jumping off tables and rolling on the floor. Even then bored and exhausted looks as well as the glances exchanged by them are very loud.
- Plot: The plot of the film is very simple with a deeper meaning which could be understood only at the end when the entire exchange of looks is repeated between the two characters. Only people who would manage to look beyond the lateral events and get engaged with the plot would understand or discover the deeper meaning intended by the film makers. There could be more than one interpretation the viewers could arrive at as it has been left unsaid and open.
- Set-up: The plot is set in an office where we expect least dramatics and action. This contrast brings in some elements of humor. The set-up of the film is very relatable to most viewers

in modern times as the intended viewership is mostly young adults living a similar mundane life.

o Camera movement: This film exploits camera movements to the maximum. The entire running sequence and the dramatic glares exchanged are emphasized greatly by the camera movement. The element of surprise when the staples are shown hits the man's forehead creating suspense and then showing that it is a picture where they hit was greatly handled by the camera.

o Punch-line: This film does not have a punchline.

Theories of humor:

o Incongruity: The film uses incongruity to the fullest. The exaggerated exchange of glances between the characters over a simple stapler is completely incongruous. Also, the running towards the pack of staples and the highly dramatic catching of the staples just by holding up the stapler are not really usual for any person. The contrast of behavior and the mundane office setup is also incongruous.

o Relief: The scene where the staples hit the man's forehead was intended to create a great sense of anxiety in the audience and when they realize that it was just a picture that got hit, there is a sense of relief that results in laughter.

Figure 4.10. A scene from the video Stapler showing incongruity

The Black Hole

In a nutshell: The video is about a man in an office working late hours all alone. He encounters a magical/supernatural experience while doing his mundane job. But he gets trapped in a worse and smaller space because of his own desire to get most out of the experience.

For humor:

- o Actor: There is only one actor in the video hence all the load is on him to convey the message and humor. The character did not have much to do in terms of acting other than a few expressions of smirk here and there. The two emotions he had to portray, i.e. boredom and bewilderment are expressed quite well.
- o Plot: The plot of the video is very simple and linear. The plot also comes with a hidden message, that one should not fall prey to greed and be satisfied with what can be achieved and received naturally than going lengths. The plot *per se* does not have humor elements.
- o Set-up: The set-up is interesting from the point of view that a boring late evening in an office is hardly a place for magical experiences. The creator of the video used the contrast of the set-up and the plot to their advantage.
- o Camera: The camera movements are interestingly done. The way the character is introduced in the video, slowly covering the empty office was cleverly done to clarify that the character is alone in the office. Also, the zooming in and out from the paper was effective. The final shot where the man is trapped and the camera just zooms out of the cabin had an impact and clarifies that he is stuck alone in the safe.
- o Punch line: The video does not follow a typical sequence or pattern of a humorous plot. Hence it does not have a punch-line *per se*. The video was more an amusing one than humorous and thus the effects of humor came more from the acting of the character than the plot. When the man gets stuck in the safe can be seen as the conclusive element for the video but only if the viewers were convinced that such a paper could really be printed out of a machine.

Theories of Humor:

No clear theories of humor have been used in this video. The makers did not intend to get the audiences to laugh out loud, rather just enjoy a piece of amusement with a hint of message in the end.

Figure 4.11. A scene from the video Black hole

Boxing

In a nutshell: Buster Keaton is being pushed for a boxing match when he is clearly not a professional nor very keen on fighting. He even struggles to go past the ropes around the ring to enter and start the match. Even when he enters the rings after multiple trials he has to be helped by the referee to wear his gloves the right way and also take the correct position to start the fight. The referee is quite helpful at the start of the match trying to guide him on how to save himself from an opponent's punches and also stopping the fight when it goes out of hand. But after a while the referee also gives up on Keaton and joins his opponent in punching and kicking him. After much struggle when Keaton finally comes back to the changing room and falls on a bench to get some rest and sleep, a man from nowhere comes and starts giving him a rough massage. He tries to stop the man and talk to him but he pinned him down and punches continue to shower on Keaton's back.

For humor:

- o Actor/s: This video clip has three actors and one of them is Buster Keaton, who is a known and acclaimed comedian and actor of those times. The other actors too were regulars in such cinemas those times. All the actors played a very significant role in humor generation. Their expressions and body language did all the work of conveying the plotline and there never felt the need to have dialogues for better understanding.
- o Plot: An untrained man put inside a boxing ring for a match with a clearly professional boxer is certainly a plot that would evoke humorous effect for viewers.
- o Music: The music for this video is very suggestive of the events taking place. The viewers can get cue to when then the plot shifts and that trigger humor response.
- o Setup: The setup for the plot is appropriate but does not contribute much to the humor of the video. Though the boxing ring surrounded by ropes did play a role in generating humor with every failed attempt of entering the ring. The ropes were also very creatively used to generate humor response.
- o Camera movements: The camera does not move much in this video nor are there many instances of zooming in or out for humor generation.
- o Punchline: the entire video and its plotline are humorous. Though, the final scene where Keaton attempts to get some rest after getting punched numerous times but ends up getting more punches on his back, even though the intention of the man is to give him a massage, can be considered as the punchline to the setup.

Theories of Humor:

- o Incongruity: Incongruity runs as the central theme of this video. Why should an inexperienced man be sent into a boxing ring for a fight with a person who definitely seems more trained? The lead actor does not even know a way to enter the boxing ring nor does he know how to correctly wear the boxing gloves. The attempts of crossing the rope to enter the ring and the actor getting stuck in most unexpected manners multiple times is also incongruous. The last scene where the man suddenly appears from nowhere and starts giving the lead actor a massage and not even willing to hear what the man has to say or if he is pleading to stop and continue the massage also is quite incongruous.

Figure 4.12. Scenes from the video Boxing using incongruity

4.3 Discussion and conclusion

This chapter was focused on examining humorous videos that were rated humorous by a set of participants and to explore how humor is generated in them with the help of different elements. We also analyzed if the mechanisms of humor generation discussed in the literature (mostly for verbal) also find representation in the visual medium. After detailed analysis of each of the selected videos, we can conclusively say that the traditional theories of humor are not restricted to verbal humor. The makers of humorous content in the visual medium heavily depend on these mechanisms to generate humorous plotline for a video. The frequent use of incongruity at the conceptual as well as action (behavior) level is noteworthy. A humorous video uses incongruity in either of the ways for audiences to appreciate humor in them. Though, some traces of superiority and relief too cannot be ignored. Relief in the visual modality is represented with the help of physical comedy or slapstick comedy. In some cases, the plotline too creates situations of relief for the audience for amusement. Interestingly, Bergson (1901) in *Le Rire* discusses three aspects of humor. They are as follows:

- o The comic element in form of movement, which includes gestures, attitudes of actors, etc.
- o The comic element in situation, generated with the techniques of repetition, inversion, etc.

    o   The comic character

It is not surprising that all the three aspects mentioned by him are included and exploited in videos intended to be humorous even in modern times. One can simply not make a humorous video without having all the three aspects. The degree in which each aspect would be included may depend on the video making team. But any one of the aspects when excluded, can result in a video not as appreciated by the audience as intended by the film makers. Some of the elements discussed by Attardo (1994) as "knowledge resources" in his General Theory of Verbal Humor, also surface in visual humor. For instance, the presence of a target or butt of a joke and situation.

Hence, though verbal humor is certainly structurally different from visual humor, as seen in case of humorous videos, to generate humorous content they both rely on some universal mechanisms that have been identified by scholars since the beginning of humor research. The mode in which humor needs to be generated just determines the structural components, i.e. choice of words and sentence structures, etc. for humor in verbal mode whereas acting, camera work, creating situations, etc. in the visual mode. The underlying mechanisms that play a role in the choices of structural components for each mode are more universal in nature and provide a guideline to the creators of humorous content. A combination of mode specific requirements fulfilled in the best possible manner and the universal mechanisms of humor generation employed by the creative team generates the best humorous content which is then appreciated by the recipients as intended.

In the next chapter, we would begin exploring the reception patterns for humorous videos by people using different modalities of languages, i.e. sign and verbal to understand better the ways in which people appreciate humor in general and also humor generating elements. The focus would hence be on the influences of our language modality can potentially have in one's reception and appreciation of humor and the cultural influences in this regard.

Study I

Humorous videos: Composition and Reception by Deaf and Hearing Viewers

5.1 Introduction

This chapter reports a study aiming to understand the anatomy of a humorous video and also how viewers using different modality of language differ in humor reception. Keeping in mind the objective of this study it was divided into three sub-sections. In this chapter, we discuss all the three sub-sections. The first section discusses choice of humorous videos based on ratings by signers and speakers. In the second section, these elements are correlated with the rating of humorous videos by the two sets of participants (verbal participants and signers) to determine if they focus on different or similar aspects in a video for humor. Finally, in the third section, we analyzed retold narratives by both the groups of participants to understand the focal parts of a humorous video according to them and the discourse mechanisms employed by the users of different modalities of language in doing so. Finally, the viewing patterns of people watching a humorous video is also analyzed and discussed to attempt in understanding the nature of components in a video that make people react positively to attempted humor generation and if there is any difference in this regard between people who use different modalities of language.

5.2 Study I

Based on the outcomes from the pilot study (a set of videos that were humorous and a list of elements that contribute to humor generation) a more focused study was then designed to understand the composition of humorous content in the visual modality and how different people receive and appreciate those elements.

As mentioned in the first chapter, the objectives for this study were as follows:

1. To examine the anatomy of humorous videos focusing on finding the elements in a video that contribute to the humor effect and also explore which elements are more prominent than others in generating humor.
2. To understand the role modality of language plays in a viewer's reception and appreciation of humor in videos and their compositional elements.

Hence the study was designed to make an attempt in answering questions that could contribute to the fulfilling of our objectives. The questions were the following,

o The elements that come together and compose a visually humorous content.

o The significance of each of the elements and their weightage and contribution in the overall humorousness.

o The similarities and differences in reception and appreciation of humor by people who use different language modes for communication.

o The elements of visual modality producing laughter and amusement.

5.2.1 Participants

Sixty-five participants (the same set of participants reported in the previous chapter as part of Study 2) participated in the study with an average age of twenty-four. Fifty-three participants out of sixty-five were verbal language users and twelve were sign language users. There was a mix of male (thirty-eight) and female (twenty-seven) participants. Since the role of gender in humor reception was not a concern for this study, the specific differences in narrative between the two genders were not analyzed differently. It was ensured that the video each participant watched was new to them and no prior knowledge of what they were going to watch was provided to them. Each participant willingly volunteered to engage in the study and received a token money in form of vouchers.

As in the pilot study, the verbal language users were a mix of people from different first languages, i.e., English, Polish, Spanish, Italian and Hindi. It was ensured that all the participants were fluent in English as a second language and had at least a B2 level competence. This was important as the survey was to be conducted in English. All the participants were graduate students in Italy, Spain and Poland.

The sign language participants were all users of sign language as their first language. This group was also a mix of participants with PJM (Polish Sign Language), LIS (Italian Sign language), ASL (American Sign Language) and ISL (Indian Sign Language). Sign language users who are partially deaf were not included for this study. So, only completely deaf people with sign language as their first language participated in the study. We ensured that a sign language interpreter is always present during the studies were conducted for clear instructions to be given. Also, most of the signers were not fluent with reading English and filling up the questionnaire in English. So, we took the help of our interpreters to translate the questions and also complete the survey.

Particularly for the third part of the study, all the participants signed a consent form in which they agree to be filmed. Irrespective of their first language, all the participants were asked to narrated the content of the video in English (verbal language users) as it was ensured that all of the participants are fluent users of English as their second language. The signers on the other hand retold the contents of a video using the sign language they know depending on their location and training in a certain sin language. The signers were given the option to retelling in their first language as opposed to verbal language users as there is hardly use of a 'Universal Sign Language' that is commonly used by deaf people across the world as their second language. The signed narratives were translated with the help of professional interpreters for analysis. Though we understand and acknowledge the significance of first language in ease of narrating and conveying information, the purpose of this study not being linguistic analysis of lexical and structural choices made by the participants did not make a difference if the narration was done in their second language. Also, the participants were only retelling what they had watched in a video rather than being humorous by themselves. Since, our objective was only to concentrate on examining the focus on humor elements and choices they make in including, excluding or stressing and elaborating certain aspects of a humorous videos use of second language did not appear to be a great hindrance.

5.2.2 Stimulus material

Based on the pilot study eleven humorous videos were selected and also a list of elements was compiled to serve as the stimulus for this study. All the videos were short humorous videos/clips from various sources available on the internet via YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. Some of the clips are short clips taken from a full film and others are complete short films made and produced for humor impact. The videos that were smaller clips scene from a full movie were complete in themselves and were ensured to have a clear plotline and not dependent any reference from any previous scenes. Also, as mentioned in the pilot study, we did not want any linguistic distractions so, we chose to eliminate any humor generated with the use of verbal cues, hence all the videos selected were silent, i.e. there were no dialogues. Humor in these videos were entirely generated with the help of action by the characters and the plot. Hence, the videos could be largely categorized into three parts: (i) Old classics: a mix of Charles Chaplin, Harold Lloyd and Buster

Keaton, (ii) Modern classics: Mr. Bean and Benny Hill, and (iii) Modern-Contemporary: videos made by small production houses and published mostly on the internet via social media.

5.2.3 Procedure and task

To conduct the study, first a larger set of participants were contacted through mail and their consent was acquired. The ones who agreed, were sent a link to perform a creativity test[4]. The creativity test was conducted to choose those participants who could think imaginatively and creatively. The test took around 10 minutes. Only those participants who answered more than 80% questions were included in the final study.

This study was divided into three sub-sections; a) watching a humorous video, b) filling up a questionnaire with objective (rating of video's humorousness and elements) as well as subjective questions, and c) Retelling the contents of the video.

For the study an online google form was created. Each participant was shown two videos, randomly selected. The participants were required to watch the videos one by one and after each of the viewing they were asked fill in the questionnaire firstly by providing their personal details, like; age, gender, first language, other languages known, English proficiency level. Further they were asked to do the following tasks:

- Rate the video for its humorousness on a scale of 1-5 (1 being low and 5 being high).
- Answer specific questions regarding all the eighteen elements identified from the first study. Participants were asked to rate them on a scale of 1-5 (1 being less contributing and 5 being highly contributing).
- The third section was more subjective in nature and the following questions were asked to get the participants' inputs beyond ratings allowing them to comment on aspects beyond the restricted questionnaire.

    Q1. Could you relate to the video from your past or present experiences? (Yes or No)

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[4] www.testmycreativity.com

Q2. Did the title of the video contribute to the perception of humorousness in the video? (Yes or No)

Q3. Please provide additional comments on the video (if any).

The purpose of asking the subjective questions was to get an insight into how personal experiences impact the reception and appreciation of humor in a video.

- o Further, the final task was to retell the contents of the video.

While the participants watched the video, they were also video recorded with their consent. These recordings were used to analyze the way viewers respond while watching a humorous video and also to examine if viewers laugh or show some signs of amusement corresponding to the elements of the video they rated as high contributors to humor generation.

Once the participants were done with the rating of elements, they were asked to narrate the contents of the video either to another participant who had not watched the video or directly to the camera. They made that choice by themselves but in most cases, participants chose to retell the video's contents to a friend than to the camera. Their narration was then analyzed by four independent volunteers who were part of neither designing the studies nor watching and rating the videos to look for generalizations that could be drawn for getting an insight into the world of humor reception and the influence of the modality of language one uses.

5.2.4 Hypotheses

Following are the hypotheses for the three sub-sections of this study:

- o Part I: As humor and especially sense of humor in a person is believed to provide an understanding of a person's personality (Stump, 1939; Craik and Ware, 1998; Martin, 2003; Proyer, et al. 2010; Ruch, 2010; Greengross, et al. 2012; Heint, 2017) and the present study makes an attempt in highlighting the similarities and differences in recognition and reception of humor in videos between different groups of people who use different modality of language.

o   Hence, the rating of high humorousness in a video should be different for verbal language users and sign language users. A video not rated as highly humorous by speakers could be rated as highly humorous by the deaf participants.

o   Part II: Bouchauveau (1994) gave a description of the ways in which humor is generated in sign languages. One of the most prominent of those ways is imitation or role-play. This particular element is not an essential requirement in generation of humor for verbal language users. Also, the visual experience influences the deaf knowledge, opinion and creativity, thus reception of humor and its processing is also greatly influenced by the visual-manual modality (Sutton-Spence and Donna Jo Napoli, 2012).

o   Thus, the sign language users should rate the aspects of physical comedy, i.e. gestures, facial expressions, etc. as higher contributors in humor generation as compared to verbal language users.

o   Part III: Based on the studies on deaf culture and humor (Baldwin, 1982; Hall, 1991; Johnson, et al., 1994; Bienvenu, 2001), we understand the world of deaf culture and how it influences the understanding and reception of humor. Few studies also explore the modality dependent uniqueness of production and appreciation of humor in sign languages (Sanders, 1986; Rutherford, 1993; Napoli and Sutton-Spence, 2011; Sutton-Spence and Napoli, 2012) and focus on the use of classifier expressions in signed narratives.

o   Hence, the retold narrative about the content of a humorous video should have some differences for the verbal and signed groups of people. While retelling the contents of a video sign language users should make use of classifiers for anaphoric references. Also, they should focus more on role playing than focusing on the punch line of the video plot.

5.3 Observations

For this study, the responses to each of the videos were analyzed and a contrastive analysis was done to understand the differences between sign language users and verbal language users. For statistical analysis, a simple linear regression was performed. An average rating was also calculated for each element for videos.

5.3.1 Part I

From the first section of the questionnaire where the participants were asked to rate humorous videos we could find a clear distinction in the pattern confirming our hypothesis. Not all the videos that were rated a highly humorous by sign language users also received similar ratings by verbal language users. Though that could not be said true for all the videos. There were some videos that were rated as highly humorous by both the groups of participants. So was also the case with few videos rated as moderately humorous. Table 5.1 shows the differences between the rating pattern in signed and verbal language groups.

Videos	Verbal Language Users	Sign language Users
Elevator	Highly humorous	Moderately humorous
Hitchhiking	Highly humorous	Highly humorous
The lion's cage	Highly humorous	Highly humorous
First Class	Highly humorous	Highly humorous
Safety last	Highly humorous	Highly humorous
One Cookie left	Moderately humorous	Moderately humorous
Noodles	Moderately humorous	Moderately humorous
Joggers	Moderately humorous	Highly humorous
Stapler	Moderately humorous	Moderately humorous
The Black hole	Moderately humorous	Moderately humorous
Boxing	Moderately humorous	Highly humorous

Table 5.1. Differences between the rating pattern in signed and verbal language groups.

Videos that got an average rating above 4.5 were categorized as highly humorous whereas any rating below that were categorized as moderately humorous. We can find a clear pattern that some videos were accepted as highly humorous for both the groups of participants but that is not true for all the videos. There were few videos that were rated as highly humorous by sign language

users but only moderately humorous by the verbal language users. In the following two sections, we would explore in details the characteristics of the videos that were differently rated by the two groups and also try to understand the reasons behind such choices. This categorization of highly humorous and moderately humorous videos would serve as a reference for further analysis and exploring the contribution of elements in the two categories.

5.3.2 Part II

As a second task, participants were asked to rate a list of elements that according to them contributed most to the humorousness in a video.

The results showed that verbal language users perceived both plot-based elements and character-based elements almost equally contributing in highly humorous videos. However, signers perceived actor-based elements to be contributing more significantly than plot-based elements. This too confirmed our hypothesis that sign language users appreciate humor that is generated in with the help of facial expressions and also gestures.

For reference, we would like to present the list of elements that were rated by the participants for humorousness in a video. (Table 5.2)

Elements		
Actor based elements		o Acting of the lead actor
		o Acting of other actors
		o Facial expressions of the lead actor
		o Facial expression of other actors
		o Body language/gestures of the lead actor
		o Body language/gestures of other actors
		o Dressing/costume of actors
		o Energy of Actors
Plot based elements		o Background music
		o Sequence of actions/scenes
		o Unexpected ending
		o Overall presentation
		o Script/plot of the video
		o Camera movement
		o Background setup/location of the video
		o Colors used in the video
		o Duration of the video
		o Expectation from humorous videos

Table 5.2. Elements contributing to visual humor:

For statistical analysis, a two-way ANOVA was conducted, which suggested that the difference was statistically significant ($F(1,63)=3.93$, $p < 0.05$). For moderately humorous videos, verbal language users perceived plot-based elements to be contributing significantly more than actor-based elements ($F(1,63)=7.05$, $p < 0.01$). However, signers perceived actor-based elements to contribute more significantly than plot-based elements ($F(1,63)=6.93$, $p < 0.01$) (See figure 5.1).
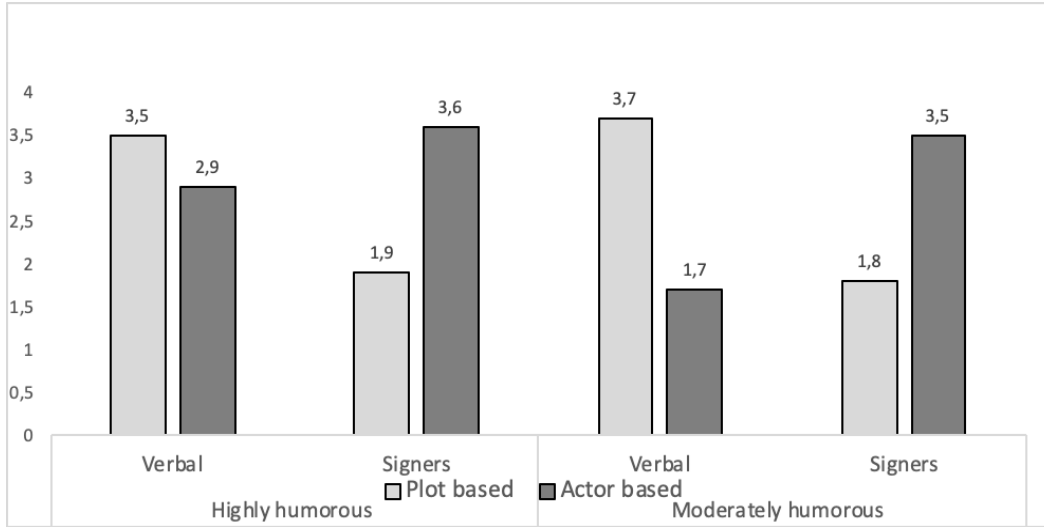
Figure 5.1. Average rating for plot-based elements and character-based elements of verbal language users and signers in highly humorous and moderately humorous videos.

For a detailed statistical analysis, separate linear regression models were created for highly humorous and moderately humorous videos taking responses of verbal language users and signers as conditions. Ratings for various elements were taken as independent variable and humorousness ratings for the videos were taken as dependent variable. The tables for the statistical analysis have been reported in Appendix II. As The number of data points were not sufficiently large to draw any conclusions based on those results we chose not to include them here for analysis.

Actual average ratings for all actor-based elements by verbal language users and signers is shown in figure 5.2 (A and B) for highly humorous and moderately humorous videos. Similarly, actual average ratings for all plot-based elements by verbal language users and signer in shown in figure 5.3 (A and B) for highly humorous and moderately humorous videos.
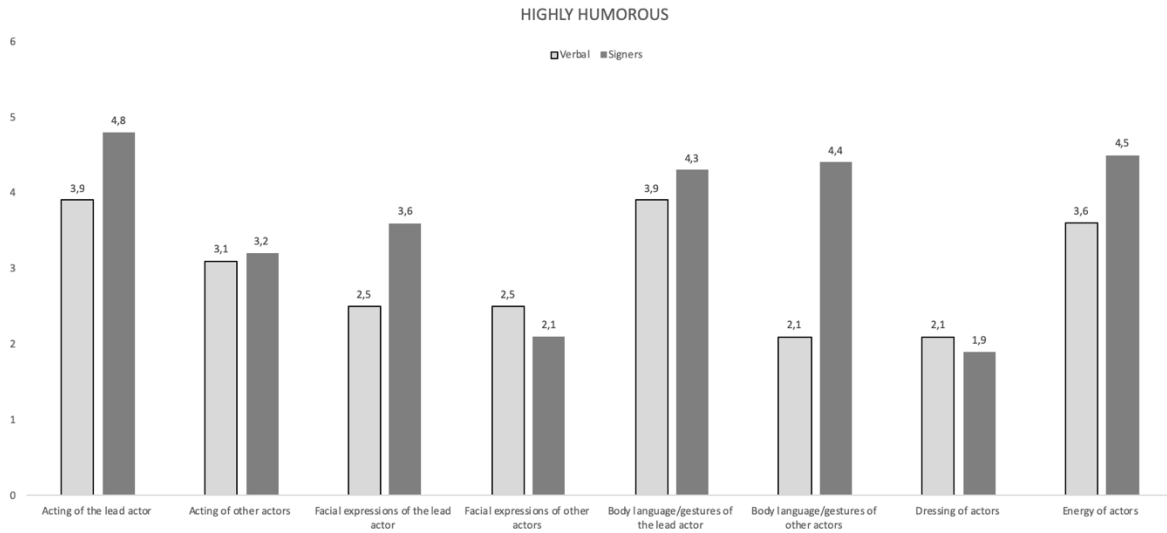
Figure 5.2A. Average rating for actor-based elements in highly humorous videos by verbal language users and signers.
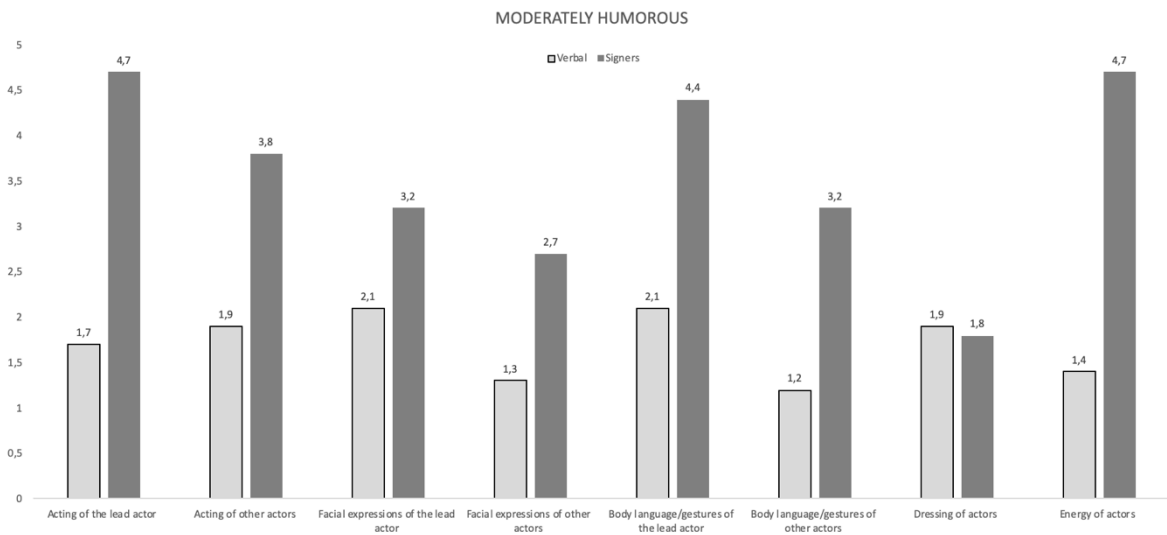

Figure 5.2B. Average rating for actor-based elements in moderately humorous videos by verbal language users and signers.
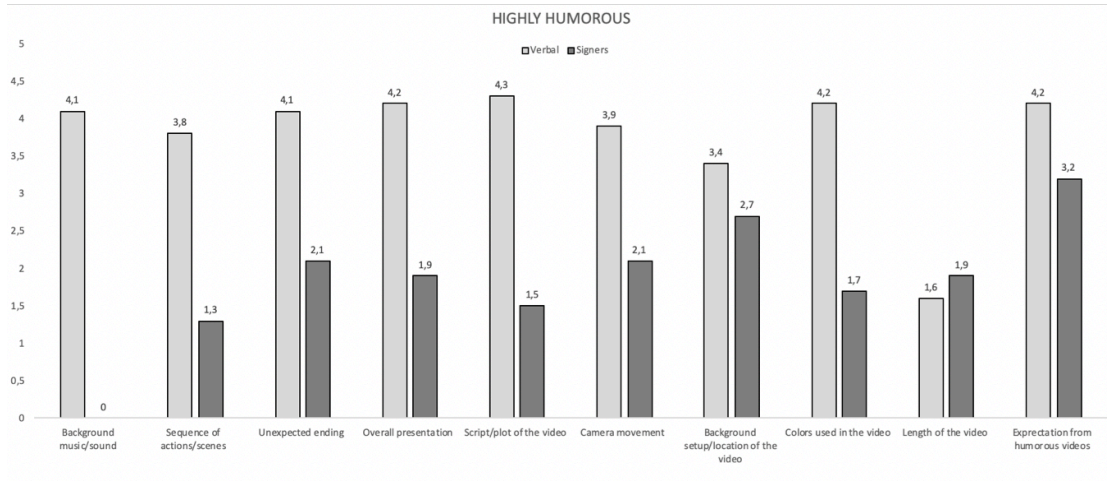
Figure 5.3A. Average rating for plot-based elements in highly humorous videos by verbal language users and signers. (Signers were not asked to provide rating for background music)
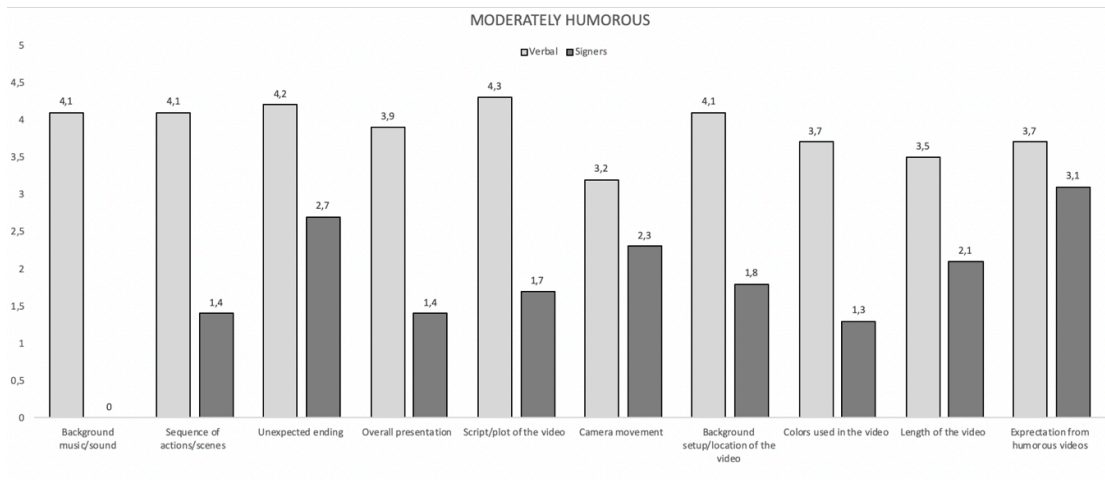

Figure 5.3B. Average rating for actor-based elements in moderately humorous videos by verbal language users and signers. (Signers were not asked to provide rating for background music)

We also calculated the response of participants for question 3 and 4. For the question if they could relate the video with their past experiences, almost all the participants said that they could. We expected that when a viewer finds some resemblance with humorous events from a video in some past experience (either heard or being in one) they respond more positively. For instance, if a person had gone through the experience of being in an overcrowded elevator he/she would find

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the video The Elevator to be highly humorous. From the ratings by the audiences we could see that our expectation was proved to be true to a great extent. When asked if the title of the video had any effect on the perceived humorousness of the video, almost all the participants said that it did not have any affect other than the anticipation for the plot of the video. The result in percentage is shown in table 5.3.

	Verbal Language Users				Signers			
	Highly Humorous		Moderately Humorous		Highly Humorous		Moderately Humorous	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Relatability	98	2	74	26	93	7	78	22
Title of the video	7	93	2	98	13	87	93	7

Table 5.3. Percentage of participants responded yes or no to relatability and title questions.

Discussion

The results of the second study provided very interesting insights on elements that contribute to humorousness of a video and how they are evaluated and received by two groups of people who use different linguistic modality for communication. It was also remarkable to find the similarities and differences in humor appreciation by different people. Some viewers tend to give more importance to the actors whereas others focus more on the humorous narrative in the plot. As discussed in section 5.2.5, the study provided us with two sets of videos based on the ratings by the participants as highly humorous and moderately humorous. Most videos were rated similarly by both the groups of participants, i.e. videos that verbal language users rated as highly humorous were also rated the same by the sign language users and the same was the case for moderately humorous videos too. But some exceptions were also noticed when a video was rated as moderately humorous by most verbal participants but was rated as highly humorous by signers.

The results also suggest a clear distinction between verbal language users and signers in terms of their perception of elements contributing to humorousness of the video. As per our expectations based on findings from our pilot studies we found that verbal language users perceive plot-based elements to be contributing more significantly to the humorousness in moderately humorous videos as compared to signers who perceive actor-based elements to be contributing more significantly to the humorousness in both highly humorous and moderately humorous videos. We

also found that verbal language users perceive both elements equally contributing to the perception of humor only if the video is considered highly humorous by them.

We found that acting of lead actor and supporting actors are greater predictors of humor for both verbal language users and signers in highly humorous videos. It is a significant predictor for signers only in moderately humorous videos. Acting of actors and supporting actors are not significant predictor for verbal language users in moderately humorous videos. Interestingly, both verbal language users and signers did not find dressing of the actors as contributing factor to the perception of humorousness in both highly humorous and moderately humorous videos.

We had expected to see a significant effect of length of the video on the humorousness of the video as a longer video can become boring. Also, a video that is too short could also have lack of clarity of plot and punchline if not executed well. We found that signers perceived length of the video as negatively contributing to the humorousness in moderately humorous videos but not in highly humorous videos. However, it was not a significant factor for verbal language users. We also found that overall presentation was a significant predictor for the perception of humorousness only for verbal language users in both highly humorous and moderately humorous videos and it was not a significant predictor for signers.

Regarding two independent questions related to the title and if they could relate to the video in any way, all the participants including verbal language users and signers did not find the title of the video as a contributing factor to the perception of humorousness in a video. Also, when a participant watches a humorous video they tend to relate the events from the video with some past experience, either a first-hand experience or from anecdotes of their family or friends. When participants relate better either with the characters or the events taking place in a video they find the video to be more humorous. The same was true for both the groups of participants.

When the participants were asked to provide their subjective inputs on videos they had watched, it was noteworthy that both the groups of participants provided suggestions either at the actor level or at the plot level for the videos they rated as moderately humorous. The suggestions were mostly provided as changes that they would have liked to make in the video to make them more humorous for others. The suggestions were almost always plot centric but like mentioned above, some also

suggested that a better actor or better expressions by actors could have made the video more humorous for them.

5.3.3 Part III

The third sub-section of the study and its findings are reported in this section.

The reception of a video or any humorous content, be it jokes, funny pictures, humorous advertisements, a stand-up performance, etc., can be evaluated by simply keeping track of when during the course of the humorous content laughter or any expression of amusement occurs (Foot, 1997). If a person reads or hears a joke and laughs at the end of it, we can to some extent conclude that the purpose of the joke is served. But certainly, we do not mean that laughter alone is an indicator of a content being humorous (Attardo, 1994). There are many other forms of expression, for instance smile, amused expressions such as raised eyebrows, etc. (Chik, Leung and Molloy, 2005). These mechanisms are quite intuitive as well as studied in multiple scenarios by several researchers (Donoghue and McCarrey, 1983; Corcoran, Cahil and Frith, 1997; Ruch and Hoffmann; 2017).

When a viewer/audience watches a humorous video, they show signs of understanding and appreciation with some outward reactions. It is also required to understand the focal points in a humorous content that trigger those responses by the audience. Some of them are discussed by Attardo (1994), though in a different modality, i.e. verbal humor. The triggers pointed out by him are, the presence of a butt of the joke, a specific narrative strategy, situation of a joke, script opposition, etc. Intuitively, most of the components that make up a joke might form part of a visual humorous material as well. And once a humorous video ends, the effects it has on a viewer does not fade away. Going by the principles of communication (Dynel, 2009; Lynch, 2002), and one of the key necessities of maintaining a social life, i.e., experience and information sharing people aspire to transfer the humorous effect to some others who are close to them.

One of the ways to do that in today's digital world is to share the video with people whom we want to pass on the experience to. But this is not always the only way we share humor or amusement.

Many times, we just tell the contents of the video, i.e. what the video was about and we might recommend them to watch. This retelling of the video contents could be a great source to understand what kinds of elements and in what ways viewers actually find it humorous, because one would certainly not want to leave out or skip through elements from the video that they felt and understood to be crucial to humor generation in the video. A similar study with jokes was done by Attardo, Pickering and Baker (2011), where they studied the mechanisms and strategies people use when a joke is converted into a conversation between two people.

Therefore, the goal of this sub-section was to explore and analyze various elements, specific to visual humor, that helps the viewer to process and receive humor, especially when they narrate and share what they experienced after watching a humorous video. And also, to explore the similarities and differences between retelling mechanisms and content selection for highly humorous videos and moderately humorous videos for the viewer. The comparison would provide a better understanding of what viewers find humorous in videos. Hence, we expect that whatever a person watches in a video and finds to be humorous would form part of the narrative they generate for retelling the contents to others. Also, based on the previous study reported in the previous section, there are some elements that are core to a video's humorousness and some not so much. Thus, the differences between videos that viewers find to be highly humorous and those that they feel are moderately humorous would reflect upon the retelling and their focus on ensuring to include the humor contributing elements.

Additionally, we also explore how a verbal language using population differs from a sign language using population in terms of making choices of what to include and what to exclude from the retelling of a humorous video. A number of studies focusing sign language discourse helped us formalize our hypotheses for this section. As the visual experience influences the deaf knowledge, opinion and creativity, thus reception of humor and its processing is also greatly influenced by the visual-manual modality (Sutton-Spence and Donna Jo Napoli, 2012). Hence, analyzing the content of retelling of a humorous visual content would highlight the similarities and differences between the two populations' reception and understanding of humor. Bouchauveau (1994) gave a description of the ways in which humor is generated in sign languages. One of the most prominent of those ways is imitation or role-play. There are other studies too discussing humor in sign

languages that provide information on what strategies are used to generate humor in sign languages and how they are received by the signing community (Bienvenu,2001; Goldberg, 2011; Attardo, 2017). As role-playing and role-shift are not an essential requirement for generation of humor for verbal language users we can foresee at least one of the ways the two populations should be differ from each other in focus and response to humorousness in visual medium. We have tried to take this area of investigation a little further and find out what is humorous for people in general and what are those aspects of humor that are specific to and influenced by the language (verbal or sign) we use for communication.

Also, as already mentioned a few studies highlight the world of deaf culture and how it influences the understanding and reception of humor. Few studies also explore the modality dependent uniqueness of production and appreciation of humor in sign languages (Sanders, 1986; Rutherford, 1993; Napoli and Sutton-Spence, 2011; Sutton-Spence and Napoli, 2012) and focus on the use of classifier expressions in signed narratives.

Sign languages have both one-handed and two-handed classifier constructions. They have the same timing properties as the prosodic words and have systematic behavior across languages. In addition to the above-mentioned studies, also Morgan and Woll (2003) discuss the significance of classifier expressions in sign language discourse and their role in reference or role switching in case of British Sign Language (BSL). Emmorey (2003) and Zwitserlood (2012) focus on classifier expressions in sign languages and the different categories of classifiers based on the semantic and linguistic context in which they are used in a sign language discourse. Perniss (2007) analyzes German Sign Language (DGS) narratives of complex events and established the prominent role of different classifier-perspective constructions in encoding spatial information about location, orientation, action and motion, as well as size and shape of referents. Another interesting take on the use of classifiers in sign languages by Wilcox (2000) suggests that these expressions in sign languages, in particular American Sign Language (ASL) are metaphorical in nature. According to her the metaphorical representation of objects and events with the help of classifiers too can be used to generate humor in sign language. Hence, we expect to find sign language users using different kinds of classifier expressions in the retold narrative of humorous videos.

The participants were not given a format in which they were to retell the contents of a video as spontaneous responses were desired for this study. All the participants were also instructed to not make any additions to the plotline of the video and stick to the original format. They were also told not to include analysis of characters or plot while retelling. The questionnaire gave them a scope to give their input on any aspect of the video. The only specified requirement was that they were to ensure that if they find a video to be humorous, they should ensure that the hearer/recipient also forms the same impression. In case they did not find a video to be very highly humorous they should still try to focus on elements, however insignificant, that were humorous and include them in the retelling narrative. The recorded videos were then analyzed by a group of four members who did not participate in any of the studies. The sign language narratives were analyzed by the interpreters who also did not participate in the studies.

After watching all the recorded videos by participants, we narrowed down a few pointers to follow and focus on for analysis. The pointers are as follows:

- *Focus: Plot or Character:* While retelling the narrative, focus given on the plot of the video or the actor/s?
- *Actor description*: Is the lead actor/s description given before starting to narrate the video or is it embedded in the description?
- *Format:* The retelling is done in which format, for example, as a narration, from the perspective of the actors, the direction or making point of view?
- *Act:* Is the participant making attempts to reenact the actor/s actions or expressions? If yes, what sections of the video?
- *Focus on Technique:* Do the participants also put emphasis on the film making techniques for humor effect?
- *Extra Elements:* Are there mentions of the extra elements in the video that could have an impact on the humor reception, for example: costume/dresses worn by characters, location/setup of the video, etc.? Music or verbal elements (the ones I mentioned in previous chapters' comments) here?
- *Expressions of supporting actors:* While narrating, more focus is given on the lead actor or protagonist of the video or the supporting actors' actions and expressions?

- *Reaction:* Do the participants laugh or smile while narrating the video? If so, is the laughter dependent on who they are telling the story to or are there specific points in the story that are narrated with a complimentary laughter?

- *Difficulty:* Do the participants have difficulty in narrating specific sections of the video, either plot based or character based? How do they cope with that awkwardness?

- *Gestures:* Focus is given to the kinds of gestures used by the participants while retelling, for instance leaning forwards or backwards, use of hand movements to emphasize on certain aspects of the video.

- *Skipping:* What kinds of details are left out while retelling? Any specific scene or detail that was consistently left out while narrations?

- *Expressions:* Any extra superlative expressions used while narrating, for example: "oh god!", "too funny", "silly', etc.

- *Willingness:* The willingness to retell the video and its relation to the ratings given by the person is also crosschecked. Also, the relationship of willingness to retell with the involvement and detail in which the narration is done.

- *Side phrases:* Are there uses of question phrases like, "do you understand?", "got it", "I mean", "if you see the video you will get it", etc.

Keeping all these pointers in mind, below we present observations in each video individually for all the participants and note the nature and the quality of narration. First, we take a look at the responses of the verbal language users followed by responses of sign language users for all the videos.

Findings based on the observations

The detailed observations for each video are provided in the Appendix III. Each retold narrative was analyzed in detail by a group of four members for verbal language videos and sign language interpreters for the signed video recordings. The following observations were made based on the recordings:

- Viewers in general focus more on the actors, especially the lead actor, when the actor is known to them. For instance, movie clips with Chaplin or Mr. Bean invariably draw the attention of the viewers towards the actors.

- To follow the previous observation, viewers also tend to pre-approve a video clip to be humorous when the actor/s in them are popular in the field of humor.

- The lead actor/s in any video get maximum attention from viewers, irrespective of how humorous they find the video to be. The only significant difference is that in case of moderately humorous videos, viewers tend to completely ignore some of the supporting cast members.

- Viewers are inclined more towards the overall plot of a video when they do not find the video to be highly humorous.

- A highly humorous video attracts attention towards each of the characters and hence, viewers feel the requirement to describe the actors' appearance as a contributing factor. But for a video one does not find humorous, there is a tendency to skip through such details.

- When people watch a humorous video, and are asked to retell the contents, the narration is invariably complemented with continuous laughter or smile whereas videos that did not qualify as highly humorous are not retold with laughter as part of the narration.

- The peripheral elements in the video that are crucial for the film makers, for instance, choice of location, costume for each of the characters, use of colors, etc., are hardly ever included while retelling.

- Highly humorous video contents when retold see gesturing as part of the narration. This is not always true for moderately humorous videos.

- While retelling contents of videos that viewers of verbal language find to be highly humorous, they also embed words or phrases that are synonyms of humor like "funny", "hilarious", "silly", etc. These words, for obvious reasons do not appear in retold narratives of videos that viewers do not find as humorous.

- The level of readiness and willingness to retell the humorous contents of a video is much higher when a viewer finds a video highly humorous.

- When a video is highly humorous, viewers do not feel the need to exaggerate or modify a scene or actions and expressions of any of the actors. Though, in some cases they may

choose to do so for more and more impact. Whereas many times viewers feel the need to exaggerate elements from a video, they do not feel very humorous.

o A moderately humorous video usually gets summarized and viewers of verbal language retell selective parts and elements while retelling, whereas a highly humorous video is more thoroughly retold with minimum elimination of scenes. But for signers, summarizing is not explored as an option.

o Many videos that do not qualify as highly humorous for a verbal language user could be highly humorous to a signer.

o Sign language users always focus on all the actors in any video equally, irrespective of how humorous the video was to them.

o Accompanied laughter while retelling is optional for sign language users even for highly humorous videos.

o Stereotypes or uncomfortable nasty scenes (bursting of sickness bag on someone's face) is not difficult for a signer to include in their narration, but verbal language users tend to refrain from using words that could sound offensive.

o Usually sign language users do not hesitate to retell what they watch. The unwillingness to retell the contents of a video are more born out of not finding the contents humorous enough to be told to others.

o Even when a sign language user finds a video to be moderately humorous, their quality of retold narrative is as detailed and as well done as for a highly humorous video.

o Exaggerated facial expressions and/or body language and actions is part of sign language narration be it for a humorous video or a non-humorous video.

	Component	Highly Humorous		Moderately Humorous	
		Verbal	Signer	Verbal	Signer
1	Plot based or Actor based	Actor	Actor	Plot	Actor
2	Actors (lead/supporting) description	83%	90%	23%	97%
3	Format of narration	Lead	Lead	Plot	Lead
4	Re-enacting of actor/s actions and expressions	64%	100%	82%	97%
5	Film making techniques mentioned	27%	27%	40%	20%
6	Mention or description of extra elements	23%	41%	23%	20%
7	Focus on lead actor/s or supporting actor/s	97%	20%	20%	20%
8	Laughter/smile while narration	20%	03%	40%	03%
9	Awkward moments/ difficulty in narration	20%	40%	20%	60%
10	Gestures used while narrating	83%	83%	64%	67%
11	Skipped/dropped details	97%	23%	20%	44%
12	Phrases depicting humorous used in narration	100%	20%	80%	80%
13	Willingness/readiness to narrate	100%	67%	23%	44%
14	Use of phrases to ensure humor impact	27%	21%	43%	20%
15	Contradiction of narration with rating and reception	20%	23%	97%	97%
16	Modifications, exaggerations, subjective input (plot based or acting based)	Lead	Lead + Support	Lead + Support	Lead + Support

Table 5.4. An overview of the observations in percentage

Discussion

To begin with, when a visual content is put into words (verbal or signed) we are looking at an intersemiotic translation taking place between two modes, i.e., visual to language (verbal and signed). We already know that humor is very culture dependent and people who belong to a specific culture and share the same language also share their 'sense of humor'. Vandaele (2010) discusses this issue at length with respect to difficulties in intercultural and inter-linguistic translations of humor. Hence, if translation within the same modality (one language to another) is a difficult task, one can only imagine how challenging but interesting it would be to see how intermodal (visual to linguistic) translation of humor would be. Based on the observations discussed in the previous section, we can conclude that humor, though a universal phenomenon, is received and appreciated differently for different groups of people. Also, the reception of a highly humorous video is significantly different from how a moderately humorous video would be received, as seen in retold narratives.

Let us first discuss those aspects of humor reception that were more universal in nature and not dependent on the viewers' language modality. First, an actor well known and much appreciated across goes beyond the quality of plot, the punchline, the overall filmmaking, etc. The very presence of Chaplin or Mr. Bean changes an audience's response towards a video clip. When these viewers decide to retell the contents of such videos, the entire focus of the narration is solely on the specific actor and the plot assumes a secondary position. There are times when the viewer could feel that it is difficult to translate the actions of these actors in words and it is best to enjoy the visuals but that does not affect the level of enthusiasm nor the willingness to share the experience with others. This is true for both verbal and sign language users. So, watching a movie clip or a short video with actors known to be skilled in the arts of humor generation triggers similar responses across populations.

This could also be true for a certain production houses or an established director in the field. The same is experienced with popular stand-up artists whose very entry to the stage triggers laughter and acceptability. One of the side effects of this phenomenon is the tendency to ignore or not notice the presence of other actors in the video. With so much attention given to a specific actor, all other actors and their role in humor generation is not recognized as much as it should be. Hence, when

such videos are retold, viewers happen to forget to mention scenes with other actors and only mention them when they have a direct one-to-one scene with the lead actor.

Second, when a viewer finds a video to be highly humorous, it automatically generates positive physiological responses such as smile and laughter (Langevin and Day, 1972; Samson and Gross, 2012). We have all had experience with a friend trying to tell a funny story or incident coupled with so much laughter that we find difficult to even understand his/her words. Hence, it did not surprise us when all the participants while retelling a highly humorous video paused to laugh and/or narrated with a constant smile on their face. The only difference between a signer and a verbal language user in this respect is the linguistic restriction placed by sign languages. As role-playing is a crucial discourse mechanism in all sign languages, a signer needs to recreate the exact facial expressions by actors and hence a smile cannot simultaneously appear on the face. Still, a signer finds pauses and gaps between signs to smile and/or laugh to confirm the finding.

Third, when a viewer finds a video to be highly humorous he/she does not feel the need to make any exaggerations or modifications in the plot or actions nor the punchline of the video. As they feel that the content is already humorous enough, they try to stay true to the original content and not make too many changes unless there is a specific purpose to do so. But for a video intended to be humorous and if it could not live up to the purpose, viewers usually make attempts to enhance certain sections with some exaggerations either with modifications in the plot or exaggerations in the actions of actors. The modification in the plot could also get extended to manipulating the punchline or the final scene of a video.

A similar pattern is also apparent with videos that do not have a clear punchline. The viewer then decides how and what could be a better climax to the plot to make it have a humorous effect. Further, a video received as highly humorous does not suffer elimination of scenes or actions whereas a video that is not as humorous, viewers tend to shorten the plot and choose to retell only those sections from the video he/she feels have some humorousness or just summarize and give an overview of the plot. This could also happen for videos people find too long and hence choose only those parts of the video that hold the core of the theme and plot. Viewers also use phrases and words to continuously reinforce the humorousness of a video while retelling which makes it apparent to the listener of the retold narrative that the viewer for certain enjoyed watching the

video. But in case of videos viewers do not find as much humorous similar reinforcements are done but for a very different purpose. In this case, the phrases are more to ensure and re-ensure that the listener/recipient of the linguistic narrative is able to give cues of understanding the intent of humor and, if not so, the speaker could repeat or alter words for better impact.

Fourth, although gestures are universal, they do play a very significant role in differentiating between a highly humorous and moderately humorous video's reception. When one retells contents of a highly humorous video, the narration is invariably complemented and supplemented with use of gestures. Information Packaging Hypothesis (Kita, 2000) suggests that producing gestures help speakers organize and package visuo-spatial information into units that are compatible with the linear, sequential format of speech. This is certainly also true for sign language users as noted by Emmorey (1999), one of the first scholars to acknowledge that signers use gesturing as part of their discourse but not exactly the same way as verbal language users do, and also by Sandler (2009). According to them signers produce gestures with their face or other parts of the body that co-occur with their signs. Fontana (2008) too has found that signers can use their mouths to gesture. Hence, heightened use of gestures does not come as a surprise when narrating a visually humorous content for viewers from both modalities.

Some of the ways, a sign language user differs from their verbal counterparts are also noteworthy and provide an insight into the world and culture deafness and how it impacts their language. The most prominent difference is the significance and focus on actors more than the plot and even the punchline/climax. A sign language user relies more on role play and visually recreating the actions of others (Sutton-Spence and Jo Napoli, 2012). The structure of a sign language discourse begins by describing all the characters in the discourse and assigning a 'name' to each one of them or assign a location for the characters in the signing space. Once that is established, they extensively use classifiers (Supalla, 1986; Emmorey, 2003; Zwitserlood, 2012) for any further anaphoric references. For instance, if there are two characters in a video, a sign language user would assign them both a 'name', i.e. a specific identifying sign, and then locate them at the two ends of the signing space. Now, each time there is a reference to a character they first sign the 'name' and then assume the role of that character and then again shift roles when needed to refer to the other character (Schlenker, 2017; Quer, 2005; Russo, 2004). This discourse mechanism is the reason behind signers giving equal importance to each of the characters in a video as opposed to verbal

language users, who tend to focus more on the lead actor alone. Also, the use of classifiers is unique to sign languages for anaphoric references. As sign language needs to encode multilayered information simultaneously (Padden, 1986; Jones, Mallinson, Phillips, 2006), it is not economical to always use full nouns for each character or objects present in the visual stimulus that needs to be translated into sign language. Hence, the use of classifiers come handy in making quick references and shifting between roles assumed.

Another significant uniqueness of sign language users is the ease and smoothness feel in signing all kinds of discourse. As we have seen in the previous section, verbal language users showed signs of discomfort talking about stereotypical issues, for example: referring to people as 'fat', even though that aspect was crucial to the humorousness of that particular video. Also, almost every speaker found it difficult to describe in words when scenes are very action oriented, for example, climbing up the building, all people jogging in different ways, going to extra lengths to reach a stapler refill, etc. For sign language users, these scenes are as easily translatable as any other scenes. This is because they would anyways recreate the characters' actions either symbolically with use of classifiers or directly assuming the role of the character as sign languages use the technique of 'role play' and 'role shift' as a discourse mechanism. This is also the reason why such videos, mentioned in the examples above, did not get highly appreciated by verbal language users but for sign language users those videos were appreciated as humorous as others. It is interesting to note that signers usually do not tend to find a humorous video less humorous than others purely because they found the actions of a certain character to be over-exaggerated. When they decide a video to be less humorous than other videos they tend to make the judgements based on other elements of the video, such as lack of coherent plot, the video being too long, an abrupt ending, etc.

Yet another reason for verbal language users to not appreciate certain videos were the lack of a strong punchline in the last scene, but those very videos were better appreciated and also well translated by sign language users, as humor in sign language is not just centralized in the punchline. The entire process, which includes the actors' description, the setup, the actions and reactions of all characters, etc. contributes to the overall humor effect for the generator as well as the receptor of a humorous content.

Based on the discussion above, we can confirm that our hypothesis for this study was confirmed as sign language users significantly differed in the strategies used while retelling contents of a humorous video. They focused on different aspects of the video as well as relied heavily on role playing and classifier expressions while retelling. These strategies also were used to ensure that the retold narrative was as humorous as the video was or how humorous they found the video to be.

5.4 Humor reception

As mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, an additional exploration was done to understand the humor reception patterns. While participants were watching the humorous videos, the camera was kept on to record their expressions of amusement. The detailed observations for each of the videos is provided in the Appendix IV.

The participants while watching the videos (two each) were also video recorded to observe their response to humorous elements listed in the study discussed above. Laughter patterns and intensity, and/or any other responses suggesting positive reception of any components from a video were noted for analysis. Here, first we looked at each of the videos scene by scene identifying the nature of sections participants found humorous and then look further to understand the contribution and role of the previously identified elements in making a visual content humorous.

5.4.1 Observations

After reviewing all the recordings of participants watching a humorous video and also based on the participants' ratings of elements that were perceived to be contributing to humor in a video we can with certainty list a number of components that make people enjoy a video as humorous. Based on the rating of elements and the time and intensity of laughter while watching a video, we can see a clear pattern that highlights those factors in a video that prompt a reaction of amusement in some form or the other. Listed below are the components and features that contribute to humorousness of a visual content:

- **Butt of the joke**:

When an audience starts watching a video he/she identifies a character to be central to the plot either in the very first scene or sometimes after a few scenes. Usually any humorous content revolves around a central character, who is the creator or recipient of all the humorous events taking place. Most of the time it is the lead actor, but in some videos, we also find that a supporting character becomes the "butt of all jokes." When a video starts and the first appearance of a particular actor immediately is welcomed with a laugher or amused response, it becomes clear that the viewers would be focusing on this specific character throughout the video and react to all the events that take place with or around him/her. This usually happens when the video has a very popular and well-known comic actor such as Charlie Chaplin and Mr. Bean used for this study. It would also have happened for viewers who are familiar with actors like Benny Hill, Buster Keaton and Harold Llyod, Laurel and Hardey, and of course many others not included in the list. There are also actors who are popular amongst specific groups of people united either by language, culture, region, or any other. Mostly, the central character also helps in raising the expectations of the audience. The level of involvement and amusement an audience would get from a video can be predetermined, all because of a specific actor being present in the video.

- **Presence of theoretical frameworks**

As discussed in the previous chapter, the traditional theories of humor greatly influence, either with conscious efforts by the makers or unknowingly, the creation of humorous script, its execution by actors, the creative team, etc. The videos selected for this study stand proof that people who create humorous content in the visual modality exploit those theoretical frameworks to generate humorous response from its audience. Incongruity, in verbal as well as visual modality, triggers humorous response. In the visual modality, incongruity could be used for humor at conceptual level, behavioral level, and also at situational level. For instance, when in Last cookie left video we saw two adults taking extreme steps to get one single cookie (Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4. Scene from Last cookie left video, which presents conceptual and behavioral incongruity for laughter.

Usually it is expected that children can behave the way shown in the video, but one expects adults to behave in a more mature manner and let another person eat the last cookie left. Hence the entire video is based on conceptual incongruity supported with the help of behavioral incongruity by adults. Also, the video *First Class* uses similar kind of incongruity (Figure 5.5). A man boarding an airplane usually is expected to know the class of ticket he is carrying. Moreover, once informed he is carrying a boarding pass for the first class, it is also extremely unexpected of an adult to tease and make faces people who are at the economy class, especially when no one is even paying attention to him.

Figure 5.5. Scene from First class video presents conceptual and behavioral incongruity as well as superiority for laughter.

This scene also uses the concept of superiority of one character over the other to generate humor. Let us now focus on the videos *The lion's cage* (figure 5.6a) and *Safety last* (figure 5.6b). In the lion's cage video, when the lead actor, trapped inside a lion's cage, risks waking up the lion but somehow manages to not let a vessel fall to ground, the audience laughs out of relief. Also in the video *Safety last*, every scene that triggers humorous response by viewers is a manifestation of relief they feel from built in tension.
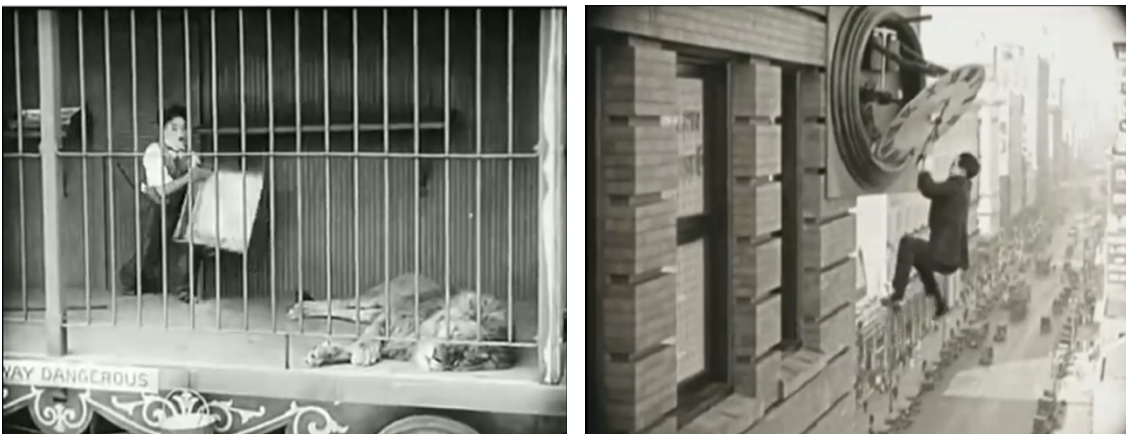

Figure 5.6. (a) scene from video Lion's Cage (b) scene from video Safety last presents relief for laughter.

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For example, when the lead actor loses balance and is about to fall, hanging from the huge clock, etc. All these scenes in some way or the other create a tension and worry in the viewers mind and once resolved results in humorous response. From all the above-mentioned examples, we can generalize that superiority, incongruity and relief are predominant mechanisms that contribute in humor generation and are received well by the viewers too.

- **Plot and character interaction**

We have already established the important and crucial role the lead actor plays in generation of humor. But this does not mean that all other actors playing other characters in a video are any less significant. There are many instances when a supporting actors' actions and reactions greatly contribute to humor generation. However, the best response from viewers come when all or at least one of the actors take the opportunities and spaces provided by the plotline and interacts with them either with facial expressions or with full body gestures. For instance, in safety last video (figure 5.7) after the lead actor reaches the top of the building and the viewers along with the character feels a sense of relief, the presence of a rotating wind vane creates further trouble and the character now has to find ways to save himself from falling down.

This scene is a case of plot generated humor that allows the actor to find creative ways to portray the situation in his/her style. This feature is not restricted to only one scene. In every video, including those not rated as high as others for humorousness exploits this element for humorous effect. Noodles video is another example (figure 5.8), where the lead actor finds a way to look at the woman and takes turns to eat the soup and look up in rhythmic alternations from the man who was blocking the view. As soon as the camera zooms out and the viewer sees all the men present in the restaurant doing the same the viewers respond positively acknowledging the humorousness.

- **Filmmaking techniques**

Looking beyond the contribution of actors and plot is necessary to recognize the role of the film making team in the successful appreciation of a humorous video. The director of a humorous video and the choices made by the entire team that works at the background provides a great platform for subtle elements to play a role in the overall humorousness of a video. The choice of clothes

each of the character wears, the casting choice for each character, the choice of props presents in each frame, the overall setup and location for the plot to be executed,

Figure 5.7. Scene from the video Safety last video presents the case of character-plot interaction

Figure 5.8. Scene from video Noodles, which also presents the case of character-plot interaction.

etc. all combined together play a significant role in the totality of the impact a video would have on its viewers. One of the most vital contributors in this regard is the choice of frame angles and camera movements. A same scene could have two very different effects on the audience just with a small change of camera movement and the choice of focus on element from that particular frame. For instance, in the elevator video (figure 5.9) when the lead actor begins to get worried about too many people entering the elevator, the camera gives an aerial shot of the elevator for the viewers to understand his situation and empathize with the character. This frame itself communicated the humorous situation to the viewers without using any dialogues to convey the message.

Figure 5.9. Scene from the video Elevator where the aerial shot emphasizes the worrisome situation of the character.

Another example of the camera angle and movement playing a crucial role in generation humor can be seen in the video, *Hitchhiking*. In this video, the lead character feels a sense of achievement when he believes to have fooled the motorcycle man and secured himself a ride to escape the deserted area. But the camera moves slowly following the man walking and catching up to him and the viewers understand that the motorcycle is too slow. Similar uses and effects of camera movements are also seen in videos that were not rated to be highly humorous. For instance, the scene from the video, *Stapler* (figure 5.10) that viewers appreciated most was of relief mechanism

generated with the help of camera. When viewers realize that the stapler pins that hit the forehead of one of the characters has in fact hit the man's picture hanging on the wall.

The stapler pins hit the forehead and there is gasp by viewers and then the camera zooms out to show that it is the picture of the man which made them laugh.

Figure 5.10. Scene from the video Stapler makes use of camera movement

- **Stereotypes**

There are many studies that focus on the use of stereotypes to generate humor (Zenner, 1970; Holte, 1984; Mauldin, 2002; Beins and O'Toole; 2010, Mickes et.al., 2012; Zimbardo, 2014). Use of social stereotypes to generate humor in videos can also be seen in the videos selected for the present study. At least two of the videos in our study used 'fat' people for humor generation also positively received by the viewers. The video, *The Elevator* (figure 5.11) and *Noodles* (figure 5.12) both use body image stereotyping to this effect. Instead of multiple "fat" people occupying the elevator the filmmakers could have chosen a greater number of average weight people. But the choice was a conscious one for the extra effect of added humor to the situation. Also, in the "Noodles" video the man who come and sits next to the lead actor blocking the clear view of the lady for him could have been of any size. The choice of someone being heavy and hence blocking the view was a deliberate choice made by the film makers.

Gender stereotypes too are regularly used for humor in many videos that we come across in the social media. Also, in the video, *The Lion's Cage*, when a female character comes near the cage where the lead actor is trapped with a lion, instead of finding ways to help him out of the cage she faints in distress. The social stereotype of 'women are emotionally weak' is used for humorousness in the scene and viewers, including women, respond positively to that. The first reaction to such kind of humor is instant laughter but, in most cases, we also find a contrast in people's acknowledgement towards such humor (discussed in Chapter four).

Figure 5.11. Scene from the Elevator video using the stereotypes

Figure 5.12. Scene from the video Noodles using stereotypes

Figure 5.13. Scene from the video The lion's cage using stereotypes

- **Nonsense**

One of the most popular and regular mechanism used for humor in the visual modality is by exploring nonsense at the plot level as well as in the actions of the actors. Studies focusing on images have consistently explored uses and effects of non-sensical pictures (Klatzky and Rafnel, 1976; Rafnel and Klatzky, 1978; Takahashi and Inoue, 2009). In case of visual moving images, i.e. movies and short clips, nonsense used mostly at the plot level makes the viewers laugh out of disbelief or astonishment. When a viewer fails to make sense of certain activities of actors and/or situations in a video he/she responds with amusement or laughter. This is not the same as instances of incongruity found in verbal humor where the resolution results in the appreciation of humorous attempt made in the joke or a discourse. There is a very thin line between incongruity and nonsense that needs to be examined carefully. Dai and colleagues (2017) discuss how the three-stage model of humor processing (incongruity detection – resolution – amusement) does not apply to absurd humor (so-called nonsense humor) with the help of an fMRI study. Absurd humor contains an unresolvable incongruity but can still induce a feeling of mirth. In videos resolution is not a primary requirement for the viewers to appreciate attempted humor. Elements of nonsense found in any of the components lead viewers to frown and be amused. One of the most telling examples can be observed in case of video, *Joggers*. Most of the script was nonsensical as well as the actions of the characters. The viewers feel continuously amazed by the nonsense in actions and situations and a consistent laughter, smile or gasping was observed while watching the video. The "what!" and "but why!" moments identified and felt by the viewers significantly contribute to appreciating a video's humorousness.

The list provided above are not the only mechanisms and elements that generate laughter or amusement in the visual mode. Many videos since the beginning of film making heavily rely on slapstick comedy for humor generation and heavily appreciated by audiences across cultures (Gallagher, 1971; Burton, 2000; Duren, 200; McCabe, 2005; Crafton, 2006; Beck, 2012; Mundy and White, 2012; Kornhaber, 2014). This style of humor was explored extensively during the 'golden era' of films, i.e. black and while silent movies by directors and actors like Charlie Chaplin, Laurel and Hardy, Mack Sennett, Harl Roach, Marxs Brothers, Buster Keaton, and many more. The style was also exploited by many early animations like, Tom and Jerry (MGM), Goofy (Disney), etc. Slapstick as a means to generate humor continued into the post black and while

phase of cinema and can be witnessed in works by Rowan Atkinson, primarily as Mr. Bean, Benny Hill, Monty Python, etc. most certainly the usage has influenced many modern film makers and actors who specialize in producing humorous videos for the social media.

5.4.2 Humor mechanisms and reception

One of the most noteworthy observations based on the analysis of the reception patterns discussed above as well as retold narratives was the preferences of one kind of mechanism over others. For instance, all the videos that were rated as highly humorous for participants from both modalities of language were videos that show traces of more than one theory of humor. In other words, videos that use superiority, relief, incongruity, slapstick comedy, stereotype etc. in some way or the other and not just rely on any one of the mechanisms alone to generate humor. In contrast, all videos that only used one of the above-mentioned mechanisms primarily to generate humor were rated as moderately humorous by both sets of participants. This tendency suggests that a film-maker as well as the actors involved in a humorous video should ensure that they keep a balance between as many mechanisms of humor generation possible and not just incline towards one particular style. Also, the prominence of incongruity theory and the different ways in which it manifests (behavioral, contextual, situational) discussed in the previous chapter cannot be ignored. The concept of incongruity certainly dominates superiority or relief for humor generation in the visual mode. And thus, also is better appreciated by most people across culture and modality of language use.

Below we take a look at each of the previously discussed theories and examine the differences in reception by the two sets of participants with reference to the retelling as well as laughter/amusement reaction while watching humorous videos.

Superiority Theory: The instances of superiority in all the eleven videos were recognized and appreciated with ease by verbal language users as well as signers. We could find very positive responses to each and every scene that exploits superiority in any form. Be it one character's feeling towards other characters or the audience feeling superior about themselves because of certain character's behavior they were always identified as humorous and met with amusement by both sets of viewers. Hence, it would not be wrong to say that irrespective of language modality,

audiences in general do understand and appreciate superiority as one of the mechanisms to generate humor in videos.

When it came to retelling instances of superiority watched in a humorous video, verbal language users tend to rely on facial expressions and gestures to put it in linguistic mode. Sign language users on the other hand, managed to imitate the expressions showing superiority with the help of role playing. In both cases, the instances did form part of the retold narrative which suggested its contributing role in the visual mode in generation of humor effect.

Relief Theory: The videos that showed use of relief as a mechanism to generate humor were also well appreciated and neither of the sets of participants showed any signs of inability to recognize those efforts. Amusement triggered by some kind of feeling of relief is used by makers of humorous to enhance the emotional involvement of the audience with the characters. Though, videos that were predominantly using this mechanism for humor generation fail to impress viewers from both hearing as well as deaf populations.

While retelling, we recognized the difficulty viewers face when they are required to put the scenes into language, i.e. express in words and sentences. This was true for verbal as well as sign language users. When a viewer retells scenes such as those in the video, *Safety last*, the sentences were usually "…and then the man was hanging from the big clock.", "He almost slipped and fell.", etc. Also, scenes from the video, *The Lion's Cage*, were retold as, "He somehow managed to not wake up the lion.", "The barking dog could have woken up the lion", "When the lion came close to him and did not eat him after sniffing he was confused.", etc. None of these sentences would have an impact on a person who is being told the contents of the said videos compared to how the viewers were impacted that yielded positive reception of those scenes being appreciated as intended. Based on these observations, we can say that relief is a more visually dependent mechanism of humor generation as compared to verbal.

Incongruity Theory: Incongruity is a more vibrant and better received by viewers than the other two mechanisms for humor generation. Incongruous scenes, in any form were immediately recognized and highly appreciated by both sets of viewers. It was also interesting to note that unlike verbal humor, resolution of incongruity is not an essential aspect of visual humor. The very

presence of incongruous behavior, situations, or contexts in a video is received as highly humorous by viewers.

Retelling is also much easier for instances of incongruity as compared to those with superiority or relief. Also, they do not lose as much impact either when put in words and sentences. For verbal language users, one of the handy supplements of retelling incongruous instances was the use of phrases such as, "not sure why!", "out of the blue", "They were acting strange", "it was wired!", etc. Gesturing too were used heavily to convey incongruous behavior or characters by most verbal language users. Signers too, as mentioned above appreciated incongruity in all its manifestations. It was also much simpler for them to include such instances in their retelling of the video contents with the help of mimicry, imitations and over all role playing and role shifting. Situational as well as behavioral incongruity of characters and events were talked about with much ease.

Two of the other mechanism that are frequently used for humor generation in the visual mode also need to be mentioned here.

Slapstick comedy: It was very interesting to observe the responses to slapstick comedy by the hearing population. While watching the videos, every instance of such variety of humor generation was mostly recognized as well as quite appreciated and welcomed with much laughter. But when it came to being a factor in rating the video as highly humorous it failed to influence judgment (discussed in the previous chapter). While analyzing the retelling of videos, we could find a pattern of either completely dropping such scenes for retelling or just mentioning briefly followed by expressions such as, "It was silly", "did not make sense", etc. But sign language users are more positive towards such mechanisms of humor generation. They not only appreciate such instances while watching a video but also ensure including those scenes in much detail while retelling in signs, the plot of the video.

Stereotypes: As discussed earlier, use of stereotypes are one of the most frequently used mechanisms for humor generation for both verbal as well as visual mode. Though, all viewers mostly (unless it offends their identity or beliefs) enjoy and respond positively to such uses while watching a humorous video verbal language user do not always feel comfortable to acknowledge their entertainment value nor include them while retelling such instances from a video. They

always try to find softer words for retelling if it cannot be avoided, as seen in case of the video, *The Elevator*. Sign language users are more comfortable in this regard as already discussed.

5.5 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to explore the following:

- o The elements that come together and compose a visually humorous content.
- o The significance of each of the elements and their weightage and contribution in the overall humorousness.
- o The similarities and differences in reception and appreciation of humor by people who use different language modes for communication.
- o The elements of visual modality producing laughter and amusement.

Based on the pilot study that provided us with a list of elements that are perceived to be contributing factors in visual humor along with a more focused set of humorous videos with different degrees of humorousness; we further designed the study reported in this chapter.

The study provided evidence to the differences in reception of humor by viewers when they belong to different mode of language. While watching a humorous video verbal language users and signers focus on different aspects of the video in different degree. It helped us prove our hypothesis that modality of language influences our reception of humor. In addition, we also observed another clear distinction, that verbal language users perceive both plot-based and actor-based elements contributing to humor if the video is considered highly humorous. However, if the video is considered moderately humorous, they believe that plot-based features contribute to the sections in the video that were humorous. Whereas, sign language users happen to focus and appreciate the actor-based elements as a contributing factor to humor in videos irrespective of how humorous they find a video to be. The reason could be central to their mode of language being more visually influenced than abstract as verbal languages are.

A highly humorous video is the result of all the elements including actors, plot, location, etc. Therefore, it is relatively difficult for verbal language users to distinguish between them. However, for moderately humorous videos, it is easy to find those elements that contributed most in

generating the humor. For the signers on the other hand, actors' acting and facial expressions are the most important elements for humor even when the video is considered moderately humorous.

Based on the observations of recordings for response to humorous elements intended to confirm if the specified elements do produce laughter and amusement. Overall, we found that instances of laughter while watching the video correlated with the ratings of the elements for both verbal language users and signers. Apart from these elements, we also listed few more factors that contribute to humorousness of the video. These are not individual elements but a combination of several elements. For instance, butt of the joke, which plays an important role in verbal humor is mostly identified even in visual humor and produces laughter. Stereotypes are as important in visual humor as it is in verbal humor. Moreover, visual modality has the advantage of visually presenting and sometimes modifying and magnifying some of the features of these stereotypes that generate more humorous effect for the audience.

We also found that although plot and actor-based elements can be distinguished, they in totality interact with each other and are co-dependent in the visual mode to produce laughter and/or amusement. In a visual modality, character can be more creative in performing by adding facial features, expressions and other visual elements in combination of various film making techniques and plot-based elements such as location, camera movements, etc. This explicit visual interaction has more potential to generate greater humor as compared to verbal counterpart, where this interaction may not be explicitly presented and may just be imagined by highly creative readers.

Visual modality also has an advantage of using various humor techniques mentioned in theories independently or in combining them. For instance, consider the case of Mr. Bean. The behavior of the actor on an airplane represents behavioral incongruity. However, it also falls within the framework of superiority.

One of the major aspects unique to the visual representation of humor is the creative use of filmmaking techniques. These techniques when used creatively contribute greatly in the reception of humor intended by the team of the film maker which also includes the actor. Like any humorous content, be it verbal, pictorial or visual, the recognition of the efforts made by the makers by the audience and responding in the expected manner is the success for the content. If the intentions are not well received for any reasons, either lack of understanding, getting offended by the content,

finding the actions and efforts "too much" or "over the top", etc. the content created loses its value and can be considered a failure.

In many ways humor is appreciated and humorous content is retained by people across linguistic cultures. But the mode of language one uses for communication influences the elements they focus on and the way one would translate those visually generated elements into their language modality. A humorous video, when highly humorous, has some qualities itself to be appreciated by all people across linguistic boundaries of modality. It is when the visually generated content has failed to live up to the imagination and intent of the film-making team, that we begin to find differences that are linguistically motivated.

Additionally, we also find evidences of certain mechanisms of humor generation based on prominent theories, when used, being more appreciated than others. For instance, relief theory alone failing to as much impress viewers as incongruity theory does (detailed discussion in Chapter 6). Also, language modality aids in making choices of selecting or dropping certain actions and/or events from a humorous video to be included while retelling the contents watched. Sign language for example, highly supports and lends discourse markers in retelling events that are categorized as slapstick. Further, the modality of language one uses for communication highly influences the recognition and reception of mechanisms of humor generation. They focused on different aspects of the video as well as relied heavily on role playing and classifier expressions while retelling. These strategies also were used to ensure that the retold narrative was as humorous as the video was or how humorous they found the video to be.

The next chapter is focused on exploring how humorous contents and their contributing elements impacts the memory of a viewer and are sing language users different from those using verbal languages in this regard.

6

Study II

Visual Humor and Memory

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we report findings of the study that was designed as a follow-up of the previous study discussing the reception of humor in videos by verbal and sign language users to understand the similarities and differences between viewers' belonging to distinct linguistic modalities. The focus of the present study is exploring the impact of humorous elements with reference to memory.

The relationship between the use of humor and its impact on memory has interested several researchers. Though most studies indicate that humor has a positive impact on memory because of heightened attention and cognitive engagement (Speck, 1991), favorable affect (Speck, 1991), or increased arousal (McGhee, 1983), there are several other studies suggesting negative effect of humor on memory. For example, Lammers and colleague argued that humor may be distracting and thus impair memory for accompanying information (Lammers, Leibowitz, Seymour, and Hennessey, 1983). Few studies also show that humor has no effect on memory (Berg and Lippman, 2001). Despite the disagreement on the effect of humor on memory, several studies have been conducted to explore the role of humor in various domains, such as cartoons (Schmidt, 2002; Schmidt and Williams, 2001), advertisements (Gelb and Zinkhan, 1986; Sternthal and Craig, 1973), in conference talks (Madrid and Gomez, 2015), language teaching (Derakhshan, 2016), etc.

One of the prominent issues in this research is the 'humor effect', which is a psychological phenomenon that might result in people to remember information better when that information is perceived as funny or humorous compared to information that they do not perceive as humorous (Warren and McGraw, 2015; 2016). Humor might enhance one's memory, whether he/she is trying to remember verbal information, such as words and sentences, or visual information, such as pictures and videos (Schmidt, 1994; Lippman and Dunn, 2000; Schmidt and Williams, 2001; Hansen, Strick van Baaren, 2009).

Considering previous researches mentioned above, it can be assumed that humor has an impact on memory. However, it is not clear, what aspect of humor, especially in visual humor, has what kind of impact on memory. It can be argued that the overall experience with the humorous visual stimulus being emotionally stimulating is retained in the memory, which being pleasing aids it. But it is also possible that individual elements, that contribute to humor (as discussed in the

previous chapter), play a major role. Moreover, the effect on memory could also be the result of these elements interacting at various levels of cognitive processes. Thus, in this study we assume that the elements that remain longer in the memory of the viewer are significant aspects of humor reception and production in visual modality. And by focusing on those elements, better humorous visual material could be created that may have long lasting impact on long term memory and learning.

Therefore, the goal of this study was to explore the relationship between humor and elements contributing to humor in the visual mode and memory. In other words, to explore which elements of visual humor are retained in the viewers' short term (immediate) memory and further, if the same elements are remembered the same way after a certain span of time, i.e. retained in long term memory. As compared to some of the other memory and humor research (Schmidt, 1994; Lippman and Dunn, 2000; Schmidt and Williams, 2001; Hansen, Strick van Baaren, 2009), the focus of this study is to explore various elements of visual humor and how they are retained and remembered by viewers, and not on how humor impacts memory in general. We would also like to examine the similarities and differences between verbal and sign language users in this regard.

 Based on our previous analysis of video recordings on humor reception and reproduction by participants, we intended to test the following hypotheses:

- o The videos that were rated as highly humorous by a viewer would be better remembered than those they rated as moderately humorous.
- o As viewers focus on certain elements more than others they should also remember, after a certain period of time, the presence of those elements more than elements they believed hardly contributed to the overall humorousness.
- o Sign language users would better remember the characters and their actions whereas verbal language users should remember the overall plotline and/or climax.

6.2 Study II

For this study, responses were collected in the following stages: (1) Short term or Immediate stage and (2) Long term or lasting stage.

- o Immediate stage: Recording of previous study (in which participants saw the videos and narrated it) was analyzed. The recording included their response while watching the video and their narration. For the analysis, we noted those aspects that they narrated after watching the video. This recording also served as a baseline and reference to long term or lasting stage analysis. The analysis of the video included taking a note if they remembered the title of the video they just watched, how much of the plot-line did they remember, checking to see whether or to what extent and in what kind of scenarios they remembered, the sequence of events (for instance, proximity of events with humorous elements), etc.

- o Lasting stage: The lasting stage was conducted at least after 3 weeks and at most within 6 weeks from the first study. Same participants, who had each watched two videos following which they answered a set of questions and narrated what they had seen in the video, were contacted. It must be noted that they were not informed about this follow-up study during their first recording. The meeting was set in the exact same location with the same set of people around and similar set-up. This was done to recreate the environment in which they first watched the video and performed the tasks. For this study, participants were seated in a relatively silent room in front of a laptop. A video recording camera was placed in front of them to record their reactions. The video also recorded their response in the later task. Participants were asked to sign the consent letter in which they agreed to video recording and its analysis for present and similar related studies. Participants were asked few questions and then they were instructed to retell the video that they had watched.

6.2.1 Procedure and task

The study was conducted in the following steps:

Step 1: Once the participants were seated comfortably they were asked which videos they had watched and if they remembered the title of the video and if they think they remembered the

contents of the video. Depending on if they reported to remember the videos or not they were categorized in two groups. So, there were two sets of participants for this experiment:

- o Participants who claimed to remember the video/s they watched
- o Participants who claimed to not remember the video/s they watched

Step 2: The participants were then asked following questions:

- o Did you like the video they had watched?
- o What did you like the most about the video?
- o If you did not like the video what did they dislike in the video most?

Step 3: After asking the above-mentioned questions, the participants were then asked to retell what they had watched in the video in the previous session. Their response was recorded and analyzed. For those who claimed not remembering the video were also instructed to try retelling whatever little they remember.

Step 4: The video recorded responses were then cross-referenced with their previous recordings discussed in the previous chapters to explore if humor and elements that generated humor influenced memory and if yes, in what ways. Depending on what they had said they liked or disliked most in a certain video and their rating for specific elements of the video was checked to find out what they evaluated them as when they watched them first in the previous study and did that evaluation change after some time. The retelling of the videos they had watched was also compared with how they retold the video when they first watched and similarities and/or differences (additional elements, omissions, new details, etc.) were noted for analysis. Also, the self-evaluation of the participants was assessed and compared with their responses for better understanding of the relationship between humor and its impact on memory.

6.2.2 Stimulus material

For this study, we analyzed the same stimulus material used for the previous studies. The selection of the short humorous videos/clips from various sources, mostly available on the internet via YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. Some of the clips, like described earlier, are short clips taken from a full film and others are complete short films made and produced for humor impact. Also, since we did not want any distractions we chose to eliminate any humor generated with the use of verbal cues, hence all the videos selected were silent, i.e. there were no dialogues. Humor in these videos were entirely created with the help of action by the characters and the plot. The videos that were small clips taken out from a full film were ensured to have a clear plotline and did not depend on the larger plotline of the full film to be understood clearly.

6.2.3 Participants

Fifty-two participants, out of the 65 participants who were part of study 2 and 3, were chosen for this particular study (forty-two verbal language users and ten sign language users). Out of the forty-two verbal language users there were twenty-three male and nineteen female participants and out of ten sign language users there were six males and four were females. Though the number of participants who participated in the previous studies was larger, we had to restrict the number for this study. As all the verbal participants for these studies are students at different universities and the experiments were conducted with recordings and questionnaire form over a period of three years, it was not possible to ensure availability and willingness of all the participants for a second round of study. In case of signers, some of the signers were not available as they were travelling or had other engagements. So, a random selection of available participants was done, mostly subject to availability and their willingness to participate in the memory study. Some of the participants, when approached for this study, claimed to have a bad memory and were reluctant to participate. In some cases, the participants also claimed to have watched the same video at least one more time after participating in the first round of experiments, either to show it to a friend/family or because they wanted to enjoy the video watching experience again. Such candidates were excluded from this study. Amongst the remaining participants, the selection of participants was done at random, without knowing beforehand if they remembered or thought they

remembered which video they had watched and at least to our knowledge had not watched the video at a recent time or more than once.

6.3 Observations

Recorded responses of participants were analyzed by four independent volunteers who were neither part of any of the studies as participants nor as designers for the study. The sign language users' responses were analyzed by interpreters along with the four volunteers. The method was tedious and required watching all the videos several times and noting down participants' reactions, facial expressions, gestures, laughter, etc. All the videos were analyzed open ended initially. Pointers for results were deduced after several rounds of watching recorded videos.

Observations along with the pointers determined are as follows:

6.3.1 Immediate stage

As mentioned in the previous section, the present study is two folds. The first part of the study is an extension of the previous study discussed in chapter four. So, borrowing the analysis from that study, the following points were observed:

First, participants were found more engaged when they watched a video that made them laugh or smile. This suggests that the level of involvement we feel while watching humorous videos reflects upon our retention and reproduction of the contents. Second, as participants watched a certain video, if they felt that the plotline was boring and/or that the climax or the punchline did not do justice to the intention of the filmmakers and actors, they skipped through details and those details did not surface in the reproduction of the contents for another person. Third, in some cases, it was also observed that the participants rated a video as not very humorous or even reported not enjoying watching it at all, but they retained some specific elements vividly. Attention was also paid to videos that tickled the audience a lot more than other videos, be it for the reasons of non-sense as humor (Benny Hill: Joggers), a very well-known and established comic actor (Mr. Bean: Lift, First Class, Chaplin: Circus), or use of a stereotype for humor (Elevator), etc. So, fourth, viewers

sometimes missed out on certain details while watching the video and thus, dropped those details while retelling, as seen in the previous chapter discussion.

In contrast with the retention of details for humorous videos that were enjoyed by audiences, we also noted how and why few details from the moderately-humorous videos were also attended to for retelling purpose. For example, all the participants distinctly remembered to mention some scenes from the video, *Joggers*, that they felt was forced humor. Similarly, participants gave detailed description of scenes from the video, *Stapler,* while they had actually rated those scenes as not-very-humorous. This suggests that participants identified "forced humor", upon its failure to produce desired humorous effect and hence rated them low but distinctly remembered the intention of the creator. They even suggested alternative sequences that could have made it more humorous. This suggests an interactive involvement of participants while watching a video.

6.3.2 Long Lasting

As mentioned earlier, long term retention of aspects of watched video was recorded after 3 weeks. For this, participants were asked to retell what they had watched. We analyzed each participant's recorded response and noted aspects of video that they remembered. The analysis also included comparing present response with previous response. Below we present our observation of participants for all the 11 videos. Note that first five videos were rated highly humorous and later five videos were rated moderately humorous by participants. We also analyzed the eleventh video which got mixed rating.

The Elevator

Video recording of eight verbal participants were analyzed for this video and two were signers. It was confirmed that they had not gone back home and watched the video again. All the participants, who had watched the video, claimed that they remember the video very well. They also claimed to not remember the plot clearly, though they did remember which video they had watched, as they could report the title of the video. All the participants reported liking the video. When asked what they found most humorous in the video, six participants reported that they found the lead actor's acting and his worry that the elevator will fall the funniest. Two participants also reported that they

thought the final scene where the actor was again caught amongst people that risked his safety very humorous. None of the verbal participants talked about the repetitive plotline where more and more fat people came into the elevator raising the lead actor's worry whereas both the signers could recollect that part. None of the verbal participants, while retelling, elaborated or mentioned details about the supporting actors in the video but the signer participants could to some extent provide details about the other actors. Overall the retelling narration, when compared with their first narration in the previous experiment, was much more summarized. So, the aspects that both sets of participants remembered from this video were the lead actor's facial expressions, the overall plot of the video, and the final scene, i.e. the punchline of the plotline.

In short, the first time these participants had watched the video, the retelling was much more detailed. The narration also included a description of all the other characters in the video by all the participants. The scenes of the video were also retold mostly as it was with minimal summarizing. Though there were some awkwardness to the description of other actors as 'fat' for the verbal language users, they ensured to use some positive words to keep the core theme of the plotline intact. The last scene of the video was told with a lot of laughter and description accompanied by their understanding of what must have gone through in the lead character's mind for both sets of participants.

Hitchhiking

Five verbal participants and two signers were analyzed for this video. Every participant clearly remembered the plot of the video along with the lead actor and his actions including imitating the facial expressions of Mr. Bean. The responses for this video were similar for the two sets of participants. All participant who claimed to not remembering the video too could retell the contents almost accurately leaving out some details, for example, the exact look of the bike the second actor was riding, the exact expressions of the lead actor. They could also summarize the plotline and also retell the final scene of the video where the core of the humor lies. When asked if they remember the title of the video, all participants, both verbal and signers, reported not remembering or noticing the title of the video and made guesses. Two participants suggested it could have been "Lift' or "hitchhiking". So, for this video the participants remembered the lead actor, the plotline, the supporting actor and the last scene. While retelling, the participants did not give much details

of the objects (i.e. bike) and the setup/location of the video. The facial expressions of both the actors were re-imitated and the narration was accompanied with some smiles and laughter at plot points that they thought were humorous.

When these participants had watched the video for the first time, they had all laughed throughout the length of the video. In the process, some of the details were missed out by some of these participants. For instance, the exact look of the bike the other man had come riding on. Interestingly, those are the details that got left out in the retelling narrative after a span of three weeks' time. The excitement of the participants as soon as they realized that the lead actor of the video they are going to watch is Mr. Bean, they had started smiling or laughing already. The same happened this time too. As soon as the participants started retelling, they mentioned the lead actor and the narration that followed was full of Mr. Bean-like expressions and mannerisms with the exception of exaggerated expressions by signer participants.

The Lion's Cage

A total of ten participants' responses were analyzed for this video with eight verbal language and two sign language users. The video was rated highly humorous in the previous studies and the responses by participants were very positive with almost continuous laughter while watching the video. The participants also did the retelling of the video accompanied with laughter and smile almost throughout the narration. When asked if they remember which video they had watched and if they remembered what the video was all about, six participants were sure they remembered the video and also remembered the title of the video. Three participants claimed not remembering the video and were not very certain if they remembered the details but they believed they certainly did remember the overall plot of the video and who the actor was, in this case Charlie Chaplin. While retelling the contents, all participants, both verbal and signers, could give a summary of the plotline including the high points of humor from the video. The scenes all the participants mentioned in the retelling were Chaplin getting trapped in the lion's cage, how he tried to escape but ended up facing another lion in an interconnected cage, the lion waking up from sleep and not attacking him, how he pretended to not be scared of the lion when a lady walked by, and the way he ran out of the cage once unlocked as soon as he felt that the lion could attack him. Only one out of eight verbal participants mentioned the last scene where Chaplin ran on top of a pole and when the lady

followed him he pretended to be doing gymnastics on the pole whereas both the signers included the last scene in their retelling this time. Only one of the participants mentioned the scene where a dog comes by and barks at the cage that could have potentially woken up the lion, even though the same participants did include that scene in their first study.

The most interesting aspect that came out of the analysis of this video from the immediate stage was the fact that most of the participants had failed to or decided to drop the last scene of the video. They got so engaged and continued the laughter throughout the video that they did not even notice that there was an instance at the last part of the story that added to the *persona* Chaplin had established in the character for this video. The fact that he was scared but did not want others to realize that he was, had surfaced in a previous scene too, when he pretended to be at ease inside the cage as soon as he saw the woman coming towards him. The dog scene too, was skipped in the immediate narration, which continued to be dropped out in the narration after three weeks.

First Class

A total of six verbal participants and two signers were available this video's reporting. Interestingly, all the participants were more than willing to participate in the memory experiment. They all reported that they really enjoyed watching it and would like to retell what they had watched and see for themselves how much they remembered of the contents. Those participants almost remembered what they had watched. To get a balanced and uniform result for this experiment, participants who reported to have watched the video again after the first experiment were excluded for this study, as for this specific video some of the participants had gone back and watched the clip or the entire movie. All the participants remembered the theme of the video and the broad plotline. They also correctly mentioned the title of the video. Secondary and supporting characters were also mentioned in the retelling by both sets of participants. Five verbal participants also imitated and redid the actions of the lead actor, i.e. Mr. Bean in this case and four of them even re-enacted the parts played by the supporting cast. The same was done by both the signers. Almost the entire video was narrated by all participants. Though three of the verbal participants had confusion regarding the sequence of events. While narrating they used sentences like, "I am not sure what exactly happened next, but it doesn't matter", etc. Three of the verbal participants did not mention or skipped 'the puking in the sickness bag' scene but this scene too was included

by both the signers. Later when asked if they had forgotten that scene, they said they did not feel it was important or added any extra impact on the humorous effect. The sequence where Mr. Bean pretends to be carrying a gun and is being chased by the security people at the airport, was shortened and mostly summarized by all the verbal participants but not the signers. The last scene, when the security officer tries to get information out of him and understand why he behaved the way he did, and checked his passport photo was not skipped by any of the participants while retelling.

The responses and quality of retelling done immediately after watching the video was mostly comparable with the retelling done after three weeks' time. The details of the actor, description of the setup, involvement of the supporting actors, etc. were all as much as the first narration by the participants. But, the scenes or components that they skipped or forgot to mention were those that they were not either comfortable with or did not think added much of extra humor to the existing plot. Also, the fact that the sequence of events was not very clear in the memory of the viewers nor did they feel that it made any lesser impact on the humorousness of the video was interesting to observe.

Safety Last

Recordings of nine verbal participants and two signing were analyzed for this video. The most significant feature of this video was the stretched out and elaborate actions. The participants who watched this video had rated it to be highly humorous and also laughed along while watching the video. Most of the laughter, though, was coming from relief theory-based reaction as discussed in the third chapter. It was interesting to find out that none of the participants had attempted to or intended to watch it again or recommend it to friends or family, even though they had enjoyed watching it. When asked if they remembered the title of the video, all the participants could report correctly. It was noteworthy that at least eight of nine verbal participants were not sure if they remembered the contents of the video and would still manage to retell the plotline. Also, both the signers too were not sure in how much detail they remembered the contents of the video. But, once they started retelling, all the participants managed to give the broad plotline correctly and almost in the correct sequence. The narrations were quite summarized but the overall theme of the video was narrated by the participants. The narration was accompanied by many hand gestures imitating

the actions of the actors. It was also noted that six of the verbal participants did not mention the supporting actors even for scenes that were dependent on their actions, whereas both the signers did. The narration almost felt like it was a one man show for the verbal language participants. The last scene of the video was also narrated by seven participants. The scenes where the lead actor almost lost his balance but somehow managed to kept going were all part of the narration. None of the participants had previously known Harold Llyod as a famous actor and were first introduced to his work by this video. Two participants reported that they looked up the actor and did watch some of his other video clips later. But for this experiment, when asked if they remembered what the name of the lead actor was, all the participants knew and said the same correctly. Seven verbal participants did not mention that there was a female actor too in the video whom the lead actor meets at the top of the building. After the narration when they were asked why they did not talk about that scene, they all exclaimed that they had somehow forgotten that part of the video and only remembered the struggles of the lead actor trying to reach the terrace of the building.

As for the first viewing of the video and its reception, the humor impact had stayed with them. Most participants suggested that though they had fully enjoyed watching the video and also rated it highly humorous but in the later subjective questions had raised doubts regarding its humorousness. Also in the previous study when asked to retell they did not believe that they remembered the contents of the video. This could have hinted towards non-retention of details in the follow-up study too. When the participants started narrating for this study, the retelling was certainly comparable to the first narration they had given right after watching the video. The sequence of the events was a little jumbled up but still coherent and did justice to the plotline. The only difference noted this time was the falling out of details of all other actors and their contribution to the plotline for humor generation.

One Cookie Left

Recordings of eight verbal and two signers were analyzed for this video. The video was rated as moderately humorous by all participants in the previous study. When asked to retell the contents after three weeks, participants were not sure if they had much to say about it. Most participants reported to be not sure if they remembered the details enough to revisit the narration. Participants, both verbal and signer, also could not recollect the title of the video. Some made guesses and

mostly came up with "Cookie", "Fight", etc. There was also visible confusion over how many actors were there in the video for the verbal participants. Five participants were almost certain that there were two main actors but when asked if they remembered how many other actors were present in the video, they were not certain. The participants who claimed to not remember the video could retell the plotline in one or two sentences. Even those who had claimed to remember the video gave only the overall idea about the plot and the central theme. The scene by scene details that they had given when they first watched the video was completely lost in case of both sets of participants. The sequence of the scenes was also jumbled up. The only aspect of the video all the participants could recollect with certainty was that it was a black and white video and the tempo was the likes of Chaplin videos. This aspect was not mentioned or talked about when they did the retelling in the first round of experiments, but clearly, they could draw a parallel in the style of the video making. Only one of the verbal participants remembered the last scene, i.e. the punchline of the video. But even she was not sure if she was telling it correctly. On the other hand, both the signers mentioned the last scene, though not in as much details as they did the first time.

One of the most interesting aspects of retelling for this video was the reference to 'Chaplin style' by all the participants. They somehow remembered very little details from the video but the overall impact of style made an impression on their memory. In later informal discussion, most of the participants felt that the expectation from the video was raised because of the style, which when did not match up, left a negative impact on its humorousness. Hence, this was one of the most prominent aspects of the video that they all remembered even after three weeks' time. The repetition of similar events in the video also was not appreciated by the participants and was also dropped out for narration this time. Since the focus of the plot for humor generation were the two lead actors, viewers did not pay attention to the presence or absence of any other character.

Noodles

For this video recordings of seven verbal participants and one signer were analyzed. The video was rated as moderately humorous by most participants. For the present study four of the verbal participants reported that they did not remember much of the contents of the video. The signer available for this video was almost sure he remembered the video quiet well. They also reported that they thought the video had a very simple plot and it could have been much shorter in duration

to avoid being repetitive. Once they started retelling the video contents, it was observed that all the participants, including the signer, were summarizing the plotline and used very little hand and body gestures or facial expressions. They also skipped through the setup of the video and the description of the location and peripheral actors. The focus of the retelling was mainly the lead actor and the lady who walked into the restaurant. The same was observed in the retelling of the signer who had claimed that he remembered the video well. One of the scenes that made most participants laugh or chuckle, 'making space and taking alternative looks at the lady by all the people sitting down at the table', was included by only half of the verbal participants. But the signer included that section in the retold narrative. None of the participants remembered the title of the video and also failed at making guesses. The most noteworthy aspect of the retelling was that none of the participants could recollect with certainty how the video ended. Some just gave the summary that the lead actor was interested in the lady and was keen on having a look at her and other ended by saying that these events took place but they are not sure how it ended. As mentioned in the previous chapter, some of the participants had suggested a better ending for this video that could have made it more humorous to them. All the participants interestingly remembered the suggestions they had provided. The participants who claimed not to remember the video finished the retelling in one sentence and recollected that they were not very impressed by the video in the first viewing too. They also remembered not enjoying the video earlier and losing interest in the plot. They also stated that they realized that the video was meant to be humorous and there were few elements here and there that made them smile, but it could have been better.

After the participants had finished the retelling of the plot for this video the first time, they all came up with suggestions for what could have been done in the last scene, or in other words how the video should have ended to make it more humorous for them. Those suggestions, with time, got mixed up with the original plot and climax. Hence, the retelling for this study included those suggestions as part of the plot narration for most participants. The absence of description of other characters from the video was also consistent with the first retelling.

Joggers

Recordings of ten participants were analyzed for this video two of them being signers. As discussed in the previous chapters, this video is an interesting example of how the participants respond to nonsense as humorous. All the participants who had laughed throughout while watching the video were mostly uncertain if they remembered the details for the first round of retelling. They could only recollect that there was a man who was jogging around the city and every single person whom he met along the road were jogging too and the same was observed for this study. So, essentially the central theme of the video stayed in people's memory, but the details of all the other actors and what they were doing was lost. Six of the verbal participants mentioned only two or three characters the lead actor met while jogging and the two signers too reduced the mention of number of other supporting characters. Though there was not much consistency in the characters mentioned as each of the participants chose them at random reflecting their personal preferences. The most remarkable consistency in the retelling was the fact that all the participants, both verbal and signers, clearly remembered the first scene. They could almost give detailed scene-by-scene narration of the first scene in the correct sequence both immediately after watching the video as well as for this study. For this study in particular, when asked what they remembered from the video, all the participants were certain about the first scene and also reported that they found it to be the most humorous. One of the characters from the streets that most participants remembered was the old lady on a wheelchair. Even though they could not remember and narrate all the scenes she was in, they could all report her presence and that she had fallen from the cliff at one point and still survived. Interestingly, the last scene of the video was not narrated by any of the verbal participants and even when asked specifically they could not recollect how the video ended. Though one of the signers did include the last scene in his narration too. The title of the video was also dropped from memory and so did the name of the lead actor. Though four of the participants did admit that they enjoyed the video and wanted to check out some of Benny Hill's other videos. All the verbal participants also remembered that there was a laughter track to the video giving cues to scenes being humorous.

After comparing the retelling narrations by participants immediately after watching and after around three weeks' time, the most noteworthy aspect was the mixing up of sequence of events as

well as inclusion of supporting characters in the narration. Both the narrations lacked the two above mentioned aspects. Almost every participant chose few events and characters to talk about in the retelling. None of the participants could retell every single event from the plot at both times. The detailed and near-accurate description of the first scene should also be noted for analysis. The continuous laughter as a response to silliness could possibly be responsible for holes in the plotline.

Stapler

Recordings of five verbal participants and one signer were analyzed for this video. The participants who had watched this video were very reluctant to come back for the second round of recording based on the same video. Some of them even asked if they could watch a different video instead of talking about the same video again and they reported that it had some moments of humor but not enough to be retold or recommended to others. Additionally, all the participants agreed that it was not a very bad experience watching the video and some scenes did make them chuckle but there was not enough in the plot or a punchline to be repeated or put in words. Two verbal participants gave up after a sentence summarizing the plot and then said it was "kind of pointless". All the participants were certain that there were just two actors in the video and they were going out of their way to get to compete with each other and reload the stapler. Only one of all the verbal participants remembered how the video ended whereas others just made guesses and tried to come up with an idea as to how it could have ended. They did remember the suggestions they had provided in the first recording to make the video more humorous. One of the participants who claimed not to remember the video but she did remember the alternative plotline she had earlier suggested. Two participants could not even recollect what the two actors were competing for. The central object of the plotline which also happened to be the title of the video did not come across as essential and central to the plot as it must have been conceived by the filmmaker/s. Though, all signers too had similar opinions regarding this video all of them could still retell with much greater detail the events of the video for both the studies. Both sets of participants also commented on the fact that the filmmaker made extra efforts to enhance the involvement of the audience by adding special effects and specific camera movements creating suspense and thrill. The location of the video was not described by any of the participants. Also, the scene where one of the actors gets hit by a pin at the forehead and later the camera zooms out to show it was not the man but his picture

hanging on the all that was stabbed by the pin was not mentioned by three verbal participants but was mentioned by the signer.

As mentioned in the observation from video 'Noodles', the participant viewers of this video too included their suggestions that could have made the video more humorous to them and possibly others too. The retelling for this study was summarized to eliminate the aspects they had felt unnecessary or not very 'funny' after the first viewing of the video. Since the video had just two actors, there was hardly any confusion regarding presence of any other characters. The setup and location were also not felt significant enough to be included this time. The overall theme of the video was the only aspect that stayed in the memory of the participants and all other details were treated as peripheral and unnecessary to the plot.

The Black Hole

Recordings of eight participants were analyzed for this video, six verbal and two signers. Like other videos that were rated moderately humorous, participants who had watched this video were not sure if they remembered the details of all the scenes. The only aspect they all were sure of was that there was only one actor in the video and the overall setup was kind of dark. They could also not recollect the title of the video. The overall theme of the video was narrated for this recording without much description of the smaller details in scenes like the man eating a chocolate bar or what he was wearing. Three verbal participants also did not remember exactly how the lead actor realized the black circle was magical in some way nor could they recollect for sure if the paper was already kept on the table or if the actor freshly printed it out. It was the same for one of the signers too. It was remarkable that all the participants narrated the last scene of the video almost with clarity and correctly unlike other videos of this category. Two participants who claimed to not remember the video initially and refused to participate in this section of study once they started retelling from memory, they could retell almost as much as others with similar details. There was hardly any scope of gesturing or imitating facial expressions of the lead actor and hence it was not expected from the participants while retelling.

The participants' reluctance to retell the video contents and mostly skipping through details of events was the most interesting. The retelling done immediately after watching the video was much

more detailed than the one done after a gap of weeks. The sequence of events too was kind of jumbled up and the central theme of the video was only aspect retained. The last scene too was described with fewer words than done the first time.

Boxing

Recordings of seven verbal participants and one signer were analyzed for this video. The video had mixed response in the rating experiment and also at the reception study as discussed in the previous chapter. The participants were not familiar with the actor's body of work (Buster Keaton) and only two participants had heard of him from their parents or others. While coming back for this study, it was ensured that none of the participants re-watched this specific video. All the participants could retell the summarized version of the plotline. They could also specify exactly how many actors were present in the video and their roles. Five of the verbal participants narrated the plotline sequentially as it occurred in the video and the signer could too. Most of the participants could remember the title of the video correctly and remembered for certain that it was a black and white video. Two of the participants who mixed up the sequence still did not miss out on much of the details. The retelling by verbal participants was accompanied with some gesturing that were imitations of the actors' actions in specific scene. One of the scenes that were acted out while narrating by every participant, both verbal and signer, was how Keaton could not get the posture right to start a fight. Minor details, like a man smoothly jumping over the ropes to enter the boxing ring, the referee getting frustrated and taking a seat at the corner, etc. were absent in the narration. All the participants could retell the final scene but two of them were not sure who the man giving a massage was. In the video that man's face was not shown but some participants assumed that it was the referee and included that in the retelling.

The major difference in the retelling content for this study compared to the previous one was the mixing up of sequence of events. The retelling right after watching the video was much more detailed and truer to the original sequence. Most of the participants had used imitation techniques for describing the lead actor's actions the first time as well as this time. The only difference was that not all imitations were repeated this time. There was also a remarkable confusion to the role and presence of the some of the supporting characters in the video in contrast with the previous retelling, which had much more clarity.

6.4 Findings

Based on our observation and analysis of recorded videos of participants after three weeks of first viewing, we could summarize the results in the following table. Notice, these pointers and categories were generated in the bottom up method by analyzing the videos several times. Table 6.1 shows the percentage of participants who retained various aspects of highly humorous and moderately humorous videos. Table 6.2 presents the percentage of actual remembering of the participants who claimed to remember the video and those who claimed not to remember the video.

Aspects retained in Long term memory	Highly Humorous Videos		Moderately Humorous Videos	
	Verbal	**Signers**	**Verbal**	**Signers**
Plot	92%	87%	87%	90%
Lead Actor	94%	96%	92%	92%
Supporting Actor/s	89%	93%	62%	86%
Location/Setup	84%	78%	27%	42%
Gesturing/Re-enacting	87%	96%	32%	86%
Correct sequence of events	84%	78%	32%	52%
Last scene/Punchline	92%	94%	76%	92%
Willingness to retell	87%	88%	22%	76%
Summarizing/Eliminating repetition	24%	32%	92%	80%

Table 6.1: Aspects that were retained by participants (in percentage) after three weeks during retelling of the previous watched highly humorous and moderately humorous videos.

	Participants who claimed to remember the video	Participants who claimed not to remember the video
Highly Humorous Videos	81%	19%
Moderately Humorous Videos	38%	62%

Table 6.2: Actual remembering percentage of highly humorous and moderately humorous videos by participants who claimed to remember the video and those who claimed not to remember the video.

Based on our analysis, below we summarize our findings:

o   Almost all the viewers remembered the lead character/s in the videos they had watched earlier irrespective of them considering the video as highly humorous or moderately humorous.

o   The plot-line was remembered, either entirely or partially, when the viewers found a video to be highly humorous. However, for the videos that were not considered highly humorous, only the overall theme of the video was remembered.

o   Remembering the supporting actors was subject to how humorous the video was rated as for verbal language users. In case of highly humorous videos viewers could recollect almost all the supporting characters, whereas for moderately humorous videos viewers either did not remember or had a selective memory of the other characters' role in the plotline. On the other hand, signers seem to remember the supporting characters from a video in far more details.

o   Viewers mostly did not remember and skipped in later narration the sections of videos that they found uncomfortable to watch. Also, the parts of a video they felt were unnecessary, even in highly humorous videos, did not form the part of memory. This was true for both verbal as well as signers.

o   Viewers usually remembered the elements they did not find humorous but were intended by the filmmaker to be humorous. These elements were also noticed and mentioned in the retelling

right after watching a video but showed to have a more lasting impression on the overall experience of video watching.

o Some videos were not rated highly humorous and the participants suggested minor changes in the plot-line or character sketches that could have contributed to humor. In some cases, participants also suggested a change in the punchline that could have better humorous impact in the immediate stage. Interestingly, in the long-term memory study, the participants could remember the changes they had suggested but could not very well remember what was actually present in the video.

o The participants who claimed not to remember the videos could mostly narrate all the details for highly humorous videos. But, when viewers did not find a video to be very humorous, they also knew for sure that they did not remember the contents very well which reflected in their narration of contents. Interestingly, signers who were not certain about their memory of videos, irrespective of the video being highly humorous or not they could better retell the contents than their verbal counterparts.

o Mostly when viewers believed that they remembered a video what they meant was the lead actor's character and the plotline. Some viewers, who thought they remembered the video they had watched could not recall correctly the videos they did not like, but could almost retell with details the videos they had rated as highly humorous.

o Irrespective of videos being highly humorous or moderately humorous, viewers remembered the punchline of the plot, i.e. they mostly always remembered the last scene of the video. This was more noted in case of signers than verbal participants.

o In some cases, the viewers tended to get mixed up or get confused with the sequence of events. This happened mostly in case of videos that they, both the sets of participants, did not find very humorous. This could also be notices in case for highly humorous videos, but even though the sequence was mixed up they still remembered each and every event from the video.

o   When viewers found an actor to be highly contributing to the humorousness of a video, they imitated the expressions and actions of the actor. This did not change or got clouded with time. Even when they were asked to retell the contents of a video after three weeks they accurately remembered the actions as well as gestures and expressions. The re-enacting and mimicry of done by the signers were as detailed as they were in the first round of the retellings. With some participants, we also noticed that signers were also as accurate in the re-enacting as the original characters from the video.

o   When viewers found a video to be highly humorous, they avoided summarizing the plotline as they gave equal importance to each and every aspect of the video both immediately after as well as while retelling after a certain period of time. In contrast, when a video was not considered as humorous, with time details faded away and the only option left was to summarize the plot line as well as other elements from the video.

o   Most interestingly, sign language users and verbal language users do not show much difference in the patterns of remembering significant details from a humorous video. Both the groups of viewers maintained the similar trend of remembering aspects of a humorous video better when they found them to be humorous in the first watching itself. For instance, when a signer found gestures significant to humor generation they also focused and retained the memory of those gestures. One of the aspects we could observe difference between the two groups of viewers is the willingness to retell a moderately humorous video. Where verbal language was significantly reluctant to talk about these videos, signers did not show much hesitation.

6.4.1 Discussion

Keeping in mind all the observations from the responses of participants, we can conclude that humor does play a crucial role in retention of information. The most apparent conclusion we can draw from the study is that humor purely in the visual mode, i.e. without the support of language, has a strong impact on memory. The more humorous a visual content is, the better are the chances that it would have a positive and lasting impact on long term as well as short term memory.

There could be multiple reasons for a viewer to find a video humorous, as discussed in chapter four and five. For example, finding the plot humorous, finding the actor/s to be humorous, the plotline being relatable, etc. While, watching a humorous video, the audience smiles, gasps, and in the best cases laugh out loud. All these responses are involuntary but results in stimulating positive physiological responses which results in impacting lasting memory. In some cases, when the audience starts watching a video and as soon as a certain actor, be it his/her favorite or a very famous established actor in the field, the expectations of audience get heightened. Most of the time it leads to the audiences' biased response to enjoying the video and ignoring bits from the video that might not have been very humorous. Sometimes, it also results in the audience not even focusing on any other aspects of the video, other than the actor. The same could be possible in cases of well-known directors or production houses. But, whatever be the reason for a viewer to enjoy a video and find it humorous, he/she will certainly remember the overall content or the overall reaction they had while watching the video.

If we introspect, we will realize that all the experiences in life that made us smile or laugh stay in memory for almost eternity. One of the other reasons could also be coming from the fact that human beings are social animals. When we watch a video that instilled humorous response in us we look forward to sharing that experience with others, like our friends or family. This makes us keep in mind details and instances that made us laugh so that we can retell it to others and give them a similar enjoyable experience. Of course, this is not just limited to the visual medium. It should also be applicable to text-based humor, such as jokes, memes, or pictorial humor widely used by the advertising industry, and other mediums. Also, when a person watches a humorous video, they believe that most of the details from the video are fresh in the memory in contrast to videos that they did not find very humorous. This can even be extended to people who have not watched to video themselves but the person who watched the video and found it humorous narrated the contents. In the table 2 we can see that viewers are more certain that they can correctly retell a highly humorous video watched sometime in the past than viewers who had not found a video to be enough humorous.

In some cases when people are not certain if they can manage to retell the video after a gap of few days, once they start narrating they are themselves surprised with the amount of details they

actually remember from humorous videos. Also, when a narration is done accompanied with laughter it remains in the memory longer. This is the extent of impact humor has on memory.

Given the observations, we can also conclude that between plot and characters in a video, the plot has greater impact on long lasting memory. That is, in videos, generally the plotline is remembered better and for a longer duration. However, when a video is considered highly humorous the viewers remember the plot as well as almost all the characters. But when a video is considered moderately humorous somehow the overall plot stays in memory but not all the characters. Though the sequence of scenes could fade from memory also in case of highly humorous video, the likeliness of completely forgetting the plot is almost rare for highly humorous as well as moderately humorous videos. The same cannot be said with certainty for all characters in a video. As we have seen in the previous section, there can be multiple instances of viewers completely forgetting some of the characters from a video. Though, when it comes to the lead actor of a video, irrespective of how humorous the video is for a view, they always remember the role and certain crucial features as well as actions of the lead actor. The only difference between highly humorous and moderately humorous videos could be to what extent viewers remember details about the lead actor. When it comes to highly humorous video, viewers not only remember the lead actor and his/her actions and role in the video, but they also remember the facial expressions and gestures used by him/her well enough to recreate, both immediately and after a span of a at least three weeks. However, the lead actor from moderately humorous or non-humorous videos could be remembered but not as well. The same is true for the setup of a video. The highly humorous videos are remembered with great details including the location, setup, even clothing in some cases. These details are almost completely lost in case of moderately humorous videos. Hence, we can only imagine how much of details would retain in the memory from videos that viewers do not find humorous at all.

Another interesting conclusion we can draw from this study is the role of the last scene in a humorous video. After watching a highly humorous video, the viewers decide where the punchline of the plot lies. In most cases, it is the last scene of the video. But, there could also be videos that have more than one punchline spread throughout the video's length. Even then, the punchline, which is the core of humor in a video comes towards/at the end of a scene or the whole video. Hence, viewers always remember the punchline for videos, which almost seems to be obvious. But

it does not happen for some videos that viewers found to be moderately humorous. As seen in the previous section, people mostly left out or had completely forgotten how a certain video ended more frequently for a moderately humorous video. Though it happened more for moderately humorous videos, it also happened at least in one case (Charlie Chaplin: *The lion's cage*) which was mostly rated as highly humorous. So, there should be some reason for it. One of the reasons could be the fact that this specific video had multiple punchline-like scenes. Hence, people did not feel that the last scene had more centralized humor. The most noteworthy fact is that the scene was left out in retelling both in immediate as well as lasting memory study. Hence, memory alone could not be responsible for not mentioning the scene for this video. For videos that viewers find moderately humorous, the last scene is mostly either forgotten or some confusion regarding its specificities are apparent.

In some cases, though, we could also find evidence of material that viewers do not find very humorous finds at path to be retained in memory for a long run. For example, when people could recollect those bits and components from a video they disliked or did not appreciate the most. The reason could be that the other humorous content that surrounds the non-humorous bit makes it stand out as forced or failed attempts by film maker or actor/s. Hence that aspect impacts the memory and stays for a longer duration.

Another interesting finding from the study is the fact that the video makers' intention to generate humor in the work is noticed and remembered. The intention could be at any level, be it plot, actor/s selection, actors' execution of scenes, choice of sequence of events, execution of a certain instance (camera movements, choice of angles, etc.), events within the plotline and/or deciding upon how to start and end the video clip. If the attempts to fulfil the intention are not successful, i.e., if audiences do not find the video as humorous as it was intended to be, the audience does keep in mind the efforts and hence end up including those details while retelling the contents to someone or when recommending the video to another person. In some cases, they generate an alternative scenes and instances based on maker's intention and this alternative instance remains in the memory of the viewer. Moreover, the background laughter tracks too work in this regard to help audiences identify and get cues to points in a video that were believed to be humorous by the film makers.

We also find evidences of better retention of incongruous events and actions by characters significantly better than those of superiority or relief. The latter two mechanisms are better retained in immediate memory than in lasting memory. All participants included scenes that depict superiority and relief while retelling contents of a video immediately after watching a humorous video but some chose to eliminate such details when asked to retell after a few weeks. Sign language users did include some of those scenes more than verbal language users, but the reason behind that could be the need to include those details for mimicking the actions of characters from a video. Slapstick and stereotypes too loose their impact and do not get retained in long term memory. We had also found, as discussed in the previous chapter, that verbal language users sometimes do not prefer to include such details even while retelling right after watching a humorous video. Interestingly, even though signers do include details from slapstick and stereotype style of humor in immediate retelling but when it comes to lasting memory some of those details get blurred and not reported with as much accuracy.

6.5 Conclusion

The goal of the study was to explore what aspect of visual humor is retained in the memory and examine if there are significant differences between verbal language users and sign language users in this regard.

The videos that were rated as highly humorous by a viewer were indeed better remembered than those they rated as moderately humorous confirming out first hypothesis. This was true for both sign language users as well as verbal language users. The videos a viewer rated as highly humorous after watching it for the first time also showed considerable willingness and hardly any hesitation in retelling the contents of the video. On the other hand, there was visible hesitation and a far more overall summarization of the contents for those videos that they found to be moderately humorous as they had forgotten details of those videos.

We found evidences confirming our hypothesis that because viewers focus on certain elements more than others they should also remember, after a certain period of time, the presence of those elements more than elements they believed hardly contributed to the overall humorousness. After the analysis of recorded videos, we can confirm our hypothesis that elements that are believed to

be significant contributors in humorousness of a video are retained in the memory of a viewer and other elements that are not recognized as contributing factor can be potentially either completely forgotten or only partially retained in long-lasting memory. We found that participants did remember those aspects of the video longer when they were included in the narration they did immediately after watching the video. Those aspects can either belong to the overall plotline of the video or from the character/s' acting which they find humorous. The same is true for sign language users. Hence, there is no apparent difference that modality induces on the relationship between humorous elements from a video and their retention in memory of a viewer. Following previous research on memory, it could be argued that while narrating an instance or a scene, it gets retained in the memory for a longer period than those scenes and instances that did not find place in the narration (Banikowski and Mehring, 1999; Lucidi et al., 2016; Bayliss et al., 2015).

With respect to our third hypothesis that sign language users would better remember the characters and their actions whereas verbal language users would remember the overall plotline and/or climax of a humorous video, we could find enough evidences to confirm it too. Sign language users, irrespective of degree of humorousness of a specific video remembered in much greater detail the actions and facial expressions of the different characters as compared to verbal language users. On the other hand, verbal language users remembered the plot and the punchline/climax of the videos more than other details.

Additionally, we also found interesting evidence supporting that the intention of the creator, if recognized immediately and explicitly mentioned in their first retelling, is remembered for longer period. Viewers remember those scenes and sequences which they did not find humorous but considered intended to be humorous. There are two things to note in this result. First, the intention of the maker is recognized as well as remembered. We argue that it is possible because of the expectation of the viewer from the video to be humorous. So, while watching a video, viewers are not passive instead they actively assess and evaluate the intention of the maker. And thanks to this process of active assessment, expectation and evaluation is retained in the memory. Second, sequences and scenes that fail to produce humor can also be remembered as a failed humor. It can be argued that if the purpose of the humorous video is to be retained longer in the memory of the

audience and not only to entertain at the moment, then some level of failure, where the intention is recognized, can sometimes indirectly serve the purpose.

Recognition of intention is not just an act of appreciation, instead it is a process of constant evaluation. In this process, the viewer tends to produce subjective imagery, in which he/she plays a modified sequence, based on the plotline and intention of the maker, in his/her mind. This is an important outcome, as it suggests that humor reception is not passive reception instead it is an interactive reception. Retention of modified sequences, based on maker's intention suggests that the process of reception of humor may also become a part of the production of humor itself. This finding can also be supported by the fact that participants not only imagined and remembered the failed intended humor but also adjusted and exaggerated the punchlines and remembered them.

Furthermore, aspects along the lines of incongruity theory have a much greater impact on memory as compared to other mechanisms of humor generation, such as superiority or relief for hearing as well as deaf viewers. Though, superiority and relief mechanisms are as much recognized and appreciated as incongruity while watching a humorous video the previous two tend to lose their impact on the viewers with time and as a result sometimes get completely lost with time. Incongruity on the other hand is considered crucial to the plotline as well as the characters' uniqueness and hence retained in the memory of the viewers.

Therefore, overall, we can conclude that watching humor in visual modality, without the support of the language, is a complex interactive cognitive process. While watching a video, a viewer, irrespective of modality of language they use, not only recognizes and appreciates humor generated with the use of specific mechanisms but also simultaneously works at recognition of intention of the film makers, making efforts to retain as much information as possible and also finding correlations with past experiences for better retention of details.

With the observations made after this study and the generalizations we could deduce based on the two studies reported in this chapter and the previous one we would proceed to reporting all the different conclusions we could draw in the next chapter. So, the next chapter is the final chapter of this thesis where we present all the conclusions and additionally discuss some of the limitations of this work. Finally, we also propose possible future work that we would like to take-up as an

extension of this work to make further more focused contribution in the fields of humor search within the scope of comparative sociolinguistic analysis.

7

Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

7.2 Conclusions

7.3 A note on failure of humor in videos

7.4 Limitations and future work

7.1 Introduction

We started this study with the following objectives in mind,

- o To examine the anatomy of humorous videos focusing on finding the elements in a video that contribute to the humor effect and also explore which elements are more prominent than others in generating humor.
- o To examine if theories of humor are modality independent and are also applicable to humor in the visual mode.
- o To understand if and how hearing and deaf population differ in reception and appreciation of humorous videos and if the differences are influenced by the modality of language they use, i.e verbal or signed.
- o To explore the relationship between humor and its compositional elements contributing to humor in the visual mode and memory.

With the different studies designed to observe the ways in which humorous videos are designed and created and if and how an audience's modality of language impacts the reception of humorous videos we could to a great extent fulfil the objectives for the study.

7.2 Conclusions

Based on the first study we could conclude that as viewers our modality of language plays a significant role in the appreciation of humorous videos. Though some videos could fall into the category of being universally humorous and appreciated equally by almost all groups of viewers we cannot deny that our language modality does influence the aspects and elements in a video that we would consider more important and crucial than others. As the structure of sign language discourses are more inclined towards the roleplaying of characters and role-shift the sign language users tend to focus more on those aspects and find humor. This could be confirmed with the help of all the sub-sections of the first study including the retelling of contents as well as analysis of reception patterns. Sign language users significantly differed in the strategies used while retelling contents of a humorous video. They focused on different aspects of the video as well as relied heavily on role playing and classifier expressions while

retelling. The classifier expressions were also, as expected, used anaphorically to refer to characters and as well as events.

In case of memory, the second study we could confirm our hypotheses that elements that are believed to be significant contributors in humorousness of a video are retained in the memory of a viewer and other elements that are not recognized as contributing factor can be potentially either completely forgotten or only partially retained in long-lasting memory. And signers and verbal language users are not very different in this regard and show similar patterns of memory retention for humorous videos. Videos each group found to be humorous were remembered better by both the groups so were the elements that were believed to be contributors of humor in a video. One of the ways sign language users were found to be different from verbal language users was that irrespective of how humorous signers found a video to be they still remembered the characters and their actions much more than verbal language users for whom level of humorousness made a difference.

This thesis aimed at exploring the composition of humorous content in the visual mode and understand the mechanisms employed to generate humor. We also aspired to examine the ways in which humorous content is appreciated and recognized by people who use languages belonging to different modalities, i.e. verbal and signed. As the core idea that influenced the study was based on the fundamental differences between the verbal and signed language at the linguistic level (structural) as well as cultural level, it was interesting to find that linguistic modality does indeed seem to influence our recognition and appreciation of humor in the visual mode. Though, the internal composition of each of the groups, i.e. within verbal and signed groups with different linguistic background, did not show any impact on the comprehension of contents in the videos analyzed for the studies. It must be noted that the videos that were selected for this study did not have any use of language hence neither of the broad groups (hearing and deaf) nor the different linguistic backgrounds of participants had any advantage over the other in reception and comprehension of contents.

Below we present some of the other significant conclusions based on the observations of our participants' responses:

- **Traditional theories of humor are modality independent**

After exploring in details all the established theories of humor proposed by various researchers from different fields of studies we attempted to examine their execution and presence in the generation of humorous content in the visual mode in chapter three. We could establish that though some studies discussed in the chapter two criticize the traditional theories of humor, namely superiority, relief and incongruity, they provide a vital foundation for creators of humorous content in the visual mode. All the videos that can be labelled as humorous to any degree, has traces of combinations of either all the three theoretical frameworks or at least one of the mechanisms to generate humorous effect. In some cases when a film-making team does not employ any of the three mechanisms the video either does not get identified as being humorous or fails to be appreciated by the viewers as they would have intended. In such cases, we find that videos heavily rely on other mechanisms for humor generation such as, physical comedy, slapstick comedy, nonsense as humor or in some cases use of stereotypes. In case of nonsense humor, we could find evidences of great response while watching the video, i.e. reception is greatly positive but the acknowledgement and comprehension gets heavily dented.

- **Humorous videos are compositionally different from verbal humorous content**

Based on the studies mentioned in chapter four, we provided evidence to the assumption that verbal and visual humor are composed differently. We found a number of elements that work together and are considered by the creators of visual humor for generating a content that can be appreciated by viewers as humorous. Also, as mentioned earlier, the absence of verbal cues in the selected videos ensured that none of humorous contents are linguistically triggered. A video, especially a humorous video, is a combination of a well thought out plot that has inbuilt humor, humorous characters who execute the humor in the plot, inputs and choices made by the entire team of filmmakers which includes costume designing, choice of music, color schemas, choice of location and props to aid the plotline, choice of actors, etc. The intention to make a video that is appreciated as humorous by audiences requires the film making team, including the actors who execute the plot, to understand the significance of the elements listed and use them in the best possible way. Once a video is created with the intent of humor

generation it is seldom that the audience fails to identify the intentions and humor pointers, unless the audience lacks some cognitive abilities. For instance, people who suffer from conditions such as autism or down syndrome (James and Tager-Flusberg, 1994; Wu, et al., 2014; Nagase, 2018).

- **Actors and other elements specific to visual modality contribute to generate humor in different degrees**

As discussed in chapter four, multiple elements together generate humor in videos. Each of the elements are focused upon or recognized as a contributing factor in overall humorousness of a video in different degrees by people belonging to different cultures and linguistic backgrounds (in case of this study, linguistic modality). Based on the finding reported in the chapter, we could recognize the crucial role an actor plays in the overall reception of a humorous content in the visual mode. Many of the film making techniques not executed in the best possible way can be ignored or overlooked by the audience if the actor/s in the video are masters in their art. Here, the role of the lead actor needs to also be highlighted as the weight of execution of all the humor mostly lies on him/her. But in some cases, we also realized that the supporting actors too are as important as the lead actor in a video. The plot of a video is almost as important as the actors and their acting abilities of conveying humorousness. The best of actors too can carry the load of humor generation only to some extent but when the plot provides humorous 'situations', the outcome is surely appreciated by the audience. Another noteworthy finding was the importance of length of a humorous content. When a video is too long more times than not the audience loses interest, or focus and hence those videos fail to impress the audience. Knowing how much an event or reactions to an event can be stretched is really a skill the film making team needs to possess. Another factor that should be considered by film-makers who intend to make humorous videos is finding and including such events that a larger set of audiences can relate to as well as the expressions and reactions of the characters in specific situations that audiences can identify with. This is one of the most prominent factors that help stand-up comedy routines to be largely appreciated and enjoyed by people across age, gender, socio-cultural backgrounds, etc. When a person can relate to an event or the characters' reaction to those events, they tend to appreciate the content much more than when they cannot.

- **Viewers focus on elements differently for highly humorous and moderately humorous videos**

We also discovered with the help of studies discussed in the chapters four and five that there is a difference in the audiences' appreciation and focus on the listed elements when they find a video to be highly humorous versus when they find a video to be only moderately humorous. When a video is received as highly humorous audiences happen to focus much more on the actors and their actions than what the plotline or the punchlines are. In contrast to that a video that has been rated as only moderately humorous invites greater scrutiny of the plot and absence of good punchlines in the plot. Additionally, as discussed in the previous point, the audience subconsciously looks for relatability with the characters or situations and events in a video and when that cord is struck the video is much more appreciated. The reason behind this could be empathy towards the character/s or also reliving a past experience that they have been and has stayed in memory as a humorous event in life. This could also be true for events that they have heard of by others or just witnessed happening to someone else.

The eagerness and willingness to share the humorous experience while watching a video too is an indicator of how much an audience has appreciated the intended humor. It was repeatedly noticed that viewers who find a video humorous happened to be more willing to share the experience by retelling the contents than those who watched a video they found to be only moderately humorous. Also, the detail in which a highly humorous video was retold by viewers was also significantly different for those videos that were judged as moderately humorous. Use of gestures too while retelling indicated and confirmed that audiences get more involved and emotionally invested in videos they find to be highly humorous.

- **Theories of humor are appreciated in different degrees**

While analyzing humorous videos we found traces of use the traditional theories of humor lending mechanisms to generate humor for the actors as well as creators, such as script writer, camera-man, etc. Though all the prominent mechanisms manage to generate humor and also be appreciated by viewers, clear preference of certain mechanism over others could be noted. For instance, superiority, relief and incongruity all contribute to humor effect in videos but it

is incongruity that is largely preferred by viewers. Relief as a humor generator has a much narrower scope as viewers tend to not acknowledge its contribution as much as they recognize and respond to it while watching a video.

- **Reception of humor is influenced by the modality of language**

When a comparative evaluation of the differences in reception and recognition of overall humorous content and also a more detailed analysis of elements was done with two groups of language users belonging to different modality as their first language, we could identify the differences that are influenced by modality in identification and appreciation of humor. The linguistic modality that develops and cultivates a culture for people greatly influences our abilities of humor appreciation. A deaf person, who uses sign language for communication has a significantly different world-view from those who are hearing and use verbal language (Stokoe, 1980; Wilber, 1987; Johnson, 1991; Costello, et al., 2006; Sandler and Lillo-Martin, 2006; Jones, et al. 2006). The discourse structure (Liddell and Metzger, 1998; Emmorey, 2001; Russo, 2004; Barberà, 2013) and use of language influence the signers to focus much more on the actors than the plot. As role-playing and role-shifting are one of the most essential components in a sign language (Padden, 1986; Quer, 2005; Meurant, 2008; Schlenker, 2017), a sign language user invariably tends to focus more on the actors and their actions, including the facial expressions comparably more than users of verbal language. However, we do not claim this to be only unique to sign language users. Verbal language users too tend to focus on expressions and actions of actors but difference is only in the degree in which it happens. Also, irrespective of how humorous a signer finds a video to be, the focus on actors does not change, whereas verbal language users show a tendency to not give as much importance to actors when the video they watch does not qualify as highly humorous to them. Also, some videos that predominantly relied on physical comedy or slapstick comedy for humor generation were not always appreciated by verbal language users. Whereas some sign language users also found those videos to be highly humorous. Even the signers who did rate the video as highly humorous did not show any significant differences in the focus and narrative structure while retelling. The retold narratives were similarly structured for both categories of videos, i.e. highly humorous and moderately humorous. Hence, the choice of videos and preferences towards kinds of humor too are different for signers and verbal language users.

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- **Contributing elements and intended humor effect have a lasting impact on memory**

The study discussed in the sixth chapter the impact humor has on a person's memory. This effect on memory was tested based on how much and to what extent could the audiences remember and repeat contents from a video. It was noteworthy that when people watched a video they evaluated as highly humorous, it was better remembered than those videos that were not as humorous for them. Also, we explored the kinds of details an audience remembers from a highly humorous video versus a moderately humorous video. We could identify qualitative differences between retold narratives for moderately and highly humorous videos. The details provided after a certain period of time had significantly reduced for moderately humorous videos whereas highly humorous videos were retold with as much details as when freshly watched. Also, when we examined the immediate retention of elements from a video that were rated as highly humorous by a certain viewer, he/she had much more details to report. So, the degree of humorousness in the visual modality more positively impacts an audiences' memory.

Although most of the elements that contributed to humor in highly humorous videos are retained in long term memory, it is interesting that – in case of videos people find to be moderately humorous – most of the characters are dropped from the memory. The overall plotline is always remembered irrespective of a video being highly humorous or moderately humorous. Also, it is noteworthy that the intention of the film making team and the efforts made by them to generate humor is always recognized by the audience. Especially in case of moderately humorous videos, every other aspect could be dropped from memory but the intention is retained.

Further, incongruity in scenes (behavioral as well as contextual) seems to be better retained in memory as compared to instances of superiority or relief mechanisms that were used to generate humor in a video. This was supported by both verbal and sign language users from their retention of details from a video that were retold by them after a certain time had passed from their first watching of videos.

- **Animations are expected to be more humorous than other videos**

There is a general belief that animations are mostly more humorous than other videos. Also, there are certain production companies that have a reputation of making videos that would invariably have elements of humor. This reputation sometimes influences audiences' expectations from animated videos and they force themselves to find humor in those videos. While designing the pilot study and selecting videos for survey a number of animations were listed as humorous videos. Before we started the pilot study we discussed with a number of people who suggested that if and when a Disney video is not humorous viewers seem to get confused and doubt their understanding and still believe that the video must be highly humorous and that they must have missed out on recognizing humor in the particular video. This strong bias towards animations was the reason why all those videos had to eliminated from the studies. To understand humor in animation videos it would be better and advisable that they are analyzed independently, comparing and analyzing animated videos with other animated videos.

7.3 A note on failure of humor in videos

While we explored elements that make a video humorous, appreciated and remaining longer in the memory, we also found cases of failed humor. Along the study, we realized that these cases of failed humor cannot be ignored. They according to us, are gold mines in humor research and provide equally precious insights on visual humor. The failures could be identified at the generation level as well as the reception of the content by its audience. Below we discuss some of the reasons for a video to fail at generating the intended humorous effect.

- *Absence of well-structured plotline*

The most significant and intuitive reason is the absence of a well-structured plotline with appropriate triggers that evoke some form of humorous response from viewers. The plotline almost serves as the backbone for a humorous video which determines the final product being humorous or not. Even if the scriptwriter intends to create a humorous video, he/she requires to have a well-structured plot that provides situations and background upon which other team

members can work on. For instance, a video that ends abruptly without giving closure to the issues raised in the plot can rarely succeed in getting appreciated by the audience.

- *Absence of significant pointers or clues*

When a film maker decides to create a humorous video, he/she makes conscious decisions regarding use of each and every compositional element for the video. The degree in which the element should be used, the nature of it, etc. are significant decisions when rightly made, yields best results and the viewers appreciate the video the way the makers intended it to be appreciated. Most of these elements have been discussed in details throughout this thesis and we have now a better understanding of the relative load on each of the elements a maker should give to make a video best appreciated.

One of the components, as mentioned in the introduction of the thesis, was most crucial to this particular work and that was the background score in a humorous video. We clarified that we chose not to eliminate the music in the videos for the hearing participants. As, based on some trial studies we did before the final pilot study we realized how important music is to a humorous video. When a hearing participant was presented with a humorous video without the music they could not appreciate it as much as when the same participant was shown the video with the original music. The absence of a single component that works as a pointer for humor in a video significantly influenced the recognition and appreciation of a humorous video. Elimination of the music from a humorous video can be comparable to signers being forced to communicate without the use of facial expressions, physical contact such as touch, etc. that are key components of sign language communication and more importantly for humor generation.

Hence, if a film maker heavily relies on music as a pointer for humor recognition by viewers, his/her video might not be as appreciated by the deaf population that lacks in that ability. So, a video, if not targeted for a specific audience, must keep in mind the larger population and not put too much load on a specific element that might not be recognized by a certain group of audiences that differs only with respect to a single ability, i.e. hearing.

- *Length/duration of a video*

Determining the length of a plot is very critical to the success of a humorous video. It is very rare to find videos that are too long, for instance more than ten minutes being appreciated by audiences as highly humorous. After the pilot study, mentioned in chapter three, we observed that most of the videos that got eliminated for being non-humorous, were too long. Viewers tend to like humorous videos that are short and to the point with a clear plotline that is wrapped up in the last scene without leaving out sequences or events unresolved.

- *Repetition*

The length of a video can substantially increase when the scriptwriter or the director decides to repeat a specific event too many times. If an event is recognized as humorous, the audience does not appreciate multiple repetitions of the same as that could result in over analysis leading to loss of impact. This is true also for videos that are built around a very simple concept but the film makers stretch the same for too long. For instance, the video 'Stapler' was based on a very simple concept that people who stay back in offices for too long doing some menial or boring job, tend to find excuses to being some activity in life to feel a sense of fulfilment. For this concept, the actions and behaviors of the actors were over-the-top and also too long. This was one of the reasons why most participants rated that video to be only moderately humorous.

- *Overuse of stereotypes*

Another component that leads to failure at generating humor is the overuse of stereotypes. Though, stereotypes have always been an aid to humor generation (Burma, 1946; Aizenberg, 1980; Davies, 1990; Barnes et al., 2001; Rappoport, 2005) in today's times, where political correctness has become a way of life, many audiences do not find the use of stereotypes as amusing (Leveen, 1996; Forsyth, et al., 1997; Smuts, 2010). Rather some feel uncomfortable with them and it is also common to find some audiences feeling offended by such use. Body-shaming, gender stereotypes, ethnic humor etc. are not as appreciated as they were before.

- *Overuse of physical humor or slapstick humor*

The other element that sometimes lead to failure in appreciation of humor is the over use of physical humor or slapstick humor. Though this mechanism sometimes positively contributes to generating humorous content but not all kinds of audiences appreciate such style of humor. The reason why the video 'Joggers' was not rated as highly humorous by most of the participants is the exaggerated use of physical humor that is enjoyed while watching but upon reflection audience finds themselves not very impressed with the overall final product. We do not intend to claim that such styles of humor always fail to impress the audience by its overuse certain can.

- *Viewers' cognitive involvement*

Now from the audiences' side there can be a number of factors that affect the reception and appreciation of humor in the visual mode. As videos require a certain amount of time and a relaxed mind to be fully appreciated, they certainly demand more cognitive involvement. A joke being shorter, mostly two or three sentences can be appreciated and enjoyed at mostly given time. But for a video, an audience required to find the leisure time and also make a choice of watching or not watching a video at any given time. We can all relate to this scenario from our day to day life while being on the social media. While scrolling down if we happen to stumble upon a joke we always read them, but when someone forwards or posts a humorous video we choose, depending on where we are, who we are with, etc., to watch it or not. Also, a humorous video watched alone versus when we watch the same video with one or more friends or family (people we are comfortable with) can have a very different impact on us. There are certainly videos that are not dependent on this factor and are universally eternally recognized as humorous. This could be said about all the classics like Charlie Chaplin, Laurel and Hardy, Mr. Bean, etc.

- *Lack of linguistic and cultural understanding*

Although not applicable to this particular study, the language which a video uses also influences the level of appreciation by audience. If a person not fluent with English and the

cultural nuances specific to the language, he/she would never be able to appreciate a humorous video in English. Hence, a video failing to evoke positive responses do not always suggest that the video was not well made. It is important to ensure that a video reaches the right audience for whom it was targeted.

7.4 Limitations and future work

This study has a set of limitations too that we would like to acknowledge. For example, we chose to have a mix of first language users as a representative group for verbal language users as well as sign language users. We understand that a person's first language heavily influences his/her appreciation of humor and thus the same study with a specific first language group could have given us some different results. For this study, we only considered the similarities and differences between groups of people who use a different modality of language. All sign language users were considered as one group and all verbal language users another. Cultural impacts of inter-verbal language differences on humor reception were not taken into account.

It is also worth noting that all the videos that were selected as humorous based on the ratings by a large set of participants that comprised of a mix of different genders and linguistic backgrounds had male lead actors. Also, while searching for humorous videos for the pilot study, hardly any videos that were suggested as 'silent humorous videos' had female lead actors. It would be worth designing a study making comparisons between humorous videos with male lead actors and those that have a female lead actor. Hence, the present study could possibly have given different and more interesting results if the lead actor of some videos had been female.

Furthermore, one of the most prominent limitation of this thesis is the smaller number of sign language users compared to verbal language users. The non-availability of signers and also finding the desired group (completely deaf) and users of sign language as first language was a challenging task for us. As partially deaf people having some exposure to verbal language cannot be considered a representative group we chose to exclude them from this study. With an equal number of signers and speakers, better generalizations could have been made in a more conclusive manner.

We would also like to highlight the importance of music in humorous videos. As briefly discussed in the fourth chapter, for selected humorous videos, the prominent role music plays cannot be denied. Since this study focused on the differences and similarities between signers and speakers in reception of humor we should have eliminated music for keeping the stimulus balanced for both the groups. But we have to accept that presence of music is key to the hearing population, especially in case of humor identification and its elimination could have possibly given a different rating for videos by the hearing participants. But that, in no way, is natural to a hearing audience. So, we admit that some of the ratings could have been different if we had eliminated the music included as an element for evaluation.

As discussed above, not all humorous videos succeed in amusing its audiences as desired by its makers. Some of the elements that contribute to the failure have been pointed out based on the observations while analyzing the responses by our set of participants. A more focused study on reasons for failure while creating humorous content in the visual mode as well as different reasons why a potentially good video might not be as appreciated by all sections of audiences as one might expect might be worth exploring. Also, keeping in mind the present study as a basis for understanding humorous videos we would like to further explore and propose some guidelines that could help creators of humorous videos to produce videos that can amuse across different sections of the target audiences.

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Appendix I

The Elevator

***Detailed plot*:** A man walks into a building and presses the button for the elevator. When the elevator arrives, he enters and is alone in the elevator. He presses the button to go to the ninth floor which is the last floor of the building. The elevator door opens at second floor and three people get in, all of them are on the heavier side weight wise. It does not show for which floor these people press the button. On the third floor, the door opens again and three more people come into the elevator who are also quite heavy. Now there are already many people in the elevator and the protagonist is pushed towards the back of the elevator with all the new people coming in. He now checks the information plate that says the maximum weight the elevator can carry is 2000 lbs. On the fourth floor, another heavy person enters the elevator and now the camera moves for an aerial shot of the elevator, which clearly shows that the lead actor is sandwiched between all these people at the back of the elevator. Here the man takes out his mobile phone and opens the calculator. He starts to look at each of the people and makes an estimate of how much they could each weigh and adding it all up. Even before he could estimate all the people, the calculator shows 2001, which means they have already crossed the maximum capacity of the elevator. The man looks very worried now. Then comes the fifth floor and suddenly the elevator starts to shake and the floor number starts to decrease and there is a sudden thud of the camera to indicate that the elevator has fallen to the ground floor. But none of the people seem to be worried or reacted to this event. And then again, the man sees the number display going up from first to fifth floor. It is possible that the man was imagining the fall as he was really worried. On the fifth floor the door of the elevator opens and a young boy is standing, who is of an average weight. The man looks a little relaxed but suddenly the boy moves aside and a very fat man is shown walking towards the elevator. To this sight, the man immediately jumps and just pushes everyone aside to escape from the elevator and bumps into the fat guy who enters the elevator anyways. While the door closes and he looks inside with amusement and feels relaxed. He then moves to the next elevator and presses the button for it, which means the building has two elevators. The door to the next elevator opens and there are a few people standing, all of whom are average weighing. The man enters the elevator relaxed and

confidently with a big smile greeting everyone. As soon as he settles in all the people start to cough and the man looks around perplexed. He then instantly tries to cover his nose with his shirt collar as he is not carrying anything. One person behind him coughed so hard that his hair got soaked in saliva. This man now desperately covers his nose to save himself. The lift reaches the seventh floor and all the coughing people go out at once and the man sees a board displaying an arrow indicating the direction in which all those people went. On seeing that the man is just amazed and gives an exasperated expression and the door to the elevator closes to go further up.

Hitchhiking

Detailed plot: The video starts with a man riding a bike on an empty road, with fields on both sides. This place looks completely isolated and not a single person or vehicle can be seen around. The scene looks like a hot summer day. Mr. Bean comes walking out of the fields to the side of the road deciding to ask for a lift from the man coming towards him. The man is casually dressed whereas Mr. Bean is wearing a suit. Once the man reaches Mr. Bean, he stops his bike to give him a lift. The bike is clearly visible now which looks more like a bicycle. Mr. Bean sits at the back of the bike which is too low and also does not have a proper seat. He somehow manages to sit with his legs touching the ground. He tries to fold his legs and keep them on the tire when the man starts the bike to go on. But for some reason the bike does not move and only emits smoke out of the back. Mr. Bean tries to move himself back and forth to give the bike a move but it does not work. The man gets down to check what is wrong with it and Mr. Bean looks a little bit disappointed with all this. While the man is trying to investigate the problem with the bike Mr. Bean looks around thinking something, as if he just got an idea. He slowly puts his hands on the handle of the bike and jumps to the riding seat of the bike. As soon as he jumps to the seat, the bike starts to move and Mr. Bean grins looking back at the old man who looks really surprised with all this. Mr. Bean rides on somehow managing to keep the handles of the bike steady and fighting the wind that flows his tie to the back. He smiles at his victory while riding. Suddenly the man comes walking from behind him, catching up to him. Mr. Bean is completely startled when he realizes that the man has caught up to him. The man just grabs the bike handle by taking a few fast steps and stops the bike. He then pushes Mr. Bean off the seat. Mr. Bean just looks at him with complete amazement and frustration as the old man goes away leaving him behind at the road side.

The Lion's Cage

Detailed plot: The video starts with the lead actor, Charlie Chaplin, being chased by a donkey and he hurriedly enters a cage. As soon as he walks into the cage he realized that it belongs to a lion. The lion is peacefully sleeping at the corner but Chaplin tip-toes towards the gate to escape the cage. Thinking that the gate is locked from the outside he tries to put his hands out of the fence to unlock but accidentally locks the gate from outside. He thinks for a while and takes out a handkerchief to wave out of the cage trying to grab someone's attention to some and rescue him. As he sees no one around he puts it back into his pocket and with very soft steps walks towards a small door he could find inside the cage. He opens it and looks around but there was a tiger in that cage which he notices after a few seconds when he turned his head around. He quickly crawls out of the door, locking that small gate. When he tries to stand up and think about what other ways he can find to escape, he accidentally bangs himself on a huge metal plate that was kept at a height, perhaps to serve food to the lion. The plate would have dropped on the floor waking up the lion but Chaplin catches it midair. He quietly keeps it on the floor of the cage and as soon as he took his first step a small dog came running towards the cage and starts barking at him. He gets really worried and pleads the dog to stop barking. When the dog would not go away he tries to scare it off by attempting to kick the dog far away. But the dog grabs his trousers making the situation even worse. Right then a woman comes by and on seeing all this faint to the ground. When she falls, the dog runs away and Chaplin tries to splash water on the woman's face. It does not bring her back to consciousness but the lion woke up. Chaplin just drops the water dish and runs towards the gate of the cage. The lion gets up and quickly walks towards him and starts sniffing him. After sniffing the lion turns to his back and sits at the other end of the cage. Chaplin is taken by surprise and could not believe that he is indeed still alive. He takes a sigh of relief and sees the lion behaving like a puppy. He gets too relaxed and walked casually towards the grill. At this moment, the woman comes back to consciousness and hurries towards the gate to unlock it and rescue Chaplin. She unlocks the gate and asks him to quickly come out, but now he behaves in a very relaxed and confident manner and also invites her into the cage showing that he is not scared of the lion. In an attempt to impress the woman, he casually walks towards the lion but now the lion roars and Chaplin ran out of the cage in a giff. The woman locks the gate and goes looking for him. He has now climbed a long pole and calls out to the woman from the top. When she looks at him with

amazement he shows some acrobatic-gymnastic moves to impress her. She calls him down and he slides down the pole and greets the woman.

First Class

Detailed plot: The video starts with Mr. Bean entering an airplane with a camera clicking pictures of people including the airhostess. When he turns to go inside and look for his seat the air hostess calls him from behind and tells him to go to the front section, i.e. the first/business class. He is too happy and tries to show off his boarding pass to all the people in the economy class showing that he does not belong there. He then enters the business class section with a proud walk and is greeted by an airhostess who asks for his coat which he gladly gives away. He then shows off his boarding pass to an old man sitting on a window seat reading a magazine and sipping a drink. Mr. Bean then just takes the seat next to the man and melts into the seat. He then just looks around the seat, stretches his legs and is ecstatic that he could stretch his legs all the way up. He then just grabs his camera out of his pocket and clicks a picture of the man who gives him absolutely no acknowledgement which makes Mr. Bean a little disappointed. Next is a scene of a few hours into the flight and Mr. Bean is shown bored and eating a packet of M&M. There is a small boy with his mother on the seats across the aisle who is not feeling very well. Mr. Bean tries to offer his M&M to the kid but he refuses to take it. Mr. Bean then just takes the mast out from the packet and throws it into the air and catches it with his mouth trying to impress the kid. The kid gives a faint smile, so he feels encouraged. He then blows air into his packet and tries to burst it on the face of the man sleeping in front of him (it is the same man who was sitting next to him). But the packet does not burst well as it is a very small packet. Mr. Bean then looks around for some bigger packet, in the meantime the kid just throws up in a sickness bag. When Mr. Bean looks at the kid again, he sees the kid holding the big bag in his hand and thinks he is giving him the bag to burst on the man. Mr. Bean then quickly blows into the bag and bursts it on the man's face before the kid could alert him. The scene then cuts to where all the passengers are walking out of the airplane and the angry and disgusted man is being followed by a number of cabin crew members trying to apologize. Mr. Bean is just trying to hide behind people to not be noticed. Mr. Bean finally is safe and standing on a walking escalator and notices two security personnel standing and chatting by the water fountain. He notices their guns and is mesmerized. He then just playfully pretends that he has a gun in his coat inside pocket but the security people notice him doing so. Because his

behavior raises suspicion they walk towards him. Mr. Bean just scared of them turns around and tries to walk in the opposite direction to his failure. He then just runs away from those men alarming two other security people standing in front of him. He then just goes in a zigzag and running behind alarming all the security people and them announcing an emergency situation with a man carrying a gun in the airport. Mr. Bean then runs into the waiting lounge where the security person comes and asks everyone to go down. Mr. Bean too goes down but the woman next to him reminds him that all this is for him. He gets up to run away again and is faced by the four security guards right in front of him. They ask him to take out his weapon and place it on the floor. With a very nervous demeanor and shaking hands he reaches into his coat pocket and pulls out his two fingers representing a gun and puts his hands on the floor. The security people all look at each other perplexed. He is then taken into the office of the head of security who has his passport. He looks at the picture in the passport and looks at Mr. Bean several times. He then places the passport right next to Mr. Bean's face to match it with the photograph. That's when we see that he has a funny face in the passport and realizing the situation Mr. Bean makes the exact same face so it can match.

Safety last

Detailed plot: The video clip starts with two men talking to each other and one of them clearly giving the other man some suggestions. The man giving advice is casually dressed whereas the other man is wearing formal suit, a hat and spectacles. The suited man, Harold Lloyd, then starts climbing a building from the outer wall, a column which provides some grip to keep hands and feet while climbing. A crowd has gathered around to cheer the man. He slowly manages to reach the top of the column, but instead of holding the wall he accidentally grabs the rod to the shade curtain for the shop on the ground floor. As soon as he turns to crowd to wave and assert that he has managed his task, the curtain falls open and the horizontal rod hits the head of a man in uniform who falls to the ground. Harold somehow gains balance and continues to climb up the column and the crowd cheers for him. The policeman in uniform then gets up and looks around to see the other man from the first scene gesturing at him that he is going up that building and runs into the building. The policeman runs after him to catch him. The first man has now managed to reach quite a height and the crowd around the building on the street also seems to have increased. The friend calls out the man and gestures him to keep going further up. When he manages to reach a

substantial height, he finds a window to rest on and take some support. As soon as he tries to step on the window sill, two men who were working on long log of wood pushed it out of the window accidentally hitting his face and pushing him away. He somehow manages to catch hold of the log and hang through it. The men inside pull the log in and help him take support with the window sill again. At this point the friend again peeps out of one of the windows and they have a conversation regarding going further up. While they were talking, the policeman peeps out of another window and the friend flees into the room. Harold now moves further up and the crowd on the street still looks up watching everything going on. He reaches almost to the top of the building. There is a big clock right next to him. Again, standing on a window sill, he is taking a break. Right then, his friend comes looking for him and opens the window. The window opened in a way that slides half up where the friend is looking down and Harold was pushed up on the other half of the glass. This resulted in the friend not knowing that he was right there and he closes the window and goes away looking for him elsewhere. To save himself from falling down, Harold grabs the clock next to him. He could only grab one of the arms, and hangs in the air as it keeps pulling out the dial part of the clock because of his body weight. The crowd on the street begins to panic at the sight. The friend manages to find him right when he is hanging holding the clock arm. He was at the window right up the clock. He finds a long rope in the room and throws it at Harold. But as soon as he had thrown the rope out the window, the cop who was following him comes to the room. Seeing the cop, he starts running away before he could tie the rope to the leg of a table. But on the other side, Harold is struggling hard to somehow get hold of the rope. The cop and the friend somehow manage to get hold of the rope on the other side before Harold falls to the ground. They start pulling him up as he had gone a few floors down. But at one point there is an extended structure on the building where he gets stuck. Not knowing the kind of situation he is stuck in, the two men continue to attempt to pull him up resulting in too many bangs on his head. After many trials and errors and lots of struggle, he reaches the top of the building. As soon as he is approaching the roof, there is a wind-vane taking rounds at the very same corner. He could easily get hit by the revolving machine and might end up falling down the building. As expected, he gets hit by the revolving machine. Since he was already dizzy by all the experiences before, he starts to lose his balance and could fall down the roof at any point. As expected, he gets hit by the revolving machine and falls from the roof, but one of his feet gets tangled in a rope that was kept at the spot. He dangles in the air like a pendulum but gets saved by a woman waiting for him at the roof. Harold

is seen walking away with woman he meets at the rooftop. There is a pool of cement or tar on the floor they are walking on. But lost in each other's arms, Harold walks right through it, resulting in his shoes, followed by his socks getting stuck in the pool of cement. But that does not stop them and they walk away.

One Cookie left

Detailed plot: The video starts with a close-up of a cookie (chocolate chip cookie) on a plate. The camera zooms out and shows that the plate is kept on a kitchen counter. Then a girl and a boy come and place their hands on the cookie at the same time. They then just look at each other and the girl runs away with the cookie. She then runs around the house trying to go up the stairs trying to eat the cookie and the boy, who has been chasing her just grabs her foot and drags her down the stairs and takes away the cookie from her. He runs upstairs with the cookie goes into a room, the girl follows. There are three doors to different rooms and they keep running in and out of each room, missing each other every time. The girl then opens the door to the closet and realizes that it is not a room and goes away looking for the boy into another room. But, after she is gone, the door to the closet opens from inside and the boy comes out. In the running about at one point the two bump into each other and fall. The girl then goes down and she gets the cookie. She is almost going to bite onto the cookie when she hears a knock on the door. As soon as she opens the door, the boy snatches the cookie off of her hands and runs out. The girl follows him outside the house and that's when the boy comes back to the house and is relieved that she is now locked outside. He then settles on a bed and as soon as he is going to bite the cookie the girl pops in through the window behind him and just gives him a push making the cookie fly to her hands. Then a man, wearing a hat, is shown sitting on a lawn bench reading a newspaper. The boy comes and looks at him and goes away, only then the newspaper moves and it is revealed that it was the girl who managed to fool the boy again. She again makes another attempt at biting on the cookie when the boy comes running and takes it away from her. They again run into the house and now just trying to snatch the cookie off from each other. As they are pulling on the cookie, it just flies high into the air and lands in the hands of a man who is standing at the kitchen. He catches the cookie and takes a bite and the girl and the boy come running to him and are extremely disappointed that the cookie is gone.

Noodles

Detailed plot: The video starts with a woman cooking in a restaurant and calling people in. The restaurant is almost full and then a man walks in and walks up to the counter table and takes a seat. He places his order right next to him there is a couple. He looks at them and gets very uncomfortable with the young couple sitting very close to him immersed in kissing. He tries to look away and just then his order of soup arrives on his table. He enjoys the aroma of the soup and as soon as he took his first spoon, a beautiful woman walks into the restaurant. She looks around and the man is totally fascinated by her presence. Suddenly a very fat man comes and sits right next to him blocking his view of the woman. There are silent exchanges between the two men, with clear disappointment on the lead character's face and confused expression of the man sitting next to him, not understanding why the man is bothered by him. They stare at each other for a while and the fat man just casually continues to smoke. The lead tries to sneak a glance at the woman and the man next to him again looks at him with confusion. He tries to slide down, peak over the man's shoulder, etc. just to see the woman. He then finds a way to look at her. He takes a sip of his noodle soup when the man next to him does so too and then when his head moves up he looks. The women at the kitchen counter notice this and they look around. Suddenly there is a rhythm found in the movement of all the men sitting on the table alternatively taking a bite and raising their heads to look at the woman, which continues for a while. The only person not looking at the woman is the 'fat' man sitting next to the lead actor. All men from the other side of the table suddenly turn at the protagonist's side which startled him and while he tries to understand why everybody has turned towards him, he realized that the woman came and sat right next to him. A woman comes to take her order and she points at the noodle soup the man was having. Her soup is served with a set of chopsticks but she clearly looks uncomfortable using them. The man then pulls out a fork and quietly slides it towards her. She smiles in acknowledgement and the man too smiles with content.

Joggers

Detailed plot: A couple, who are newly-wed, look excited and happy in the first scene. The woman goes behind a changing divider and the man follows her. She tells him to go to the other one to which he shows disappointment. They both start taking off pieces of clothing one after the other and hanging it on the divider. As soon as the woman takes off her undergarments and hangs it, the man too with a cheeky expression hangs his, which turns out to be an old man's overall stalking kind underwear. The woman walks out of the divider dressed in silk nightwear and the man too comes out jogging, but in shorts and t-shirt with sneakers on. The woman looked in surprise and the man just jogs out of the house. She looks down from the window as the man, joined by another jogging friend of his, goes away. On the way, many other people are seen jogging and doing their chores. One woman, wearing normal dress, comes jogging into her house. As she opens the front door, her husband, who was standing right at the door trying to pick up the newspaper, falls to the ground. The woman does not wait to check how he fell down nor does she stop jogging. She just continues to jog with a broom in her hand going up the stairs. Back to the street view, an old woman in a wheelchair is being pushed by a nurse who is also jogging. The old woman seems to be very competitive and keeps telling the nurse to overtake all other joggers on the way. In the process, not satisfied by the nurse's speed, she just gets up and makes the nurse sit on the wheelchair and jogs on. Two traffic control ladies, also jogging, find a man who looks too tired and almost ready to collapse. They somehow manage to hold the man and get him seated on the side of the street. The location being no parking spot, they just stick a bill on his forehead and continue to jog away. An old man comes jogging to the bank of a river with a huge rock tied to himself. He accidentally drops the rock on his feet and hurts himself. Maddened by this he just frees himself of the rock and goes away jogging while limping. A woman waiting outside of her house meets the milk delivery guy who came jogging. She too takes a bottle of milk from him, while jogging. She sits to pour the milk for breakfast but nothing comes out. She looks into the bottle and realizes the milk has turned into butter, she just casually takes out some butter from the milk bottle and spreads it on her bread. A man comes jogging and takes a break near a tree. He takes out a cigarette but has no lighter. A man wearing Olympic t-shirt and the torch comes jogging and is stopped by the man and he uses the Olympic torch fire to light his cigarette and then just casually blows it off. The man starts crying and goes back jogging. The old woman now being pushed by Benny Hill, still trying to overtake all other joggers, starts teasing a man pinching him

here and there. Two girls stop him to ask for some address and he turns to talk to him leaving the wheelchair. As soon as he leaves the wheelchair, it just rolls down the street. He did not worry about it much and just casually joins the two girls on a jog. The wheelchair rolls down the street, through some park and just falls off a cliff. As soon as it hits the ground, the woman just stands up brushing dirt off herself and just a little distressed. She falls to the ground and two men come jogging with a stretcher/gurney. They put the woman on it and get confused about which direction to go. They both move in opposite directions not moving at all. The men with stretcher meet Benny Hill coming from the other direction and then woman sits up accusing him for the accident. There were two policemen around who arrest him and all three jog away. The woman on stretcher again pulls all joggers behind to overtake them meeting the same man she was teasing earlier. She starts pinching him again. The two policemen taking Benny Hill keep jogging not noticing that he is sliding up a string/rope. They pull him down and continue. The three men cross Benny Hill's house where the wife is still at the window. One of the policemen sneaks into the house, changing from his uniform into pajamas.

Stapler

Detailed plot: The film starts with an empty office room with lots of tables and chairs. There are only two people sitting little far from each other doing some office work. One of them is shown stapling some papers together and keeping them aside. We can see that he has already stapled a number of papers and continues to do the same with an exhausted look on his face. The other person sitting a little away from this guy is sipping some coffee or tea, which he definitely does not like the taste of, while working on his computer. The first person continues to staple his papers but suddenly realizes that the big stapler has run out of clips and did not staple his papers. He very angrily pulls out the pin slot of the stapler and finds that it is indeed empty. He gives a very angry glance at the other person who looks very puzzled with his look. He just nods at the other person confusing him further. He then pulls out the empty stapler and keeps glaring at the other man with fiery eyes to which the other guy suddenly reacts with the same anger on his face. They both start running towards the other end of the office. The second guy runs fast going over the tables and sometimes sliding and rolling through them. The first man is also running fast with the stapler in his hand. The second man continues to perform stunts while running and throwing things off from tables. And then he just stops looking at the table right in front of him, sitting on that was a pack

of staples. He stomps his one leg on the table which moves everything kept on it and the pack of staples dramatically lands on his hands. He then throws the staples at the first man. All the staples come flying at the first person like bullets. Seeing this, the first man just closes his eyes, takes a deep breath and holds the stapler in front of him. In the meanwhile, all the staples come flying towards him breaking some objects around and sticking on the man's forehead. But then the camera zooms out and we realize that the staples after all got stuck on the picture of the man hanging on the wall. The camera moves back to the man and he had managed to catch some of the staples inside the slot on the stapler. There is a sudden quiet and both the man calmly come back to their respective seats. They fix their ties and go back to what they were doing, the first man stapling papers and the second man working on computer sipping coffee. As soon as he goes to sip his coffee he realizes that the cup is now empty and he turns to the first man to which he responds by taking off his glasses and glaring back at him.

The Black Hole

Detailed plot: The video starts with a view of an empty office room and a man standing with a bored and exhausted face. He pushes a button the copying machine and waits. Suddenly he realizes that the machine is not working and he gets even more frustrated and vigorously pushes the buttons on the machine and starts kicking it in anger. As soon as he kicks the machine a print came out of it. The paper that is printed has just a big black circle in the center of a white page. The man takes the paper in his hands and gives it a puzzled glance. He quickly sets the paper aside on the machine right next to him and checks the original paper he had put in the machine for printing. He just looks at the original and realizes that the machine continues to make more copies. With a tired face he checks his watch to see how late in the night it is. He then just picks up the glass kept next to him and takes a last sip of the drink emptying the glass. He then just unknowingly places the empty glass on the paper that was just printed out of the machine with a big black circle. As soon as he places the glass on the black spot the glass went through it into the machine the paper was kept on. He gets completely baffled and hesitantly tries to touch the black circle and quickly retracts his fingers. He then looks around and puts his hand on the circle which just slipped through the spot and into the machine. He could pull out the glass that fell into that machine through the black circle spot on the paper. He is completely amazed and confounded with this experience. He then picks

up the paper and holds it in front of his face. He tries to put his hand through the black spot which does happen. In wonderment to his experience he quickly runs to the vending machine with the paper and places the paper on the display glass. With a quick glance around he puts his hand through the glass and pulls out a chocolate bar. He then takes a big bite of the chocolate and looks around with a grin. His gaze then stops on a door to a cabin. He runs to the door and places the paper on the door and puts his hand through the door and unlocks it from the inside. He steps in and switches on the light. There is a huge safe kept in the center of the room. He tapes the paper on the safe's door and again looks around to check if someone is watching. He puts his hand through the safe and pulls out a bundle of cash. He chuckles and continues to pull out cash from the safe. He got out a pile of cash almost emptying the safe. He keeps digging further into the safe and finally crawls into it to wipe it clean. As soon as he enters the safe, the paper falls off the door and he is now stuck inside the safe.

Boxing

Detailed plot: The video clip starts with a man in suit guiding Buster Keaton, who is already dressed and wearing boxing gloves, towards a boxing ring. As soon as they reach the ring, Keaton tries to walk past the rope around the ring and his legs get tangled in the rope. He falls face down with one of his feet caught in the rope. A man came to the spot from inside the ring. The suited man holds the caught-up feet and the man inside lifts Keaton up to free him. In the process, he just manages to hang on the rope. Both men try to free him and the moment they feel they have succeeded and the ring man is about to leave they realize that now Keaton's head is caught between the ropes. Both men come to his rescue but only make matters worse. Finally, the man inside suggests only he does the freeing so the man outside steps back. The man thinks for a while and twists Keaton's whole body and frees his head. Keaton falls to the ground outside the ring. Both men insist he gets into the ring. After giving it a thought Keaton decides to slide into the ring. The man inside the ring asks him to stand up and raise his hands. He lifts both his hands straight up. To this the man nods a no and asks him to put up his hands in the boxing pose, showing his how to do it. Keaton takes the pose with very stiff hands and they both give a puzzled look at one of his boxing gloves. The man pulls his glove out and puts it back the right way. Now he asks him to take the boxing pose again. In the meantime, now Keaton's opponent is also in the ring now and standing right in front of him. Keaton takes his position but with a very stiff hand. The ring man

hits his hand to correct the pose but that results in Keaton hitting himself on his face as a reflex action. The man then helps Keaton keep his hands and legs in the correct position and posture. Once satisfied with the stance, he gives a signal to start the fight. The opponent bounces and tries to take a hit on Keaton whereas he just stands still holding the posture. With one punch Keaton is down on the ground. The referee signals him to stand and start the fight again. But, this time too Keaton only focuses on getting the right position and posture and the opponent starts hitting him. They take rounds around the ring with the opponent continuously punching Keaton and him just somehow trying to save himself. After a few punches, Keaton starts running around the ring and his opponent trying to catch up with him for a fight. The referee stands at a corner trying to get the situation under control when Keaton comes running towards him and jumps at his arms. The referee puts him back on the grounds and signals to continue the fight. The opponent comes around and showers constant punches at him. The first man is also standing outside and watching the fight. Keaton continues to save himself and run from his opponent and in one such attempt jumps out of the ring. The first man comes running to Keaton and has a talk with him to go back to the ring. The referee holds the ropes apart making space for Keaton to enter the ring, but releases the ropes even before he has passed. This results in him getting hit by the rope at the neck and he falls back out of the ring. The referee holds the ropes apart again but this time Keaton just moves past him and slides on the ground and into the ring like before. As soon as he enters the ring the opponent starts punching him again. The referee signs at Keaton telling him to safeguard himself from the punches. But when he safeguards his face, the opponent punches his stomach and when he safeguards his stomach, the opponent punches his face. This goes on for a while. After being punched several times Keaton looks towards the man outside the ring as well as the referee for help. The referee comes and stops the fight and pushes the opponent away having a conversation with him. While the referee is angrily giving the opponent instructions, Keaton sneaks in a punch at the opponent from behind. As they still talk, Keaton goes from the other side and kicks the opponent. The referee then makes them both stand facing each other and he gives clear instructions to Keaton on how to fight and how to save himself from his opponent's punches. He then signals to begin the fight again. But this time too, the opponent showers punches and Keaton is somehow trying to save himself and walking backwards and away from the opponent. For this round of the fight, Keaton too makes attempts at punches but they were all going in the air and missed the opponent every single time. Keaton keeps his eyes fixed at the referee and not the opponent and

just punches in the air sometimes barely touching him and mostly missing him completely. The referee is virtually showing how to punch and kick and Keaton has his eyes fixed on him and imitating his every move. He punches the air so hard that he loses balance and falls to the ground. The referee finally looks exhausted and exasperates letting them do whatever they want and nodding in disappointment. The man outside looks too concerned with how the fight is going on. The referee finally sits at the corner of the ring. When Keaton has received multiple punches the referee gets up and kicks Keaton in frustration. So, now he is getting punches and kicks from both front and back and is somehow trying to safeguard himself. He tries to run out of the ring and gets entangled in the ropes again and the referee pulls him back inside. They make him sit at the corner and hand him his gloves and the man outside comes to have a talk with all of them. In the next scene, Keaton is sitting on the ground outside the ring and a man just leaps over the ropes to enter the ring. Seeing this, he tries to do the same but happens to swing back out and falls to the ground again. He then decides to slide into the ring like before. Now the scene changes to Keaton standing in the changing room completely exhausted and walks to a bench to lay down on his stomach. As he is almost asleep a man comes from somewhere and starts massaging his back quite roughly. He tries to stop the man but he just pins him to the bed and continues to hit and slap massage punches on his back.

Appendix II

The results of linear regression for highly humorous videos (table 1) showed that for verbal participants, acting of the lead actor ($p < 0.05$), acting of the other actors ($p < 0.01$), body language of the lead actor ($p < 0.01$), unexpected ending ($p < 0.01$), overall presentation ($p < 0.05$), script of the video ($p < 0.01$), camera movement ($p < 0.01$), colors used in video ($p < 0.05$), energy of actors ($p < 0.01$), and expectations from the video ($p < 0.001$) were significant predictors of the humorousness of the video.

For signers, acting of the lead actor ($p < 0.01$), acting of other actors ($p < 0.05$), facial expressions of lead actor ($p < 0.05$), facial expression of other actors ($p < 0.05$), body language of lead actor ($p < 0.01$), body language of other actors ($P < 0.05$), unexpected ending ($p < 0.05$), energy of actors ($p < 0.01$) and expectation from the video ($p < 0.05$) were significant predictors of the humorousness of the video.

The results of linear regression for moderately humorous videos (table 2) showed that, for verbal participants, acting of the other actors ($p < 0.01$), facial expressions of the lead actor ($p < 0.05$), background music ($p < 0.05$), sequence of actions ($p < 0.01$), unexpected ending ($p < 0.01$), overall presentation ($p < 0.05$), script of the video ($p < 0.01$), camera movement ($p < 0.05$), background setup ($p < 0.01$), colors used in video ($p < 0.05$), and expectations from the video ($p < 0.05$) were significant predictors of the humorousness of the video.

For signers, acting of the lead actor ($p < 0.01$), acting of other actors ($p < 0.05$), facial expressions of lead actor ($p < 0.01$), facial expression of other actors ($p < 0.05$), body language of lead actor ($p < 0.01$), body language of other actors ($p < 0.05$), script of the video ($p < 0.05$), length of video ($p < 0.01$) were significant predictors of the humorousness of the video.

Table 1. Simple linear regression for Highly Humorous videos.

Condition	Predictor	β	t	N	df	F	R²
Response of Verbal participants				303	18	2.6**	.45
	Acting of the lead actor	0.13	0.77*				
	Acting of other actors	0.14	0.65**				
	Facial expressions of the lead actor	0.17	0.47				
	Facial expression of other actors	0.11	0.07				
	Body language/gestures of the lead actor	0.19	0.11**				
	Body language/gestures of other actors	-0.08	0.08				
	Sequence of actions/scenes	0.12	0.09				
	Unexpected ending	0.17	0.73**				
	Overall presentation	0.14	0.64*				
	Script/plot of the video	0.13	1.62*				
	Camera movement	0.12	0.66*				
	Background Music/sound	0.17	0.14*				
	Background setup/location of the video	-0.08	0.05				
	Colours used in the video	0.17	0.56*				
	Dressing of actors	0.07	0.07				
	Length of the video	0.05	0.11				
	Energy of Actors	0.18	0.05**				
	Expectation from humorous videos	0.15	0.68***				
Response of signers				303	18	3.22**	.67
	Acting of the lead actor	0.16	0.61**				
	Acting of other actors	0.13	0.48*				
	Facial expressions of the lead actor	0.14	0.56*				
	Facial expression of other actors	0.16	0.67*				
	Body language/gestures of the lead actor	0.17	0.84**				
	Body language/gestures of other actors	0.15*	0.44*				
	Sequence of actions/scenes	0.11	-0.07				
	Unexpected ending	0.18	0.71*				
	Overall presentation	0.08	0.17				
	Script/plot of the video	0.07	-0.09				
	Camera movement	0.11	0.14				
	Background Music/sound	-0.09	0.06				
	Background setup/location of the video	0.02	0.68				
	Colours used in the video	0.01	0.34				
	Dressing of actors	0.08	0.73				
	Length of the video	0.03	0.08				
	Energy of Actors	0.26	0.72**				
	Expectation from humorous videos	0.14	0.77*				

*p = 0.05, ** p = 0.01, *** p = 0.001*

Table 2. Simple linear regression for Moderately humorous videos

Condition	Predictor	β	t	N	df	F	R^2
Response of Verbal participants				303	18	3.73***	.63
	Acting of the lead actor	0.12	0.32				
	Acting of other actors	0.19	0,67**				
	Facial expressions of the lead actor	0.18*	0.67*				
	Facial expression of other actors	0.17	0.37				
	Body language/gestures of the lead actor	0.29	0.51				
	Body language/gestures of other actors	0.08	0.08				
	Sequence of actions/scenes	0.11	0.47**				
	Unexpected ending	0.17	0.76**				
	Overall presentation	0.18	0.44*				
	Script/plot of the video	0.13	1.62**				
	Camera movement	0.12	0.21*				
	Background Music/sound	0.12	0.27*				
	Background setup/location of the video	0.18	0.45**				
	Colours used in the video	0.17	0.66*				
	Dressing of actors	0.08	0.08				
	Length of the video	0.11	0.71				
	Energy of Actors	0.14	0.45				
	Expectation from humorous videos	0.17	0.68*				
Response of signers				303	18	1.96*	.74
	Acting of the lead actor	0.18	0.41**				
	Acting of other actors	0.13	0.28*				
	Facial expressions of the lead actor	0.14	0.66**				
	Facial expression of other actors	0.19	0.69*				
	Body language/gestures of the lead actor	0.19	0.74**				
	Body language/gestures of other actors	0.15	0.54*				
	Sequence of actions/senes	0.31	0.47				
	Unexpected ending	0.08	0.01				
	Overall presentation	0.48	0.37				
	Script/plot of the video	0.27	0.69*				
	Camera movement	0.09	0.47				
	Background Music/sound	-0.09	0.66				
	Background setup/location of the video	0.03	0.07				
	Colours used in the video	0.21	0.64				
	Dressing of actors	0.06	0.03				
	Length of the video	-0.53	0.61*				
	Energy of Actors	0.17	0.12				
	Expectation from humorous videos	0.18	0.77				

* p = 0.05, ** p = 0.01, *** p = 0.001

Appendix III

The Elevator

Verbal language users:

Video recordings of ten verbal language users were analyzed for this video. The retold narration was more plot based and the participants did not give much details about the lead actor. The lead actor was mostly referred to as 'the man" throughout the narration. Although, the narration was done from the point of view of the lead actor. Only two participants did any re-enacting of any of the characters from the video. Thus, the actors' actions were mostly described in words rather than actions. Not much description of the film making perspective was given. The techniques used were appreciated and understood as reflected in the previous study, but not mentioned while retelling. Only one of the participants mentioned that all the people entering the elevator were casually dressed, wearing beach like shirts and shorts. The entire narration was done from the perspective as well as with descriptions of the lead actor and his actions. It was also noted that most of the entire narration was done with a smile on the face and in some instances, like when the actor takes out his phone to calculate the weights of the people on the elevator, when the actor runs out of the elevator, etc. were done accompanied with laughter. One of the interesting observations was that every single participant found it difficult to narrate the sections when they had to specify that the people entering the elevator were 'fat', though it was crucial to the plot and the punchline. They paused to find the most socially acceptable words to describe those actors. In some cases, participants used words like 'not very thin people', 'kind of heavier than the first man', etc. for every entry of a fat character. Most common gestures too were used by the participants to make his/her audience understand that the people were fat. The narration was done with a forward leaning posture by all the participants suggesting the interest and involvement in the narration and the video. The section of video where the lead actor is extremely anxious and imagines that the elevator falls down because of over burden was skipped in the narration. One of the participants just mentioned, "then the elevator suddenly moved and falls to the ground floor but no one gave any expressions… I am not sure what exactly happened, so anyways...", and continued to narrate further. Hardly any phrases or words were used to describe any incident or action from the video as overtly humorous. Also, all the participants were quite willing to narrate the video as soon as

they finished watching it and there was absolutely no hesitation or difficulty they suggested for the narration. A lot of "you know!", "I mean!", "do you understand?" were used while narrating in particular with reference to the fat people entering the elevator as the only sign of hesitation. No contradiction could be observed between the reception, rating and narration of the video. There were no exaggerations or subjective inputs done by any of the narrators other than two of the participants, who eliminated the repeated entries of people into the elevator and shortened it to "people kept coming in every floor".

Sign language users:

Video recordings of five sign language users were analyzed for this video. All the sign language users retold the contents of the video based on the plot but the participants did give details about the lead actor. The lead actor was assigned a specific sign in the form of a classifier to refer to 'the first man' which was used throughout the narration. The narration was also done from the point of view of the lead actor. All the signers role-played the lead actor along with the other characters in the video. Not much description of the film making perspective was given. Two of the signers also described the casual dressing, specifying the prints on shirts and shorts, other actors were wearing versus the all-black outfit of the lead actor. Mostly the entire narration was done with a smile on the face and in some instances, like when the actor takes out his phone to calculate the weights of the people on the elevator, a very fat man entering the elevator instead of the thin young boy, the actor running out of the elevator, the last scene, etc. were signed with a complimentary laughter. In contrast with the verbal language users, signers did not find it difficult or awkward to describe all the characters in the first elevator as 'fat'. The physical description of those characters was embedded in the narration and referred back to when they talk about the lead actor running out of the elevator to escape. Most common gestures used by the participants were to make the audience understand that the people were fat and the people coming in later were fatter. Gestures were also used to compliment role playing of the lead actor. The narration was done with a forward leaning posture by all the signers suggesting the interest and involvement in the narration and video. The section of video where the lead actor was extremely anxious and imagined that the elevator fell down because of over burden was skipped in the narration. Continuous signs such as "funny" and other of its synonyms were also used in the retelling. All the participants were quite willing to narrate the video and they did not hint towards any awkwardness or difficulty, not even those

hesitant uses of phrases to refer to 'fat' characters used by verbal participants. No contradiction could be observed in the reception, rating and narration of the video. The video was rated as highly humorous and while narrating the signers showed interest and hinted towards the video being humorous. There were some exaggerations or subjective inputs by signers, especially in forms of role play. Another significant difference noted between sign and verbal language users was the shortening of plot to avoid repetition. The signers did not eliminate the repetitions of events from the video.

Hitchhiking

Verbal language users:

Recordings of ten verbal language users were analyzed for this video. The entire narration for this video was actor dependent. Every participant started the narration by giving an introduction to the lead actor and throughout the narrations were done from the point of view of the lead actor. In most instances the participants re-enacted the facial expressions of the lead actor. In some cases, they also used the hand and body gestures as a compliment to the narration. Three participants remarked on the filmmaking techniques like, "then the camera moved slowly", "and the camera zoomed on the man", etc. Six participants also mentioned the location and setup of the video as well as commented on the dressing and looks of both the actors. The narrations were all focused on the lead actor but the supporting actor was also mentioned. The mention of the supporting actor's actions as well as facial expressions were also mentioned for better understanding the lead actor's perspective. All the participants laughed almost throughout the narration and specially paused to laugh at the specific incidents they found most humorous. None of the participants showed any signs of hesitation or awkwardness to start the narration or even through the narration. None of the plot lines or descriptions were found difficult to be narrated. Overall, a lot of hand movements were accompanied while narrating in particular the parts to describe the vehicle, the actions of the actors. The facial gestures of raised eyebrows and body leaning forward while narration was also perceived in almost all the narrations. All the narrations were completely thorough and no section of the plot was skipped or eliminated while narrating. Lot of use of phrases like, "it was so funny", "that was hilarious", "he was so silly", etc. were constantly used by the participants while narrating. None of the participants showed any signs of discomfort or

unwillingness to narrate the video. Six participants used phrases like, "you should see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc. showing the participants' willingness to ensure that the hearer also enjoys the plot as much as they did. All the participants who watched the video rated the video as highly humorous and the narration was done to ensure the same impact, hence no contradiction between rating and retelling. No modifications were made by the participants in the narration of the plotline or the acting but interestingly three participants attempted to exaggerate the impact of humor by repetition and extended elaboration of the plot as well as both actors' expressions.

Sign language users:

Recordings of five signers were analyzed for this video. The signed retelling too was actor dependent and all the signers too started the narration with giving an introduction to the lead actor. All the plot was retold from the point of view of the lead actor. In all instances the participants re-enacted the facial expressions of the lead actor as well as the supporting actor as part of role play. In two cases, they also used the hand and body gestures as a compliment to the narration. Three participants also included the film making techniques as part of the signed narration painting an almost clear replication of what and how events took place in the video. All the participants mentioned the location and setup of the video as well described the appearance of both actors. The narrations were more focused on the lead actor but the supporting actor was also mentioned and described throughout the retelling. As observed in the case of verbal language users, all the signer participants too laughed almost throughout the narration and specially paused to laugh at the specific incidents they found most humorous. None of the plot lines or descriptions were found difficult to be narrated. Lot of gesturing could also be seen. Raised eyebrows and body leaning forward while narration were also observed in all the signed narrations. The narrations were completely thorough and none of scenes were skipped while narrating. Use of phrases like, "it was so funny", "that was hilarious", "he was so silly", etc. were constantly used as done by verbal participants. None of the participants showed any signs of discomfort or unwillingness to narrate the video contents. Four participants used phrases like, "you should see the video", "got that", etc. suggesting that the participants' willingness to ensure that their audience understand how humorous the video was and there was no contradiction in this respect. All the participants who watched the video rated the video as highly humorous and the narration was done to ensure the same impact. Modifications in the plot were not made nor did signers exaggerate too much of the

final scene. Though, some exaggerations in expressions of the lead actor and reactions of the supporting actor were found in the narration. For instance, prolonged hold of a specific expression by either of the actors, the bike description from the point of view of the lead actor being detailed, etc.

The Lion's Cage

Verbal language users:

Recordings of ten participants were analyzed for this video. Verbal retelling for this video were actor based for all the participants. Before participants started the narration, they mentioned the lead actor which instantly generated laughter and amusement for both speakers as well as hearers. The retelling narrative was from the point of view of the lead actor. In most instances the participants re-enacted the facial expressions of the lead actor for every scene. Sometimes they also used the hand and body gestures as a compliment to the narration. No mentions regarding the film making techniques were done while narrating. Other than describing the location and setup of the video no other details were mentioned in the narration by any participant. The entire narration was focused on the lead actor and his actions. The other female character who was also an important element to the video plotline was mentioned by two participants too but not in great detail. All the participants laughed through the retelling even taking pauses for incidents they found most humorous. There were no awkward moments in narration. None of the plot lines or descriptions were reported to be difficult to narrate. Lot of hand movements were accompanied while narrating in particular the parts to describe how the lead actor tried to escape the cage, and other actions of the actor. The facial gestures of raised eyebrows and body leaning forward while narration was also perceived in eight out of ten participants' narrations. The narration was not as detailed as the video plot. Many details were skipped while retelling and only the major plot was narrated. The ending of the video was also skipped by four participants. Lot of use of phrases like, "it was so funny", "that was hilarious", "he was so silly", etc. were constantly used by the participants while narrating. Three participants felt it was difficult to narrate the video. They were doubtful that they might not be able to retell what they just saw in the video as events were more action based and they were not sure how to translate those actions into words. Participants used phrases like, "you should see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc. showing the participants'

willingness to ensure that the hearer also enjoys the plot as much as they did. All the participants rated the video as highly humorous and the narration was done to ensure the same impact. The actions of the lead actor were exaggerated by the participant while retelling in forms of added facial expressions and full body movements to match the actions in each scene. The participants who skipped the end of the video were the ones to exaggerate the actions of the actor more than those who narrated the video scene by scene.

Sign language users:

Video recordings of five signers were analyzed for this video. The sign language narrations for this video were actor based for all the participants. Every participant started the narration by mentioning who the lead actor for this video was. As soon as the lead actor's name was mentioned there was an immediate positive response in the form of laughter and forward lean by the recipient/audience. The narrations were done from the point of view of the lead actor. Role playing of the lead actor as well the lion in the cage was embedded in the retold narrative. In some cases, two participants also used the hand and body gestures as a compliment to the narration. No mentions regarding the film making techniques were done while narrating. Other than describing the location and setup of the video no other details were mentioned in the narration. The entire narration was focused on the lead actor but all the other actors, including the animals were also role played and back refereed to with the use of some classifier assigned to them when first mentioned. All the participants laughed almost throughout the narration and specially paused to laugh at the specific incidents they found most humorous. There were no awkward moments in narration. None of the plot lines or descriptions were reported to be difficult to be narrated. The facial gestures of raised eyebrows and body leaning forward while narration was also perceived in almost all the narrations. In contrast with the verbal language, narration was as detailed as the plot of the video and hardly any scenes or events were eliminated. The ending of the video was also not skipped by any of the participants. Lot of use of phrases like, "it was so funny", "that was hilarious", "he was so silly", etc. were constantly used by the participants while narrating. Unlike verbal language user participants, none of the signers found it difficult to narrate the video. Three participants used phrases like, "you should see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc. showing the participants' willingness to ensure that the hearer also enjoyed the plot as much as they did. All the participants who watched the video rated the video as highly humorous and the narration was

done to ensure the same impact. The actions of the lead actor were exaggerated to some extent in the form of role play by three of the participants while retelling.

First Class

Verbal language users:

Recordings of ten participants were analyzed for this video. The video received very positive response from all the participants irrespective of the mode of language they used for communication. The narrations for verbal language users were actor based for all the participants for obvious reasons. Every participant started the narration by mentioning who the lead actor was and like the previous video the listeners responded with enthusiasm to that mention. The narrations were done from the point of view of the lead actor and all the participants re-enacted the facial expressions of the lead actor and also to some extent other actors'. All the participants also used the hand and body gestures as a compliment to the narration. Also, no mentions regarding the film making techniques were done while narrating. Other than describing the location and overall setup of the video mostly no other minute details like, what characters were wearing, their positions, etc. were mentioned in the narration. The entire narration was focused on the lead actor but other characters in the video were also mentioned and described when it was crucial to the lead actor's actions. All the participants laughed almost throughout the narration and took pauses to laugh while narrating specific incidents or scenes they found most humorous. Nine participants felt at loss of words and found it difficult to structure sentences to describe the scene where the lead actor bursts a sickness bag on a man's face. Lot of hand movements were accompanied while narrating this particular scene. The facial gestures of raised eyebrows and body leaning forward while retelling was also perceived in almost all the narrations. It was noteworthy that the narrations were more focused on the actor and some details from the plot were simply ignored in the retelling by at least four participants. For example, the scene where the lead actor pretends to carry a gun with himself was described in great details but the reason why he did so was eliminated in the description. Lot of use of phrases like, "it was so funny", "that was hilarious", "he was so silly", etc. were constantly used by the participants while narrating. None of the participants showed any signs of discomfort or unwillingness to narrate the video except for the one scene (sickness bag bursting) they all cringed at while watching. Four participants also used phrases like, "you should

see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc., showing their willingness to ensure that the hearer also enjoys the plot as much as they did. All the participants rated the video as highly humorous and the narration was done to ensure that the listeners also feel the same impact. The actions of the lead actor were exaggerated, including the facial expressions. In some cases five participants also skipped over some details and scenes that they felt did not affect the overall plotline and the humorous points and just focused on the overall plotline of the video.

Sign language users:

Recordings of five signers were analyzed for this video. As much as the verbal language user participants, the signers too were very excited and showed great interest in retelling the video contents. For sign language users too, the narrations were actor based for all the participants. Also, all signers started the narration by giving an introduction to the lead actor and assigning a sign for him for further anaphoric references throughout the narration. Also, the video was narrated from the point of view of the lead actor by all the participants. All the signers, role played the lead actor as well as all the other characters imitating each and every one of their actions and facial expressions. Extra gesturing for more impact could also be found in two of the signers' narrations. Again, no specific or detailed mentions regarding the filmmaking techniques included while retelling. The location as well as the overall setup of the video were also mentioned in the narration. Unlike the verbal counterparts, the signed narrations also described the appearances of each of the actors including their dressing when they first introduced them in the narrative. The entire narration was focused on the lead actor but the other characters in the video were also given equal importance, especially when their actions were crucial to the lead actor's actions. All the signers laughed through the narration and also took pauses to laugh at the specific incidents they found most humorous. Another noteworthy, difference between the verbal and signed retelling was the absolute comfort all participants felt in retelling the scene where the lead actor bursts a sickness bag on a man's face. They took that scene as a part of the plotline and intended humor effect and included it with ease. The facial gestures of raised eyebrows and body leaning forward while narration was also present in almost all the narrations. All the narrations were more focused on the actors and some parts of the plot were simply ignored in the retelling. For example, two of the signers did not even mention the first scene where the lead actor suddenly realized that he holds the ticket to the first class. Throughout the narrations, signers used phrases like, "it was so funny",

"that was hilarious", "he was so silly", etc. while narrating. None of the participants showed any signs of discomfort or unwillingness to narrate the video. Also, all the participants showed willingness to ensure that the hearer also enjoys the plot as much as they did. There was no contradiction in their rating of the video for humorousness vs. how they wanted the recipient to enjoy the story. The actions of the lead actor were exaggerated by the participant while retelling and role playing, and since the focus was highly on the actors, some parts of the plot were skipped through or in some cases summarized.

Safety last

Verbal language users:

Recordings of ten participants were analyzed for this video. The retold narrations for this video were plot based for all the participants. No participants were familiar with the lead actor so no specific descriptions of any of the actors were provided before the narration started. The only introduction given by three of the participants was that the video seems to be very old. While retelling only details that were significant or played an important role to the storyline were narrated. The narrations were done from the point of view of the plotline and the scenes the participants laughed at while watching were described. Not much of re-enacting was done by the narrators apart from the use of gestures to describe some of the activities of the actors. Hence, the actions of all the characters were mostly described in words rather than actions. No mentions regarding the film making techniques were done while narrating. The location and setup of the video was mostly mentioned and described in the narration. The entire narration is focused on the lead actor though other characters in the video were also mentioned and described when it was crucial to the lead actor's actions. All the participants smiled along the narration. Three participants also took pauses to laugh while retelling. There were no awkward moments in narration but some sections of the video were found to be difficult to describe in words. For example, the scenes between the lead actor and his friend with the wooden plank were difficult to describe in words in specific details. Some hand movements were accompanied while narrating the actions of the actors to bridge the gaps in the visual to language transfer. The facial gestures of raised eyebrows and body leaning forward while narration was also perceived in all the narrations to indicate positive involvement. The narrations were almost shortened to summarize the plotline. Many details that

were repetitive were skipped in the retelling, for instance repeated falling while climbing up the building. Phrases like, "it was so funny", "that was hilarious", "he was so silly", etc. were also constantly used by at least seven participants while narrating. Eight participants were hesitant to retell the video as they felt they would not be able to describe well what they just watched. Six participants used phrases like, "you should see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc. showing their willingness to ensure that the hearer also enjoys the plot as much as they did or that the hearer understands well. All the participants who watched the video rated the video as highly humorous and the narration was done to ensure the same impact showing signs of enjoying the video contents. The actions of the lead actor as well as other actors were exaggerated while retelling but as mentioned above some participants skipped over some details and just focused on the overall plotline of the video keeping the humorousness intact.

Sign language users:

Recordings of five signers were analyzed for this video. The signed narrations for this video were plot based for all the participants and like verbal language participants they too were familiar with the lead actor so absolutely specific description of any of the actors were provided before the narration started. Although, one of the signers felt he has seen the lead actor in some other video he had watched in past but was not sure. While retelling only details that were significant or played an important role to the story were narrated. The signed narrations were mostly from the point of view of the plotline. Like all previous signed narrations for other videos, participants took the help of role playing to retell the actions of all the characters. No mentions regarding the film making techniques were done while narrating by any participant. A brief description of the location and setup of the video was included in the retelling but not as detailed to be enough for the recipient to visualize the scenes. The entire narration was focused on the lead actor and other characters in the video were also mentioned and described when it was crucial to the lead actor's actions. Some of the supporting cast was completely excluded in the retelling. For instance, only two of the signers talked about the crowd gathered to view and cheer the lead actor climb the building, the policeman, who was following the lead's friend was also just described as 'a man'. All the participants smiled along the narration and two participants also took pauses to laugh while retelling certain scenes. All the participants smiled along the narration. Three participants also took pauses to laugh while retelling. There were no awkward moments in narration. None of the plot lines or descriptions

were found difficult to be narrated by signers. Some hand movements were accompanied while narrating the actions of the actors. The facial gestures of raised eyebrows and body leaning forward while narration was also perceived in almost all the narrations. The narration was almost shortened to summarize the plotline. Some details that were repetitive and were skipped in the retelling by verbal language participants were not excluded by signers in retelling. Phrases like, "it was so funny", "that was hilarious", "he was so silly", etc. were regularly embedded while narrating. Unlike verbal participants, signers were not hesitant to retell the contents of the video and narrated with ease shifting between roles of one to the other characters. At least three participants used phrases like, "you should see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc. showing the participants' willingness to ensure that the hearer also enjoys the plot as much as they did. All the participants who watched the video rated the video as highly humorous and the narration was done to ensure the same impact. The actions of the lead actor were exaggerated by the participant while retelling in form of role play. When a signer skipped a few details from the video, he/she ensured that the overall humorousness is not lost and hence, no scenes that carried the essence of humor were eliminated.

One cookie left

Verbal language users:

Recordings of ten participants were analyzed for this video. The retold narrations for this video were plot based by all the participants. The participant did not give much details about the lead actor/s. The characters were addressed in the third person. As the retelling progressed only details that were significant or played an important role in the story were mentioned. Hence, the appearance, dressing, etc. of the actors did not become part of the narration by any participant. The only information about the characters were the fact that there was a man and a woman. The narrations were done from the point of view of the plotline and punchlines. No participant re-enacted the story. The actor's actions were mostly described in words rather than actions. Neither were the filmmaking techniques mentioned. A very brief information was given that the story took place in a house, and apart from that detail mostly no other details were mentioned. The entire narration was focused on the lead actors. Three participants smiled along the narration but certainly no laughter accompanied. There were no awkward moments in narration. Some complimentary

hand gestures were used while narrating the actions of the actors but gestures like raising of eyebrows and body leaning forward while narration were not perceived any of the narrations. The narration was almost shortened to summarize the plotline by nine participants. Many repetitive actions were skipped in the retelling. Phrases like, "it was so funny", "that was hilarious", "he was so silly", etc. were also not used by all participants while narrating. At least eight participants were hesitant to retell the video as they felt they would not be able to describe what they just watched. Nine participants who rated the video as moderately humorous narrated it very mildly without any excitement. The actions of the lead actor were exaggerated by four participants while retelling because as reported by them, the video did not have enough content, humorous or otherwise to exclude those exaggerations. All the participants skipped over some details, like multiple attempts of snatching the cookie from the other and just focused on the overall plotline of the video. Interestingly, even the last scene, which was the punchline of the video too was not narrated with much enthusiasm or coupled with laughter.

Sign language users:

Recordings of five signers were analyzed for this video. The narrations were actor based for all the participants. The participant did not give much details about the lead actor/s before the retelling started. Since the video did not have a clear lead actor, both the actors were given equal importance. As the retelling progressed only details that were significant or played an important role in the story were narrated. The film making techniques were also not included in the retelling. Re-enacting every action by both the characters were done in form of role play by all the participants. The house, the kind of stairs, the position of the rooms and doors were part of all the signed narrations. The entire narration was focused on both the actors equally. No laugher was present in the narrations with few exceptions of smiles here and there. But overall, the narration was done with almost a straight face and expressions came only as part of role play by all the participants. There were no awkward moments in narration. None of the plot lines or descriptions were found difficult to be narrated by signers. Some hand gestures were accompanied while narrating the actions of the actors. The signers did not shorten the plotline to summarize. Unlike verbal language users, no details, even though repetitive were skipped. Phrases like, "it was so funny", "that was hilarious", "he was so silly", etc. were also not embedded in the retold narration. Some participants did show signs of hesitation and unwillingness to retell the contents of the video. Three Participants

used phrases like, "you should see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc. showing the participants were not sure if their narration was humorous enough. In some cases when the recipient did not nod to these questions the participant repeated a scene or a specific action to ensure positive response. All the participants who watched the video rated the video as moderately humorous and while retelling signers tried to ensure that the recipient finds it humorous making some exaggerations in the actors' expressions and events. The last scene was also signed in full by all the participants where another man conveniently eats the cookie and the role of that man was exaggerated too.

Noodles

Verbal language users:

Videos of ten participants were analyzed for this video. The retold narrations for this video were plot based for all the participants. The participant did not give much details about the lead actor/s and classifier based anaphoric references were done to address the characters in the third person. As the retelling progressed only details that were significant or played an important role to the overall plot were retold. The narrations were done from the point of view of the plotline. Hardly any re-enacting was done by the participants and all the actors' actions were mostly described in words rather than actions. For this video too, no mentions regarding the film making techniques were done while narrating. Other than just mentioning that the story in the video takes place at a restaurant mostly no other details were mentioned in the narration. The participants retold the video as a narration without giving any of the actors much significance. All the actors in the video were given equal weightage while retelling. The participants retold without much smile on their faces. For some participants, scenes in which they found some humor was narrated with a smile on face. There were no awkward moments in narration. Not much of gesturing was done while retelling by the participants. Only the part where the actors move in synchrony was complemented by imitation gesture for audience's better understanding. The narration was almost shortened to summarize the plotline and any events that were found repetitive were skipped in the retelling. Phrases like, suggesting that the video was humorous, were hardly used by the participants while narrating. Also, at least seven participants were hesitant to retell the contents of the video as they felt they would not be able to put in words what they just watched. Participants did not use phrases like,

"you should see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc. showing the participants' willingness to ensure that the hearer also enjoys the plot as much as they did. Nine participants who watched the video rated the video as moderately humorous and the narration was done with some extra efforts to ensure that the recipient/audience found the contents and plotline humorous. The actions of the lead actor were exaggerated by the participants while retelling and some participants skipped over some details and just focused on the overall plotline of the video.

Sign language users:

Recordings of five signers were analyzed for this video. The narrations were actor based for all the participants. The lead actor was given a sign name and a classifier was assigned for all further references. The narrations were done from the point of view of the actors and every single action of the lead actor as well as the supporting actors were re-enacted by all the narrators (role play). All the participants re-enacted the facial expressions of the lead actor. Signers too made no mentions regarding the film making techniques while narrating. The location, i.e. the restaurant was quiet well described to understand the exact positions of the actors. All the narrations were focused on all the actors equally. Laughter was not part of the retold narration and all the participants retold the video contents with a straight face. Facial expressions were only for the purposes of role play. There were no awkward moments in narration and none of the plot lines or descriptions were found difficult to be narrated. Lot of hand movements were accompanied while narrating. Cases of forward leaning could be noticed for at least three participants. The participants did not shorten the plotline and retold scene by scene. None of the participants signed "this is very funny, "this was fun", etc. before starting to sign nor while retelling. Some of the participants showed signs of discomfort or unwillingness to narrate the video but once they started signing, they made sure to not miss any details. Participants used phrases like, "you should see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc. showing that the participants were not sure if their narration was humorous enough. In some cases when the recipient did not show positive affirmation to such questions the participant repeated a scene or exaggerated the scene or a specific action to ensure positive response. There was no contradiction between the rating and retelling for this video. All the participants rated the video as moderately humorous and the retelling was done to ensure that it is humorous too. The actions of the lead actor were exaggerated by all the participants while

retelling and some of the participants also exaggerated the expressions of the actors to accentuate the humorousness of the video.

Joggers

Verbal language users:

Videos of ten participants were analyzed for this video. The narrations for this video were highly plot based for all the participants. None of the participants were familiar with the lead actor so absolutely no specific description of any of the actors were provided before the narration started. While retelling only details that were significant or played an important role in the story were narrated. The narrations were done from the point of view of the plotline. Hardly any re-enacting was done by the participants. The actor's actions were mostly described in words rather than actions. Very briefly the overall setup of the video was mentioned. Otherwise no other details were mentioned in the narration. The participants retold the video as a narration without giving any of the actors much significance or making a distinction between lead and supporting actors. All the actors in the video were given equal weightage while retelling. The participants retold without much smile on their faces and almost no laughter came while retelling for any of the participants. Some participants felt a little awkward retelling the first scene. And all participants found the entire plot line strange to retell. They also felt at a loss of words to retell extreme exaggerated actions of the actors in the video and reported to that those kinds of actions can only be enjoyed while watching but not described in words. Irrespective of the fact that they first scene was believed to be awkward to retell, every single participant tried to retell that scene as precisely as possible. Not much of gesturing was done while retelling by the participants. The narration was almost shortened to summarize the plotline. Many repetitive actions were skipped in the retelling. Phrases like, "it was so funny", "that was hilarious", etc. were hardly used by the participants while narrating but most participants did say things like "it was so silly", "i don't know why/how it happened", "it kind of made no sense", etc. As mentioned earlier, most of the participants were hesitant to retell the video as they felt the scenes, events and actions were not describable in words. Participants did not use phrases like, "you should see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc. showing the participants'. Although the viewing response was highly positive with ample laughter, the overall average rating for the video suggested it to be moderately humorous. The narration too hinted

towards non-commitment and the narration had to be done with some extra effort to make sure the retold narrative comes out to be humorous. In the process, the participants made modifications and eliminations of multiple plotlines, especially the ones they did not understand or did not find humorous enough or 'silly' and 'forced humor'. Also, four participants did not include the last scene in the retelling and just abruptly stopped the video as 'people continued jogging'.

Sign language users:

Videos of five participants were analyzed for this video. The signed narrations were mostly actor based for three sign language users but two also retold the narrative from the plot perspective not giving much importance to the actors and focused on the plot of the video. Participants were not familiar with the lead actor so he was throughout referred to with the signed name assigned to him at the beginning or the classifier for a man. Every single action of the lead actor as well as the supporting actor was re-enacted by the narrator. All the participants re-enacted the facial expressions and actions of the lead actor as well as other actors. No mentions regarding the film making techniques were done while narrating. Other than briefly describing the location and setup of the video before the narration of the scenes and actions not much of other details were provided in the retelling. All the narrations were focused all the actors equally. Not much laughter could be seen while retelling. Almost all the participants retold the video contents with a straight face and expressions only as part of role play. There were no awkward moments in narration. None of the plotlines or descriptions were found difficult to be narrated. Lot of hand movements were accompanied while narrating. No cases of leaning forward while retelling was found suggesting neutral involvement. The participants did not shorten the plotline and retold the entire video also scene by scene in near perfect sequence. None of the participants signed "this is very funny, "this was fun", etc. before starting to sign nor while retelling. Some of the participants showed signs of discomfort or unwillingness to narrate the video. The signers wanted to ensure that the retold narrative is as humorous as it could possibly be made and hence some repetitions, exaggerations, and long pauses were used as an aid to that purpose. Some of the signers found the video to be highly humorous whereas few others rated it as moderately humorous. But in either case, the signed narrative was carefully created to have a humorous impact on whoever watches it. The actions of the lead actor were exaggerated for this purpose as mentioned above and some scenes

were also elongated. Some scenes were eliminated, but not as much as verbal language participants did.

Stapler

Verbal language users:

Videos of ten participants were analyzed for this video. The narrations were mostly plot based for all the participants. The participant did not give much details about the lead actor/s. The characters were addressed in the third person throughout the retold narration. As the retelling progressed only details that were significant or played an important role in the story were narrated. Not much re-enacting was done by the participants and the actors' actions described in words and not with the help of gestures. Few mentions regarding the film making techniques were done while narrating, for example: mentioning slow motion movements, close-up of actors or objects, etc. The brief description of the location, i.e. an office, where the events took place was provided in the narration. All the participants retold the video as a narration without giving any of the actors much significance. Both the actors in the video were given equal weightage while retelling as both the characters were leads and there were no other characters in the plot. The participants retold without much smile on their faces and of course no laughter was embedded in the narration either. There was some hesitation and awkwardness before they started retelling as all the participants found the entire plot line strange and certainly even more difficult to retell. They also reported that they would rather recommend others to watch it and share the link to it than telling what they saw in the video. Hence, they felt words would not do justice to the extreme actions of the actors in the video. Not much of gesturing was done while retelling by the participants. The narration was also shortened to summarize the plotline. For instance, some repetitive actions were eliminated or were summarized in the retelling. Phrases like, "it was so funny", "that was hilarious", "he was so silly", etc. were hardly used by the participants while narrating. Participants did not use phrases like, "you should see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc. showing the participants' willingness to ensure that the retold narrative comes across as humorous. All the participants rated the video as moderately humorous and their retelling was not a contradiction to that reception. The participants made modifications and eliminations of multiple plotlines, especially the ones they did not find humorous enough or 'silly' and 'forced'. By the end of the retold narratives, all the participants

reported the concept and actions of the characters pointless with way too much exaggeration of a simple plot. The last scene, which suggested a repetition of the same actions already done for a stapler was reported but not as a punchline expected to be.

Sign language users:

Recordings of five participants were analyzed for this video. The narrations were actor based for three participants while others focused on the plot of the video. Not much of the description was given to the actors before retelling the video. The narrations were done from the point of view of the actors. Since this video did not have a clear lead actor or one can say that there were two lead actors, every single action of both the actor were re-enacted by the narrators. No mentions regarding the film making techniques were done while narrating. The location and setup of the video were embedded in the narrative and not specifically described beforehand. All the narrations were focused on both the actors equally. Not much laughter could be seen while retelling. At least four participants retold the video contents with a straight face and expressions were restricted to role play. There were no awkward moments in narration. None of the plot lines or descriptions were reported to be difficult for retelling. Lot of hand movements were accompanied while narrating. There were no cases of leaning forward could be noticed. Unlike their verbal language counterparts, the participants did not shorten the plotline and retold scene by scene with near perfect sequence of events too. None of the participants signed "this is very funny, "this was fun", etc. before starting to sign nor while retelling. One participant showed signs of discomfort but some level of unwillingness could be felt by most signers. Participants used phrases like, "if you watch it you will understand", "I mean", "did you understand", etc. hinting the participants were not sure if their narration was humorous or clear enough. In some cases when the recipient did not nod to these questions the participant repeated a scene or a specific action to ensure positive response and only then moved further to the next scene. All the participants rated the video as moderately humorous and the narration was done putting extra efforts to ensure that the retold narrative is humorous. The actions of the lead actor were exaggerated by the participant while retelling. Three participants also exaggerated and prolonged the expressions of both the actors.

The Black Hole

Verbal language users:

Recording of ten participants were analyzed for this video. The retellings were mostly plot based for all the participants. The participants did not give much details about the lead actor. The lead actor was addressed in the third person. As the retelling progressed only details that were significant or played an important role to the story were narrated. The narrations were done from the point of view of the plotline. Hardly any re-enacting was done by the participants. The actors' actions were mostly described in words rather than actions. Few mentions regarding the film making techniques were done while narrating, for example: mentioning slow motion movements, close-up of actors or objects, etc. Other than describing the location and setup of the video mostly no other details were mentioned in the narration. The participants retold the video as a narration. Since there was only one actor in the video everything was retold from his perspective. Though the paper with the big black circle also acted as a character in the video, not much was focused on that for the retelling. The participants retold without much smile on their faces. Almost no laughter came while retelling for any of the participants. There were no awkward moments in narration. At least nine participants found the entire plot line strange to retell. They also felt at loss of words to retell extreme exaggerated actions of the actors in the video. Not much of gesturing was done while retelling by the participants. The narration was almost shortened to summarize the plotline. Some repetitive actions were shorted and were skipped in the retelling. Phrases like, "it was so funny", "that was hilarious", "he was so silly", etc. were hardly used by the participants while narrating. Most of the participants were hesitant to retell the video as they felt they would not be able to describe well what they just watched. Participants did not use phrases like, "you should see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc. showing the participants' willingness to ensure that the hearer also enjoys the plot as much as they did. All the participants who watched the video rated the video as moderately humorous and the narration was done with some extra effort to make sure the recipients found the video humorous. The participants made modifications and exaggerations in the plotline. All the participants extended the amusement of the actor to some extent to make it humorous to the recipient. The last scene, came as a surprise to the participants when they had watched the video, and hence some of them used interactive mechanism to retell that scene. They

ended the retelling with sentences like "The man then decided to crawl into the locker....now guess what happened next..". For greater impact and better humorousness of the narrative.

Sign language users:

Videos of five participants were analyzed for this video. The signed retellings were actor based for three participants while two participants focused on the plot of the video. The actor was described and also assigned a 'name', even though there were no other characters in the video. The narrations were also done from the point of view of the actor. Every single action of the actor was re-enacted as part of the role-play. No mentions regarding the film making techniques were done while narrating. The location where the story takes place is described beforehand. All the narrations by signers were focused on the actor as well as the objects in the video that played a role in the plotline equally. Not much laughter could be seen while retelling. Almost all the participants retold the video contents with a straight face. There were no awkward moments in narration. None of the plot lines or descriptions were found difficult to be narrated. Lot of hand movements were accompanied while narrating. There were no cases of leaning forward. The participants did not shorten the plotline as done by the verbal language participants. None of the participants signed "this is very funny, "this was fun", etc. before starting to sign nor while retelling. The signers did not show any hesitation in retelling the contents of the video. Participants used phrases like, "you should see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc. showing the participants were not sure if their narration was humorous enough. Most but not all participants rated the video as moderately humorous but there was no significant qualitative difference between the two groups. The actions of the lead actor were exaggerated while retelling irrespective of them finding the video highly humorous or moderately humorous. Some of the participants also exaggerated the expressions of the actors.

Boxing

Verbal language users:

Recordings of ten participants were analyzed for this video. The retold narratives were mostly actor based for all the participants. Only one participant was familiar with the lead actor so mostly no specific description of the lead actor was provided before the narration started. The participant

who was familiar with the lead actor did mention his name and mentioned that his videos were always very funny. While retelling only details that were significant to the plot were retold. The narrations were done from the point of view of the plotline as well as the actor, shifting between the two from time to time. Some of the participants did re-enact the lead actor's actions but not all. The actors' actions were mostly described in words coupled with gestures. Not much of filmmaking techniques were retold or narrated. Other than describing the location and setup of the video mostly no other details were mentioned in the narration. The participants retold the video as a narration. While there was clearly a lead actor in the video not everything was retold from his perspective. The other actors involved in the video were also mentioned in proportion to their screen presence. The participants retold without much smile on their faces but some of the participants did take a small pause to laugh before retelling the sections they found humorous. For example, the lead actor accidentally hitting himself, the lead actor's struggles entering the boxing ring, him running around the ring, etc. There were no awkwardness or difficulty in retelling by the participants. The narration was to some extent shortened to summarize the plotline. Some repetitive actions were left out in the retelling. Phrases like, "it was so funny", "that was hilarious", "he was so silly", etc. were used by those who found the video to be humorous. At least three participants were also hesitant to retell the video as they felt that even though the video was humorous, once put into words, the scenes might lose its impact. The retelling according to them could be finish in two or three sentences. The retelling according to them could finish in two or three sentences. Participants used phrases like, "you should see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc. showing the participants' willingness to ensure that the hearer also enjoys the plot as much as they did. The participants did some modifications and exaggerations in the plotline to make it a more humorous than the video. At least nine participants added some extra actions in forms of gestures and expressions while retelling to shift the load of plotline to the actor for humor. The last scene of the video got much appreciation and the participants spoke quite elaborately about that scene.

Sign language users:

Videos of five participants were analyzed for this video. The narrations were actor based for all the participants along with focusing on the plot of the video. The actors were all described in details for their appearance and positions before retelling the video contents. The narrations were done

from the point of view of all the actors. Every single actions of all the characters in the video were re-enacted as part of role play and role switching by the narrators. No mentions regarding the film making techniques were done while narrating. The location and setup of the video were embedded in the narrative and not specifically described beforehand by most signers. The retold narrations were always focused on all the actors equally. Not much laughter could be seen while retelling for most participants. Some but not all the participants retold the video contents with a straight face and expressions only as part of role play. There were no awkward moments in narration and none of the scenes were reported to be difficult to be retold. Lots of hand movements were accompanied while narrating. The participants did show signs of great involvement while retelling as they leaned forwards and constant raising of eyebrows were seen too. Two participants shortened the plotline whereas others retold scene by scene. One participant signed "this is very funny, "this was fun", etc. before starting to sign nor while retelling. Two participants showed signs of discomfort or unwillingness to narrate the video. Participants used phrases like, "you should see the video", "I mean", "got that", etc. showing the participants were not sure if their narration was humorous enough. In some cases when the recipient did not nod to these questions the participant repeated a scene or a specific action to ensure positive response. Most of the signers who watched the video rated the video as highly humorous and the narration was done to ensure that the recipient finds it humorous. But those who thought the video was just moderately humorous made extra efforts and elaborated the actions of the actors and exaggerated their facial expressions. The last scene of the video too was elaborated and prolonged.

Appendix IV

The Elevator

Following are the scenes where either laughter or some kind of amusement was shown by participants.

a. The lead actor getting pushed to the back of the elevator is surrounded by all heavy people.

b. The lead actor finds himself accompanied by too many people in the elevator, all except him are on the heavy side of body weight. So, with grave concern clearly visible on his face he looks up at the board that displays the maximum capacity the elevator can handle.

c. The man quietly taking out his phone and attempting to estimate the weight of each person on the elevator and realized that according to his estimation the elevator is one unit higher than prescribed.

d. A thin young boy waiting in front of the elevator moves and a man heavier than all others comes walking in slow motion towards the elevator. The lead actor panics and rushes out of the elevator sighing in relief once out.

e. The other elevator he entered relieved as it was occupied by normal weight people but all start coughing suddenly. The man attempts to cover his face with his shirt trying to save himself from any infections.

f. All the people go out of the elevator together and go in the same direction and the man is stunned.

The only scene that made some of the verbal language users cringe was when on the second elevator one person's cough lets out a big spit right on the man's back of the head. The signers did not give any such response of disgust on that scene nor any other scene from the video. It is worth noticing that all the participants, both signers and verbal language users, laughed at scenes where humor was plot based. The facial expressions of the lead actor in scenes (b and c) were received with more laughter than smile for both sets of participants. Also, as soon as the scene mentioned in (a), which is a work of the camera giving a top view of the elevator making the man's position

clear, every single participant laughed out loud. The last scene of the video too made most participants laugh and some smiled with a gasp. For this video we do not see much difference between signers and verbal language users in their reception and laughter while watching.

Hitchhiking

Following are the scenes where either laughter or some kind of amusement was shown by participants.

a. The very first appearance of the lead actor (Mr. Bean) looking frustrated and standing on the side of a road/highway looking for a lift.

b. The old man on bike stops to give him a lift and asks him to sit at the back of the bike. But the bike has a very low back where Mr. Bean has to somehow manage to sit with his legs almost hanging in the air.

c. With lot of difficulty and some adjustments, he manages to settle at the back of the bike ready to go but the bike does not start, which disappoints him greatly. He just keeps sitting at the back while the man gets down to investigate what causes the bike to not start.

d. Mr. Bean giving his typical and popular expression of smirk and cunningness and quickly jumps to the front seat and grabs the handle with a smile of triumph and the bike starts to move forward.

e. The man catching up with the bike walking casually and with an expression of disbelief and Bean's expression to that.

f. The man pushing Mr. Bean away from the bike with antipathy leaving him alone and stranded at the isolated sight again with frustration clear on his face.

It is difficult to determine if the positive responses to humorous elements in this video were more inclined towards plot or the actors. A humorous plotline provides scope and twists for the actors to explore their acting skills and expressions for this video. But the dominance of the lead actor's expressions in generating laughter is clearly visible. Most prominent responses were actor driven for both sign and verbal language users. The supporting actor too contributed equally to humor

generation. To some extent, the camera movement and choice of shots too played a crucial role to the humor effect. As the scene mentioned in (e) could have not been as effective if the camera did not move along the bike to give an illusion of the lead actor's plan to elope being successful. It is only when the other character comes into the frame walking casually do audiences realize that the bike was moving too slow, which generated humorous response. The final scene too generated much laughter for both participant groups.

The Lion's Cage

Following are the scenes where either laughter or some kind of amusement was shown by participants.

a. The first appearance of lead actor (Chaplin) running swiftly being chased by a bull and entering the first open door he encounters to get away to safety.

b. The moment he realized that he got himself into the cage of a sleeping lion.

c. Attempts to escape hurriedly but accidentally traps himself in the cage. The door was open and he could have easily escaped.

d. He finds a small half-door and tries to crawl out of the cage from there not knowing it leads to another cage with a tiger roaring straight at him. He quickly retracts himself back into the first cage.

e. In a state of panic almost drops a big container, but somehow managed to grab it before it could drop on the floor of the cage and made a noise waking up the sleeping lion.

f. The tiny dog barking at him risking waking up the lion. Him begging the dog to stop barking and the dog grabbing his pants.

g. Chaplin being too relieved seeing a woman come towards the cage but instead of helping her she faints seeing the situation.

h. The lion waking up and Chaplin quickly running to the door.

i. When the lion does not attack, Chaplin checks himself to see if he is still alive.

j. The woman comes back to consciousness and quickly runs and opens the gate of the cage. But now Chaplin behaves as if he is scared of the lion and even invites her to join her in the cage, which she refuses.

k. He pretends to be friendly with the lion and in an attempt to show off to the woman, he walks casually towards the lion.

l. Chaplin running out of the cage with just one roar.

m. The last scene where he pretends that he climbed a long pole on purpose and starts doing some casual acrobatics to impress her.

The presence of a prominent lead actor known for his comic acting skills happens to be the primary source of humor in this video. Every single action and expression by the lead actor was greeted with laughter by all the participants. The signers in particular laughed at every gesture and facial expressions by the lead actor and the plot of the video became incidental. The plotline and the humorous twists, for example scene (b), (c) and (d), did add to the humor effect, but the focus still was given more to how the actor reacted to those plotlines. Scenes (d), (e) and (f) were particularly greeted with laughter by the signers. It was interesting to notice that most verbal language participants did not respond much at the last scene whereas sign language users watched the video till the end and also laughed at the last scene.

First Class

Following are the scenes where either laughter or some kind of amusement was shown by participants.

a. As soon as participants saw Mr. Bean on screen.
b. When he realized that his seat is in the business class and he goes to tease all passengers sitting in economy class.
c. When he sits on his seat in the first class he realizes that the seats are very comfortable.
d. He is clicking pictures of everything around in the first class, including one of his co-passengers who is clearly not interested.

e. Attempts made by Bean to entertain a kid on the seat across him, and in the process taking the kid's sickness bag.

f. The sickness bag bursting on the man's face.

g. Mr. Bean playfully pretending that he too has a gun in his coat pocket and getting the cops suspicious of him.

h. Trying to walk away from the cops on an escalator going in the opposite direction.

i. Where the cops ask all people to get low and Mr. Bean too drops to the ground right next to a woman who reminds him that all this was to get him arrested.

j. Once arrested with a shivering hand and scared look on his face, Mr. Bean pulls out two of his fingers that he was pretending to be a gun and puts his hands on the floor and the amazed look of the cops at this.

k. Mr. Bean trying to ensure that he is carrying his own passport makes crazy face to match the photo.

This video is a perfect combination of a greatly humorous plot and the best actor to execute the humorousness of each of the elements. All the participants irrespective of their language modality laughed at each and every on-screen presence of the lead actor. The last scene was welcomed with most laughter as it justifies the crazy character of the lead actor and all his previous behavior. The sickness bag bursting scene did make most people laugh but some just cringed or looked away from the screen for a few seconds. None of the verbal language participants laughed at any scenes or actions of any other actor than the lead whereas the sign language users also laughed at scenes like (e), (f), (h), (j), etc. where the other characters also contributed to the plot.

Safety Last

Following are the scenes where either laughter or some kind of amusement was shown by participants.

a. The lead actor's first fall within a few steps taken going up a building.

b. When he has reached a substantial height, and he finds a window to rest on and take some support, but a long log of wood is pushed out of the window accidentally, hitting his face and disbalancing him.

c. A man comes looking for him and opens the window only to push the lead actor upwards. The man not knowing that he was right there closes the window and goes away again making him loose grip.

d. Hanging from the clock scene.

e. Attempting to hold a rope and climb into a window when the rope is not safely secured on the other end.

f. Two people, pulling him up as he had slipped a few floors down and without looking out the window, continue to pull him up resulting in too many bangs on his head.

g. After reaching the top of the building, several attempts at avoiding being hit by a revolving rod.

h. Finally getting hit by the rod and losing balance.

i. Last scene where his shoes followed by socks getting stuck in a pool of cement.

Like the previous video, this video too relies heavily on the plot to generate humorous response in its viewers. The only difference here is that the participants did not focus much on the actors' actions and laughed more at the events. Even though the sign language users at times laughed at the actions of the lead actor, for instance in scene (g), but the sequence of events were designed in a way that the sequence was more humorous than the reactions given by the actors. Like, all the scenes were very cleverly written to make every accidental fall seem logical. Even if the actors are changed, the plot would still receive positive response by viewers.

One Cookie Left

Following are the scenes where either laughter or some kind of amusement was shown by participants.

a. The two characters fighting over a single cookie running around the house, chasing each other and snatching the cookie from each other's hands. The boy grabs the girl's leg and pulls her down the stairs to take the cookie from her.

b. After a lot of running in and around the house, the boy gets the cookie and sits on a bed happily almost about the take a bit when the girl sneaks from behind and pushes him while the cookie flies to her hands.

c. The last scene, when after several failed attempts by both the characters, in one such chasing-seizing act, the cookie flies across the house and lands in the hands of a man who casually eats the cookie.

While watching this video, the sign language user participants laughed much more than the verbal language users. The scene mentioned in (a) was repeated multiple times and in many different ways in the video and all the sign language users laughed for every single one of those scenes. On the other hand, the verbal participants just laughed the first time and the rest of the video they mostly either just smiled or sometimes not even that. Considering this video was not rated to be highly humorous the lesser number and intensity of laugher certainly does not come as a surprise. Irrespective of that, all the participants did laugh at the end scene of the video.

Noodles

Following are the scenes where either laughter or some kind of amusement was shown by participants.

a. The man in the noodle bar getting uncomfortable with a young couple sitting very close to him immersed in kissing.

b. A very fat man sits right next to him blocking his view of the pretty woman in the bar.

c. The silent exchanges the two men have with clear disappointment on the lead actor's face and confused expression of the man sitting next to him, not understanding why the man is bothered by him.

d. The multiple ways the man is trying to steal a glimpse of the woman trying to find space through the man sitting next to him. He tries to slide down, peak over the man's shoulder, etc. just to see the woman.

e. The rhythmic movement of all the men sitting on the table alternatively taking a bite and raising their heads to look at the woman, which continues for a while.

f. All men from the other side of the table suddenly turn at the protagonist's side which startled him and while he tries to understand why everybody is turned towards him, the woman comes and sits right next to him.

 This video was rated moderately humorous by most verbal language participants and some sign language participants too. But it was interesting to find that all the sign language users laughed for most part of the video whereas the verbal language users laughed most at the scenes (b) and (e). The overall setup of the videos, like the location, the smoke coming from the kitchen and people's food, the low lighting, etc. too must have contributed to the humor impact of the plot. Participants also laughed almost equally to the lead actor as well as other characters' actions. Humor in this video was plot centered and hence any of the characters did not get any special appreciation in form of laughter. This video was also one of the few where the participants were not seen laughing any specially for the last scene.

Joggers

Following are the scenes where either laughter or some kind of amusement was shown by participants.

a. The newlywed couple's first appearance and the man trying to follow his wife to her changing curtain met with disappointment.

b. The couple taking off pieces of clothing one after the other and hanging it on the divider. As soon as the woman takes off her undergarments and hangs it the man too with a cheeky expression hangs his, which turns out to be an old man's overall stalking kind underwear.

c.   The husband coming out jogging and dressed in sportswear which is a complete contrast to what the wife comes out wearing.

d. The man jogging out of the house and the wife looking down from the window as the man is joined by other joggers.

e. A woman wearing normal clothes comes jogging into her house and continues jogging hitting her husband in the process but does not stop.

f. An old woman on a wheelchair is being pushed by a nurse who is also jogging. The woman feels the nurse is not jogging fast enough and she just gets up and makes the nurse sit on the wheelchair and jogs on.

g. Two traffic control ladies, also jogging, put a parking ticket on a very tired man's head as he is sitting at a no parking spot.

h. An old man comes jogging to the bank of a river with a huge rock tied to himself. He accidentally drops the rock on his feet and hurts himself. Maddened by this he just frees himself of the rock and goes away jogging while limping.

i. A woman finds that the milkman who also came jogging has turned milk into butter.

j. A man comes jogging and takes a break near a tree. He takes out a cigarette but has no lighter. A man wearing Olympic t-shirt and the torch comes jogging and is stopped by the man and he uses the Olympic torch fire to light his cigarette and then just casually blows it off. The man starts crying and goes back jogging.

k. The old woman now being pushed by Benny Hill, still trying to overtake all other joggers, starts teasing a man pinching him here and there.

l. The wheelchair rolls down the street, through some park and just falls off a cliff. The woman just stands up brushing dirt off herself and just a little distressed.

m. Two men unable to decide which way to carry the old woman on the gurney.

n. The men with stretcher meet Benny Hill coming from the other direction and then woman sits up accusing him for the accident. There were two policemen around who arrest him and all three jog away.

o. The woman on stretcher pulls all joggers behind to overtake them and pinching and teasing a man.

p.   The two policemen taking Benny Hill keep jogging not noticing that he is sliding up a string/rope.

q.   Last scene where one of the policemen sneaks into first house where the woman is still at the window.

This video got most laughter from both the participant groups. The first scene in particular, when the couple is slowly taking off their clothes up to when the lead actor jogs away leaving behind a confused and angry wife; scenes (a) to (d). The signers laughed significantly more than the verbal language users for every scene. Some of the scenes, like (i), (k), (m), (o), etc. got attention from only few participants from both groups. The expressions of the lead actor in particular too made participants laugh out loud. There were very few instances of a participant smiling while watching a scene from this video. They either laughed out loud or did not give any positive expressions to suggest that they were enjoying any aspect of the video. While watching scene (l) most participants, both signer and verbal were firstly seen to get worried and then laugh once they discovered that the old woman did not get harmed. The plot of the video played a more significant role in getting humorous response than the expressions and acting of any of the actors.

Stapler

Following are the scenes where either laughter or some kind of amusement was shown by participants.

a.   One of the two men take a sip of his coffee and makes a disgusted face.

b.   One of the actors gives an angry and over exaggerated glance at the other man over a stapler being empty.

c.   The man throws the pins at the other guy and they go like bullets at him. One of the pins hits his forehead. But then the camera zooms out and we see that it has in fact hit the forehead of his portrait on the wall.

d.   The man manages to get the pins into the stapler. And he shows it off as if he has loaded a gun.

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e. The repetition of exaggerated expression by the man who realizes that his coffee finished.

This video was rated moderately humorous by all participants, both signer and verbal. Hence, it is not surprising that while watching the video the participants very rarely laughed. Even for the scenes mentioned above, most participants just smiled or exasperated showing amusement. The most laughter came for scene mentioned in (c) which was mostly a work of the camera movement than the actors' acting. The plot of the video did play a role in humor generation for this video which was then complemented by the camera work. Interestingly again, even though rated moderately humorous also by sign language users, the number of laughter and also its intensity was significantly higher by them compared to verbal language users.

The Black Hole

Following are the scenes where either laughter or some kind of amusement was shown by participants.

a. The man, after realizing that the printed-out paper is magical, runs to the vending machine and pulls out a chocolate bar and eats it with a big smile on his face accompanied with a sense of achievement.

b. When the man hurriedly and continuously keeps taking out bundles of money from the safe almost emptying it.

c. The moment at which the man, looking to make sure no money is left inside the safe, crawls into it and accidentally pulls out on the tape that kept the magical paper stuck on the door of the safe and the paper falls out. The realization that he is now trapped inside.

Like the previous video, this video too was not rated very highly for its humorousness by any set of participants. But, unlike the previous video, both verbal and sign language users reacted the same way while watching the video. None of the participants could be seen laughing while watching any specific scenes. The scenes listed above were also watched with at most a smile. The last scene, did generate some sense of amusement in both the groups but still only a few smiled when the video ended. Others just had facial expressions of amusement more with widened eyes, gasp, etc.

Boxing

Following are the scenes where either laughter or some kind of amusement was shown by participants.

a. Lead actor getting tangled in the ropes while trying to enter the ring. Two people come to his rescue but he gets more and more entangled and finally bounces back out of the ring.

b. Deciding to slide into the boxing ring.

c. The ringmaster trying to get the lead actor prepared with the right posture and stance.

d. The lead actor running randomly in circles confusing his opponent and forcing him to follow him around.

e. Getting beaten up several times, he jumps at the referee to seek safety.

f. The referee stops the opponent from continuously punching him and starts giving him instructions. Taking advantage of the situation, the lead actor punches the opponent hiding behind the referee.

g. The referee instructs on how to save himself when getting punched, but he is unable to keep track of the opponent's movements and always guards the wrong place, covering his face when getting punched on stomach and vice versa.

h. Seeing another man smoothly jumping into the ring, he tries to imitate but fails again and ends up sliding into the rings like before.

i. The last scene where a man starts massaging him with harsh punches on the back and not ready to stop or listen to him.

This video received mixed responses by participants. Those who laughed along and at every scene mentioned above rated the video to be highly humorous. But there were also a few participants who did not laugh much while watching the video but certainly enjoyed it as they rated the video to be highly humorous. Most of the participants, both signers and verbal, laughed at the actions of the lead actor. The other two actors too could generate humorous response by their expressions

and actions. The plot played a role in humor generation only a few times, for instance, scenes (a), (b), (g), and (h). Though even for these scenes, the actors' expressions were crucial and played a more significant role.

Appendix V

Link to analyzed videos from YouTube (unedited version):

1. The Elevator: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-TQQE1y68c

2. Hitchhiking: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdZm-o4oJ_M

3. The lion's cage: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2dmV2-zxNg

4. First Class Flight: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QE6PvNohffc

5. Safety Last: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEcTjhUN_7U&t=19s

6. One Cookie Left: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4OdD5TjxuU

7. Noodles: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8UzvxGaFlg

8. Joggers: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tER-Gsu_X8Q

9. Stapler: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zuZ-FM-5REg&t=2s

10.   The Black Hole: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5_Msrdg3Hk

11.   Boxing: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2IKEJcVE_M0&t=104s

Link to Questionnaire used for Study 2 and 3:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ubrIE1AvraZKUVLWGpvoEYVO61_kV58dlPEpbuszTMc/edit