

## Examination of Alexander Mccall Smith's Children's Stories According to the Theories of Humor\*

**Bekir Yıldız<sup>i</sup>**  
Çukurova University

**Esmâ Dumanlı Kadızade<sup>ii</sup>**  
Mersin University

### Abstract

Humour has existed in numerous fields throughout history, including philosophy, psychology, medicine, athletics, and art and literature. In literature, humour has been employed as a mode of expression, a mode of communication. The purpose of this study is to examine the children's stories of British author Alexander MacCall Smith in light of humour theories. Document analysis, which is one of the qualitative research approaches, was utilized to conduct this study. Nineteen of Alexander MacCall Smith's children's literature works were studied through a literature review, and eleven children's stories were picked using criterion sampling as the research's data source. The selected stories were assessed based on the superiority theory, the incongruity theory, and the relief theory. Using descriptive analysis, the humorous components of the narratives were identified and evaluated in accordance with the theoretical framework of humour theories. It was concluded that Alexander MacCall Smith's hilarious children's stories contained 25% superiority theory, 42.5% incongruity theory, and 32.5% relaxation theory-based humour. The conclusion was that the author's children's stories featured funny facts that were consistent with the theoretical foundations of all three theories. The author's conception of comedy is based on the conceptual framework of the incongruity theory, which defines discordant and conflicting mental states.

**Keywords:** Theories of Humor, Alexander MacCall Smith, Story, Laughter.

**DOI:** 10.29329/ijpe.2023.517.14

**Submitted:** 20/09/2022

**Accepted:** 09/01/2023

**Published:** 01/02/2023

-----  
\* Part of this work was presented as an oral presentation at the International Symposium of Academic Studies on Education and Culture I-SASEC 2018.

<sup>i</sup> **Bekir Yıldız**, Lecturer, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Çukurova University, ORCID: 0000-0001-9772-1856

**Correspondence:** yildizbekir086@gmail.com

<sup>ii</sup> **Esmâ Dumanlı Kadızade**, Assoc. Prof. Dr., Türkçe Eğitimi, Mersin University

## INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to precisely define humour due to the fact that it is studied by various academic areas and has a complicated structure. From the past to the present, humour has evolved from destructive, sarcastic, and vicious smiles to a process of relaxation and healing (Öğüt Eker, 2009). Ancient philosophers such as Socrates and Plato did not view laughter as an acceptable action due to its sense of superiority. One of the philosophers of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century, Thomas Hobbes, regarded laughter as an act of arrogance resulting from the frailty of others (Şahin, 2018). In totalitarian regimes of the Middle Ages and afterwards, humour had disastrous repercussions, but by the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it had acquired a tight relationship with life due to its curative potential. Why do humans laugh? What factors influence the development of humour? The answers to queries such as "What is the cause of laughter?" have grown in significance (Usta, 2009). By researching the physiological, psychological, and emotional impacts of laughter on humans, contemporary humour researchers have provided some insights in this field.

Laughter is one of the most essential outputs of humour. Although humour induces laughter, can it be recognized as the sole cause of laughter? While laughter is a controlled form of physical relaxation, comedy requires a lot of cerebral understanding and comprehension aspects (Morreall, 1997). So, can laughter just be called a physical stretch? The seriousness of laughter extends from societal insights to the control of emotional states (Scott et al., 2014). When laughing, all bodily, mental, and spiritual systems are aroused (Poncela & Maria, 2019). Humour and laughing have more deeper origins and repercussions than we believe and perceive.

Laughter is one of the most essential outputs of humour. The primary objective of humour, according to Bayrak (2001), is to make you laugh, and anything that does not make you laugh at its heart cannot be deemed humorous. According to Nesin (1973), humour has served its purpose if it can make an individual laugh in a healthy manner. Although humour causes laughter to occur, can it be regarded a simple cause of laughing? While laughter is a controlled form of physical relaxation, comedy requires a lot of cerebral understanding and comprehension aspects (Morreall, 1997). The goal of humour that makes people laugh is not unique. Humour encompasses genres that provoke thought, criticize, ridicule, contain contrasting ideas, and present them in an unexpected manner (Selcuk, 1998). According to Eker (2009), critical thinking is the fundamental dynamic of humour. Consequently, not every laughter will be humorous, and not all humour formations will make you laugh.

In structuring the research's content, recent humour studies in the field of children's literature have been taken into account. A literature assessment of national and international studies in the framework of humour theories and a creative viewpoint on humour, together with examples of contemporary research, has been conducted.

In her research on humour in children's and young adult literature, Bermejo (2021) investigated Bachelet's picture books. Through situational humour, Bachelet lowers the gravity of the grownups it incorporates in its children's works. Through graphic and linguistic intersexuality, satire and parody are essential to Bachelet's work. In this instance, a more complicated reading is required than literary humour.

Ruiz Gurillo (2017) explored the linguistic aspects of children's humour production in Spanish children's literature. It was determined that the youngsters that participated in the study to find something entertaining had a greater understanding for physical irregularity, expectation violation, distortions, and exaggerations.

Through the creation of pop-up storybooks, Leung and Yuen (2022) sought to investigate the humour of bright youngsters. Children between the ages of seven and nine produced and illustrated their own stories for pop-up books. In addition to employing incongruity in their use of humour, youngsters demonstrated the ability to make jokes, employ numerous meanings, and engage in deliberate wordplay.

Aerila et al. (2017) evaluated the drawings of 72 boys and 71 girls between the ages of 6 and 8 attending Finnish primary schools. It has been decided that the purpose of the humour of guys is to surprise and entertain others through the use of creative and aggressive aspects, while the purpose of the humour of girls is to make others happy through the use of traces of daily life. Utilizing comedy elements from English children's literature and mental maps, Klos (2020) did study on the translation of humour into several languages. Humour provides a solid cognitive foundation for translation theories, evaluation, and analysis.

Karababa and Alamdar (2017) desired to determine the humour aspects in the naive children's series, to analyse the sorts of humour, and to determine what the children laugh at, taking into consideration their developmental phases. At the conclusion of the study, it was established that the comedy aspects that generated the most laughter among youngsters belonged to the third stage, situational humour, and caricature jokes. Tarhan (2020) investigated the Adana jokes in light of humour theory. It has been discovered that the jokes in the anecdotes that were analysed using the superiority, incompatibility, and relaxation theories are applicable to all three theories.

In this study, the emotional, cognitive, and physiological impacts of the hilarious aspects in the children's stories of Alexander MacCall Smith are examined within the context of humour theories, and the author's sense of humour is revealed. The purpose of this study is to examine the humorous components in the children's stories of British author Alexander MacCall Smith in the framework of humour theories and to provide a theoretical perspective on the author's usage of humorous features. For this reason, the study issue is centred on the following question:

"How is the use of humour in the children's stories of Alexander MacCall Smith structured according to humour theories?"

### **Humour Theories**

One of the topics that humour experts investigate is the causes of laughter. The contextual nature of humour (Berns, 2004) is anticipated to result in laughing with physical, mental, and spiritual repercussions. Numerous theorists have based their research on humour and laughter on three humour theories: the superiority theory, the disharmony theory, and the relaxation theory (Morreall, 1983; Raskin, 1985; Susa, 2002; De Koning & Weiss 2002; Martin, Rich & Gayle 2004; Güler & Güler, 2010).

According to the superiority theory, a person laughs when he or she feels superior to another person and believes that the other person is on a lesser level than himself (Güler & Güler, 2010). In a sense, the act of laughing is a celebration of oneself. Humour scholar John Morreall (1997) defined the theory of superiority as a theory of laughing, which expresses the idea of superiority of the individual who laughs over others or his prior self. The notion of superiority expresses the correlation between laughter and the emotion that occurs when an individual perceives himself to be smarter, more talented, and more resourceful than other people or to be better than his previous life (Şahin, 2010). According to the superiority theory, a person who laughs compares himself to others and demonstrates his superiority through the act of laughing.

The incongruity theory explains laughter in terms of the mental component of the human being (Berger & Wildavsky, 1994; Vandaele, 2002). According to Kulka (2007), the hilarious object of laughter created by jokes and amusement is the pleasure we gain from dissonance. McGhee (1979) defines humor as the cognitive sensation of laughter that results from deviating from typical and expected patterns. Creating a specific expectation in the audience and then disclosing an unanticipated circumstance is the most fundamental method for eliciting laughter (Morreall, 1997). Laughter, according to the notion of disharmony, is the mind's quick reaction to an unexpected, unreasonable, and incompatible event (Türkmen, 1996). According to the notion of dissonance, the primary cause of laughing is a thought-based behavioural action rather than an emotional circumstance.

Relief theory examines the physiological aspect of laughing by searching for solutions to such questions as "Why does one laugh?" and "Why does laughter help us feel at ease?" It focuses on the fundamental function of relieving anxiety and releasing physical tension in the individual (Wilkins & Eisenbraun, 2009; Dinc & Cemalolu, 2018). The sensation of relaxation that relieves tension is essential to the reality of laughter (Güler & Güler, 2010; Meyer, 2000). According to the notion of relief, a person can either enter a laughing state with the released energy or the laughing state itself might promote the accumulation of nervous energy (Morreall, 1997). The attitude or action toward any authority, pressure, difficulty, or impossibility can induce laughter and relaxation.

### **Children's Literature and Humour**

It is believed that authors of children's literature who create their works in a hilarious manner would considerably contribute to the development of children's sense of humour. For children to achieve the proper level of humour development, they must be exposed to appropriate children's literature (Donoghue, 2009). The child's connection to the amusing characters he/she encounters in the story enables him/her to take a humorous perspective while confronting potential daily challenges (McGhee, 2013). The children connection with the amusing characters he/she encounters in the story enables their to take a humorous perspective while confronting potential daily challenges (McGhee, 2013). In a text, the reader may laugh if they perceives themselves to be smarter and more capable than the protagonist (Keith Spiegel, 1972; Arik, 2002), besides in such situations as inconsistency in behaviour and violation of causality in the face of an unexpected event (Wu et al., 2021), and opposing discourses that reduce or eliminate their tension (Meyer, 2000).

Humour's application in children's stories has been restricted by the notion that it demands high-level cognitive abilities and that it will primarily exist in humorous literary forms such as jokes and nursery rhymes. Due to the captivating aspect of humour and its contribution to social, emotional, and cerebral development, children must be exposed to hilarious literature (Dirican et al., 2019). The funny way in which the protagonist of the narrative overcomes obstacles will help readers who identify with him in similar circumstances (McGhee, 2013). In this situation, there is a need for children's storywriters who can use humour effectively and positively influence the development of youngsters. English author Alexander MacCall Smith is one of these authors.

Alexander MacCall Smith is a crime fiction and children's book author from Zimbabwe. Alexander MacCall Smith, a professor of medical law at the British University of Edinburgh, resigned due to his outstanding accomplishments in the area of authoring. His literary works have earned him various honours, including the Order of the English Knighthood. By incorporating a funny tone into his exciting detective novels, he has become an internationally renowned author. His work has been translated into other languages and has been on bestseller lists around the globe (Wikipedia, 2022). The majority of research on his works has concentrated on his adventurous side and his detective fiction. Waldnerova (2016) investigated the humanistic aspect of the author's detective fiction. Kalua (2007) involved the example of McCall Smith's Botswana, while Dominguez-Rue (2018) referred to the aging, creativity, and wisdom in the author's novels. Besides, Finnegan (2006) involved the genre of fiction in the author's Botswana novels, and Andersson (2004) mentioned the author's novel character Precious Ramotswe. Lastly, Sorensen (2011) hinted on the lady detectives in the related story. As a consequence of the literature examination, it was determined that there was no scholarly research on the humour element that the author expertly employed in his works.

### **Research Method**

The document analysis method, which is one of the qualitative research methodologies, was used to conduct the present study. Document analysis includes the processes of finding, reading, taking notes, and evaluating resources for a specific purpose (Karasar, 2017). Nineteen of Alexander MacCall Smith's children's literature works were studied through a literature study, and eleven children's stories were selected using the criterion sampling method to serve as the research's data source. The author's stories suitable for the 8-12 age range and having a humorous quality were

determined as criteria. Criterion sampling is the study of all situations that meet predetermined criteria by the researchers (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Researchers have examined Alexander MacCall Smith's eleven works (The Bursting Balloons Mystery, The Chocolate Money Mystery, The Spaghetti Tangle, The Popcorn Pirates, The Doughnut Ring, The Bubblegum Tree, The Joke Machine, The Banana Machine, The Muscle Machine, Calculator Annie, and Teacher Trouble) in light of three humor theories (superiority theory, dissonance theory, relief theory).

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

In this study, descriptive analysis was utilized to analyse the data collected. Necessary analyzes were made in the context of the three determined humor theories, the findings were arranged, and interpreted. The findings obtained in the descriptive analysis method should be summarized, interpreted and supported by direct quotations and presented to the reader (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). First, the research objectives were set, and then, in accordance with those objectives, the humour elements in eleven distinct works of the author were appraised in the framework of humour theories. Using the first letters of the book titles, the humour related findings in the stories were encoded with the page numbers (PBM, p.22...MM, p.12...PM, p.19). In order to digitize qualitative data, the frequency values and rates of humorous aspects in the stories were provided.

### Findings and Interpretation

Numerous investigations studying the reasons why people laugh have uncovered theories of humour. Alexander MacCall Smith's eleven children's stories were evaluated within the context of three humour theories in order to elucidate the logic and mental process underlying humour. The results of the investigation of the humour hypotheses that evolved are reported in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Humor Theories frequency and percentage table

Humor Theories	f	%
Superiority Theory	10	25
Incongruity Theory	17	42.5
Relief Theory	13	32.5

According to Table 1, in the author's children's stories, 25% of the elements that may have the quality of laughter are examples of superiority theory, 42.5% of incongruity theory, and 32.5% of relief theory. In the eleven children's stories examined, the least superiority theory (f=10) and the most non-conformance theory (f=17) were included. In the stories, it is often seen that the theory of dissonance and relief are used together. The heroes of the story develop solutions to the problems experienced with situations that create disharmony in the reader's mind. The successes achieved in the face of the resulting negativities reduce the increasing tension in the reader and give a sense of relaxation. The theories of humour that Alexander MacCall Smith included in his works are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Alexander Maccall Smith's Theories of Humor in Children's Stories

Story Name	Superiority Theory	Dissonance Theory	Relief Theory
The Bursting Balloons Mystery (BBM)	✓	✓	✓
The Chocolate Money Mystery (CMM)		✓	✓
The Joke Machine (JM)		✓	✓
The Banana Machine (BM)	✓	✓	✓
The Muscle Machine (MM)		✓	✓
Calculator Annie (CA)	✓	✓	✓
Teacher Trouble (TT)	✓	✓	✓
The Bubblegum Tree (BT)	✓	✓	✓
The Doughnut Ring (DR)			✓
The Popcorn Pirates (PP)	✓	✓	✓
The Spaghetti Tangle (ST)			✓

According to Table 2, the humorous elements that can be explained by the relaxation theory have been determined in all of Alexander McCall Smith's eleven children's stories. The author has not included the theory of superiority in his works as much as he has included the theory of dissonance and relief. In the stories called *The Doughnut Ring* and *The Spaghetti Tangle*, only the humour element belonging to the relief theory has been determined. In the stories called *The Bursting Balloons Mystery*, *The Banana Machine*, *Calculator Annie*, *Teacher Trouble*, *The Bubblegum Tree* and *The Popcorn Pirates*, humour related findings belonging to three humour theories have been identified. The humour related findings in the stories were determined and evaluated by taking the theoretical framework of humour theories into account.

### **Findings on Superiority Theory**

In this section, humour related elements based on the theory of superiority contained in the stories of Alexander McCall Smith are identified. In line with the philosophical views of the superiority theory on the formation of the act of laughing, an assessment of humorous elements was carried out.

In the story *The Bursting Balloons Mystery*, an American millionaire asks for the help of child detectives to fix a glitch that has arisen in the balloon race. In a race that continues through various adventures and challenges, the malicious Professor Sardine sets traps for the contestants, but the child detectives frustrate these traps and defeat the Professor. *"There's someone who wants to disrupt the race. Even before the race starts, things happen that go wrong, even when the racers are on a test flight. For example, lead weights are glued under the baskets to make it difficult to take off. The gas cylinders are opened so that the balloons run out of gas."* (BBM, p.22). Considering the malicious Professor's attempts to prevent the balloon race and the interesting traps he has set for the balloonists, the Professor holds the upper hand. The disruptions pleased the Professor very much and showed an act of laughter.

Although the millionaire experiences great difficulties, his alliances and plans with the small detectives defeat the malicious Professor. When the professor connects the heater pipe to the fire extinguisher, he is left in foam and becomes ridiculous. *"The professor had connected the heater pipe to the fire extinguisher, not the gas cylinder! Of course, as soon as she opened the valve, the white fire-extinguishing foams that came out of the heater's mouth covered the Professor from head to toe."* (BBM, p.123). The funny situation in which the Professor, who has the upper hand with his evil, has fallen into has caused him to lose his superiority. It is thought that this situation will please the reader and may create laughter in him.

When the Professor's falling balloon snags, bursts into a tree, and finds himself in a pig's pen, the upper hand falls entirely in the hands of millionaires and small detectives. *"The Professor's balloon burst by tripping over a tree, and the rogue threw its owner over it. And the bad professor rolled around and fell into a pig's pen."* (BBM, p.124). What happened to him when the professor's bubble fell made the detective children superior. In this case, the reader who identifies small detectives is expected to laugh with a sense of superiority.

In the story *The Banana Machine* young children live with their aunts on a banana plantation struggling to make ends meet. While the aunt is thinking of selling the plantation, the children invent the machine that produces plain bananas and they make a lot of money from this sale in a short time. So they don't have to sell the banana plantation.

The small children and the aunt's lack of livelihood are since their grandfather lost half of his banana plantation in gambling many years ago. When Grandpa lost in a gamble, his opponent took half of the banana plantation in his hands. *"Well then. Tomorrow morning you will give me the title deed of the land."* (BM, p.12). Grandpa Michael thought that even though he lost in gambling, he would not take the signed paper on which his friends pledged half of the banana plantation. But the result is not at all what he thinks, he loses his superiority, and this situation becomes tragicomic.

After inventing the flat banana machine, children make a lot of money from the sale of bananas. The aunt wants to get back the plantation they lost with this money. The landowner asks the aunt for twice the value of the land, thinking that they cannot pay. When the aunt immediately agrees to the offer, the landowner is forced to sell the plantation. "*Tomorrow I will go to the bank and take the necessary actions to get the money into my hands. Then you give the deed. Or should I say you give it back?*" (BM, p.76). The recapture of the banana plantation that the grandfather lost and the surprise of the landowner became funny and it was thought that it would create laughter in the reader.

When the owner of the banana plantation realizes that he cannot return from his promise, he states that he will not accept different forms of payment and that he will want to see the money in cash. "*See you tomorrow at the bank. In the meantime, I'd like to cash in my money. I do not accept checks. Only cash...*" (BM, p.77). The success of recovering the lost, the children and the aunt pleased the reader. The surprise of the landowner in the face of the money put forward by the aunt made the aunt superior and gave her happiness. It was thought that this situation would arouse a desire to laugh in the reader.

In the story called *Calculator Annie*, Annie, who fails math class, wakes up as a math genius when she drops the calculator under her pillow and falls asleep. When the father takes the calculator under the pillow, Annie's genius ends. But the student is no longer in a bad situation in math class as it was before.

When Annie, the hero of the story, didn't know even the easiest math question, the teachers and students responded by laughing. "Come on, Annie, how many is four plus eight, tell me? Annie became crimson. A little later 10? Said. When I start mumbling in class at 14? No 16. Okay is 16." (CA, p.6). Annie's inability to answer easy questions humiliated her in front of her friends and made her classmates laugh as they gained the upper hand.

Annie is weak and funny in the face of her friends. The people around her were surprised when Annie suddenly knew all the questions directed at her, achieved success in the exams and solved the problems in the banks. "*In this exam, one of your students got the most successful result ever. Not only did he answer all the questions correctly, he even found a mistake on the question paper. We were so amazed.*" (CA, p.35). Such a sudden transition from failure to success made Annie glorify and excel over her friends. This brought joy to both Annie and the reader.

In the story called *Teacher Trouble*, Jenny, a tall girl for her peers, is welcomed as a teacher at the school she attends. Jenny goes to class, takes a roll call, and conducts an experiment. When the situation is understood, she quickly runs away from school. When she returns home, it is understood that she went to another school by mistake because of the name similarity. After a day of teaching, Jenny goes to her own school the next day.

Jenny, the protagonist of the story, confused the school she was going to because of the similarity of the name and found herself as a teacher in the school she attended. Jenny's mistakes in teaching have made Jenny ridiculous. As a result of an experiment, a student used the following expressions for the school principal who was in the fog: "*The Headmistress is dissolved! You dissolved my teacher, Miss Ice.*" (TT, s.73). The situation of the school principal in an authoritarian position has created a laugh in the students based on superiority. The reader is expected to experience laughter by feeling that he will not experience such a thing, that he will not fall into such a mistake.

In the story called *The Bubblegum Tree*, when the raw material of balloon gums does not come from distant countries, the gums are not tasty and ballooned. The factory owner and the children travel to India to find out the cause of the problem. When they arrive in the forested area, they see that they cannot get raw materials due to tree cutting. They scare away workers who cut wearing tiger hides. Thus, malicious workers cannot come to the forest area again.

The main protagonist of the story, Tim, and his friends enter the tiger skin and succumb to the plan they set up. The workers' fear and flight made Tim and his friends superior. *"The workers tripped and staggered over each other, grabbed their belongings and fled. Then they just left their axes and saws behind and ran as fast as they could to the riverbank, where their boats were tied up, with their hands full of things."* (BT, p. 73). The fearful escape of the workers, who thought they were seeing a tiger, turned into a comic and created a laugh about superiority in Tim and his friends. With the sense of superiority that comes with the hero of the story, the reader is expected to laugh.

In the story *Popcorn Pirates*, the people of the island, who grow gin corn, collect their corn together and send it to distant countries by ship when the harvest time comes. One day, pirates seize the ship and take several island children as hostages. The boys pop a sack of gin, leaving the pirates in a pile of corn and escape from the pirates.

Using a plan conceived by children, the powerful, large-bodied pirates were entrapped in popcorn, allowed to wallow, and then sealed behind a door. *"No matter how hard the pirates tried to get up and get on deck, they had to sit back in their chairs because of the popcorn."* (PP, p.76). The fact that the scheme devised by the island's youngsters leaves the pirates with the upper hand in a mound of popcorn renders them silly. The reader is intended to giggle because he believes he would never encounter such a precarious scenario.

The frequency and percentage values of the humour related elements based on the superiority theory in Alexander MacCall Smith's children's stories, which have been explained with examples above, are given in Table 3 below.

**Table 3:** Elements of humor related to the superiority theory in the stories of AMS

S.n.	Story Name	f	%
1.	The Bursting Balloons Mystery	3	27,27
2.	The Banana Machine	3	27,27
3.	Calculator Annie	2	18,18
4.	Teacher Trouble	1	9,09
5.	The Bubblegum Tree	1	9,09
6.	The Popcorn Pirates	1	9,09

According to Table 3, eleven characteristics of comedy related to the thesis of superiority have been detected in the children's stories of Alexander MacCall Smith. The ratios of how many humour elements indicating superiority exist in the author's children's stories are listed in the table, along with the percentage ratios of how many humour elements indicating superiority occur in all of the author's children's stories. In each of the *The Bursting Balloons Mystery* and *The Banana Machine* stories, three humor elements and 27.27 % were determined. In the *Calculator Annie* story, two humor elements and 18.18 % humor element were determined. An element of humour and 5.88% were detected in each of the following stories *Teacher Trouble*, *The Bubblegum Tree* and *The Popcorn Pirates*.

### Findings on the Incongruity Theory

In this chapter, hilarious features connected to the incongruity hypothesis are recognized in the stories of Alexander McCall Smith. The hilarious elements were appraised in accordance with the notions of the disharmony theory for the production of the act of laughing.

In the story titled *The Bursting Balloons Mystery*, the most glaring inconsistency is that two small children become detectives and a wealthy tycoon seeks assistance in solving a major problem. The wealthy tycoon Mr. Helyum: *"I need two detectives who will come to New York with me and investigate what is going on. Moreover, I need it urgently. Because tomorrow the race starts."* (BBM, p.23). It was thought that when Mr. Helyum requested assistance from child detectives, the reader would experience a conflicting laugh.



After Mr. Helium's offer, the little detectives Max and Maddy ask their parents for permission to go to distant countries. The fact that parents immediately give permission to their children causes a lot of bewilderment. *"Max and Maddy immediately rushed to get permission from their parents. Since they were also private investigators, they quickly realized how important this journey was, and without hesitation, they said, "Sure, you can go, baby. Have fun!" (BBM, p.26).* The parents of the little detectives let their children go to New York, having taken on a tough detective job. Sending young children to distant cities with a person they don't know is expected to create a dissonant laugh in the reader.

The heater of the Montgolfier brothers' balloon breaks down. The balloon rises continuously as the hot air blow from the heater is not interrupted. Mr. Helium describes this situation with an exaggerated dissonance: *"If this goes on, the balloons will rise until they reach the ozone layer of the atmosphere. When they reach the ozone layer, they cannot breathe."*(BBM, p. 83). Mr. Helium says *"That balloons will rise to the ozone layer constitutes an exaggeration of incompatibility. In this case, the dissonance formed in the reader's mind makes him laugh.*

When Mr. Helium of the model plane tore the surface of the balloon in which Max and Maddy were located, Max wanted to sew the torn surface with the needle thread he was carrying. *"He went out of the basket and examined the hole in the balloon. Throughout his life, he had never set out without a sewing needle and thread with him. Because at any moment the buttons could be broken, it could have to be sewn. Now the needle and thread were badly needed."* (BBM, p.53). It is not a normal situation for the small detective to sew the balloon that is torn with a sewing needle. The discordant situations described in the adventurous story are expected to generate smiles in the reader.

In the story called *The Chocolate Money Mystery*, Swiss banks are robbed and looted by giant dogs. A bank owner asks for the help of junior detectives to solve the mystery of the incident. As a result of the intense efforts and plans of the detectives, the money stolen by the ruthless thief who made the dogs rob the banks is recovered.

In the story *The Chocolate Money Mystery*, small detectives are at work. The bank owner who says that even the police cannot solve the theft incidents in Swiss banks, where the world's most reliable and largest banks are located, asks for help to solve the problem. *"There are a lot of robberies at my bank. I don't think the police can solve these mysterious robberies. What do you think, can you help me?"* (CMM, s.17). The fact that the bank owner asked the help of small detectives to solve a big problem has created disharmony in the reader's mind. This state of incompatibility is expected to cause laughter in the reader.

The fact that the bank owner said that in exchange for the help of junior detectives, payment could be paid in chocolate instead of money increased the incompatibility. *"If you want to pay you, we'll do it with money. But we can also pay for chocolate if you want."* (CMM, p.19). It is thought that if such a mysterious robbery case had been solved, the bank owner would offer chocolate as an alternative to the money and create a laugh that created disharmony in the reader.

The fact that the robbery was not committed by a human being but by Swedish breed dogs created a great conflict in the mind of the reader. *"Bank owner: Here's one of the robbers" "Detective: But it's a dog!"* (CMM, p.24). When looking at the photograph of the person who carried out the bank robbery, the discrepancy caused by the sight of a Swedish breed dog can create laughter in the reader.

In the story called *The Joke Machine*, it is noticed that a machine that comes to the antique shop is a joke machine. A lot of money is made by selling jokes from the machine. When the shop's sullen neighbour is disturbed and comes to steal the machine, the joke coming out of the machine makes him laugh. He regrets his actions and becomes a cheerful person from that day on.

The existence of a machine that produces jokes has surprised the surrounding people and made them think that this situation may be a joke. *"Is there really such a thing as a joke machine?"*

*asked a woman in a wide hat. Or is that part of the joke?" (JM, p.26).* It can be thought that the subject described in the story creates a complete dissonance in the reader's mind. Under normal circumstances, joking is unique to people. It is thought that the fact that there is a machine that produces different jokes every time, and that it produces very funny jokes, will create a laugh in the reader's mind arising from conflict and disharmony.

Uncle Prendergast, the owner of the antique shop, makes money by selling jokes to his customers. It surprises customers by stating that this situation has a cost. *"Then Uncle Prendergast began, energetically. If you want a joke, pay for it. We have expenses too." (JM, p.27).* It is not an accepted fact that jokes that people make with each other in daily life, funny events or anecdotes can be sold. It is thought that by selling jokes in the story, the reader will have a laugh arising from the dissonance.

In the story *Muscle Machine*, a weak child becomes very strong in a short time by using a muscle machine. He can use his power to do anything he wants, but he never prides himself on his strength. One day the muscle machine breaks down, and he wants another machine from the factory. Since the machine is not produced, the factory owner sends his own machine with the same feature to the child.

When Gordon, the protagonist of the story, starts to use his muscular machine, an extraordinary change in his muscles takes place in as little as a week. Gordon can now lift very large weights. *"The rock suddenly lifted from its seat, as if it had been freed from its adhesive. Gordon was standing where he was with a giant rock in his hand. Moreover, the rock was as light as a feather to Gordon." (MM, p.14).* It is impossible to reach an extraordinary power in a short time. It is thought that this change would create a laugh that creates disharmony in the reader.

Gordon continues to use the muscular machine. When the bully student at his school confronts Ted, he wants to test the effect of the muscle machine. To reinforce the narrative, the author creates an exaggerated mismatch by saying that Gordon's shirt is about to explode. *"Gordon took a deep breath. It was time to test the muscle machine. When he breathed, he felt like his shirt was going to explode again. One of the buttons even snapped and fell. That was a good sign." (MM, p.17).* Although being very strong in a short time by using a muscle machine, being able to lift large weights, being able to stand in front of bully people create disharmony in the mind of the reader, it can be thought that it will give him happiness.

In the story called *The Bubblegum Tree*, the main protagonist, Tim, despite his young age, travels to India to solve the problem of a factory that produces balloons. Tim's parents allowed him to take part in the journey. Although this seems illogical, it adds immersion and a certain amount of funniness to the story. *"Mother: Jungles without axes, huh! she screamed. What an amazing adventure. Of course you can. But promise me that you will be extremely careful about things like snakes and tigers." (BT, p.31).* The struggles of the children in the Indian forests against the animals that the mother wants to pay attention to, the fun-filled adventures they have with the tigers in the gum tree are the laughing elements that create dissonance.

Gopal, the factory owner who produces bubble gum in the jungles of India, describes his struggle with a real tiger: "He caught the tail of the angry tiger. And then, he opened his mouth as much as he could, put the tip of the tail in his mouth, and bit it." (BT, p.77). When a real giant tiger jumped on Gopal dressed in a tiger costume, he bit the tiger's tail to get out of the crush. The adventurous dissonances experienced are expected to turn into an act of laughter in the reader.

In the story called *The Popcorn Pirates*, the pirates robbed the genie corn ship. However, it is incompatible for the captain to go on the journey with young children and for the parents of the children to allow this situation. *"We'll let them go," said Lucy's father. The corns need to reach the market. If the children are going to help, I think we should let them go. It's a pity we can't go. Unfortunately we're busy with planting." (PP, p.32).* The inability of parents to fight pirates on harvest

grounds and send their children to the high seas accompanied by a captain may cause a dissonant laugh in the reader's mind.

The children who went on a journey with the captain are fallen into the hands of pirates. After being in the middle of the sea for days, the children are wanted to get rid of the pirates by making a plan. The children blew up all the corn on the ship, leaving the pirates in popcorn, and are managed to get the sailing ship to the island. *"The kitchen was now overflowing with popcorn, and the popcorn completely surrounded the pirates."*(PP, p.75). It was thought that the events, the established plan and the situation in which the pirates fell into would create a laugh by creating some incompatibilities in the reader.

In the story *The Banana Machine*, the banana machine that flattens the curled bananas draws attention. Under normal conditions, bananas are known as a fruit with a curly structure at every stage of development. But the story hero shapes and flattens the banana with the machine he has developed. *"Patty invented a machine that flattens bananas, and this is the first banana the machine has flattened."* (BM, p.37). The shape of the banana that exists in the mind of the reader and the banana shape produced in the story constitute a mismatch. It is thought that this situation may cause laughter due to surprise and disharmony in the reader.

In the story called *Calculator Annie*, the main protagonist suddenly became a mathematical genius thanks to the calculator that Annie left under his pillow when he could not even do very easy math questions. Everyone around him was very surprised by this sudden change. *"Of course he knew it was about sleeping with the calculator under his pillow."* (CA, p.28). It's unreasonable for Annie to lose her genius when the calculator is taken from under the pillow. It was thought that this incompatible situation in the reader would set an example that could reveal laughter.

In the story *Teacher Trouble*, the fact that the ten-year-old girl who is the protagonist of the event is tall and wears a dress that looks mature causes her to be thought as a teacher. Annie asked, "I'm sorry, where am I going to sit?" Teacher: *"Yes, I'm sorry our school is a bit crowded. But don't worry, we've reserved your place. The teacher's table."* (TT, p.17). The reception of a ten-year-old child as a teacher has created dissonance in the reader. It is normally difficult for a student to be accepted as a teacher. It was thought that this dissonance could make the reader perform the act of laughing.

The frequency and percentage values of the humour elements related to the incongruity theory in Alexander MacCall Smith's children's stories, which have been explained with examples above, are given in Table 4 below.

**Table 4:** Elements of humor related to the incongruity theory in the stories of AMS

S.n.	Story Name	f	%
1.	The Bursting Balloons Mystery	3	17,64
2.	The Chocolate Money Mystery	3	17,64
3.	The Joke Machine	2	11,76
4.	The Muscular Machine	2	11,76
5.	The Bubblegum Tree	2	11,76
6.	The Popcorn Pirates	2	11,76
7.	The Banana Machine	1	5,88
8.	Calculator Annie	1	5,88
9.	Teacher Trouble	1	5,88

According to Table 4, Seventeen elements of humour related to the incongruity theory in the children's stories of Alexander MacCall Smith have been identified. In the table, the percentage ratios of how many humour elements indicating incompatibility exist in the author's children's stories and their percentage ratios are given according to the humour elements indicating incompatibility in all the children's stories of the author. In each of the *The Bursting Balloons Mystery*, *The Chocolate Money*

*Mystery* stories, three humour elements and 17.64 % were determined. Two humour elements and 11.76 % of humor elements were determined in each *The Joke Machine*, *The Muscular Machine*, *The Bubblegum Tree*, *The Popcorn Pirates* stories. In the *The Banana Machine*, *Calculator Annie* and *Teacher Trouble* stories, one element of humour was determined in each of them and the rate was 5.88 %.

### **Findings on the Relief Theory**

In this chapter, humorous elements related to the relief theory in Alexander McCall Smith's stories are identified. In line with the ideas of the relief theory regarding the formation of the act of laughing, the humorous elements were evaluated.

In the story called *Teacher Trouble*, the student who is thought to be a teacher will give himself away at any moment, give false information to the students, and sooner or later it will be understood that he is not a teacher. Besides, he is caught in an anxious wait. "*Nobody said anything. Jenny blushed crimson and just stood there, blushing more and more. Everyone was looking at him, too.*" (TT, s.41). Jenny's anxious waiting is ended with the arrival of the teacher assigned to the school. It is expected that with this event, which is unlikely to happen, there will be a laughing action that creates relief in the reader.

While Jenny is experimenting in the classroom, the headmistress arrives. At that moment, the smoke leaking from the test tubes turns the headmistress's red hair green. "*The headmistress of the school had been very funny. Everyone in the class had seen it. Her hair, which had been crimson when she entered the classroom, was now lush!*" (TT, s.74). The headmistress of the school, Mrs. Buz, who represents authority, is a harsh and prescriptive administrator. The students laughed at the headmistress of the school, who had lush red hair, and they had a comforting laugh in the face of Mrs. Buz's authority.

In the *Muscle Machine* story, the main protagonist Gordon cannot stand against Ted, who is bullying at school. Gordon is seen by his environment as a weak, lazy child. "*Now I'll show you what the rule is! shouting, he pushed Gordon away and left.*" (MM, p.6). In this situation, Gordon increases the tension in the reader, but this situation relieved the bully boy Ted, causing him to experience a state of joy and laughter.

Gordon, who became very strong by using his muscle machine, could now resist bullying, lift huge weights, help people in difficult situations, and even stand at the bottom of the pyramid to march on a show. "*As Ted tries to hit, Gordon catches his fists in the air; he grabbed the stunned bully by the collar and lifted him up. Gordon calmly walked to the other end of the schoolyard and threw the desperate Ted into a puddle of mud.*" (MM, p.18). The weaken Gordon grew stronger and defeated the bully boy Ted, reducing the growing nerves and tensions. It is thought that this situation could cause an act of joy and laughter in the reader.

In the story called *The Doughnut Ring*, when the school janitor Mr. Onur's car is stolen, the children are very upset about this situation. They want to buy a car for the janitor by making donuts and selling them to the public. By creating a chain of letters, many people are allowed to make ring buns. Buns that are no longer fit in homes are sold to markets. The buns, which no longer fit in the houses, begin to be sold to the markets. Thus, the money of the car that is thought to be bought for the janitor will be more than earned. "*They loved Mr. Honor, the janitor of the school, and the news about what happened to him was very sad.*" (DR, p.9). This sad event that happened to a kind-hearted loved one has increased the tension in everyone. When the children who created the doughnut chain collected enough money, they bought a new car for Mr. Onur. Thus, the tension has been eliminated and laughter has been ensured.

Alex leaves the Doughnut box on the table of grocery chain owner Mr. Vinram and disappears. Those at the table who open the box find the ring doughnut very tasty. When the waiter

was asked to continue, everyone was curious about where the doughnut came from and who brought it to the public. At that moment, Alex comes out from under the table where he is hiding and tells Mr. Virman all about what happened. *"If this man wants to meet with me, let's let him. Come on, young man. What's with all this ring doughnut business? And let me not go without saying that the ring buns are very tasty."* (DR, p.64). Alex, who wanted to meet with the grocery chain owner Mr. Virman, left the ring doughnut box on the table, causing everyone to be concerned and surprised. Getting out under the table and telling the public that the donut belongs to him and that there is a continuation, both destroyed the tension and a situation that could create laughter by adding funniness to the situation has emerged.

In the story called *The Bubblegum Tree*, it happens that the raw materials do not come to the factory that produces bubble gum. This situation upsets the factory owner Mr. Gopal a lot and they go on a trip to India to solve the problem with the heroic children. Here, they witness that some people have cut the bubble gum nets owned by the Gum people and that they have expelled the local people as well. Mr. Gopal and the children dressed in tiger skins scare away people who are cutting trees. Thus, the cutting of trees is prevented. *"If those men destroyed our trees, it would be a very big disaster. Thanks to you, bubble gum trees will live now. Of course, we will also be able to send raw materials to Mr. Gopal again."* (BT, p.89). The solution of the problem experienced by the heroes in the forest area with the funny and adventurous plan they made has eliminated the tension experienced. Thus, it is expected to experience laughter in the reader.

The story *The Bursting Balloons Mystery* is an adventurous thriller. The dangerous traps that the professor set for the balloonists participating in the race prevented one balloonist from participating in the race and gave the other balloonists dangerous moments. *"Little detective Maddy: Last night while we were sleeping, Professor Sardinia must have infiltrated our camp. He also drilled the hole in the tube."* (BBM, p.89). Detective Maddy's realization of the unbelievable trap set by the malicious Professor and taking precautions have reduced the tension. It was thought that this situation would create a joyful laugh in the reader.

In the story *The Chocolate Money Mystery*, the chase between Professor Sardines and the small detectives proceeds with various dangers. As the tense wait continued, tension dropped as child detectives rescued the stolen money, and the reader was relieved. *"Mr. Parabol said, 'I will always be grateful to you. Not only me, but all Swiss banks will be grateful to you.'"* (CMM, p.122). The reader is happy, because the hero has achieved success as a result of hard struggle and has won awards. This state of relaxation is expected to create joy and laughter in the reader.

*In the story called The Spaghetti Tangle, two children living with their aunts, who have strict rules about nutrition, wanted to eat pasta by escaping. The children participating in the pasta sauce competition fulfilled their wishes by eating at the same table with the factory owner. Although the aunt, who learned about this situation, was very angry, the manufacturer approached kindly and took into account the warnings and suggestions of the aunt. After a certain time, the aunt and the manufacturer got married and the aunt gave up her strict rules on nutrition.*

*Aunt Rebeka's strict dietary rule has made Tom and Niki nervous. In such a situation, they were very pleased that the children participated in the sauce-making race and ate spaghetti with the factory owner. "Once upon a time, there were two children who had never eaten spaghetti. Tom and his sister Niki would have liked to eat spaghetti, but they couldn't even spaghetti it because Aunt Rebeka never let them."* (ST, p.9). *The aunt's marriage to the factory owner and later abandoning the strict dietary rules provided relief for the children. Thus, it is expected that the joy and happiness experienced by the children will also please the reader and bring out a smile.*

*In the story The Popcorn Pirates, a ship with children on board is robbed by pirates. The children who are captured by the pirates manage to dock the plundered ship to the port on the island with the difficult and funny efforts they give. "Lusi safely put the pirate ship into port without making any mistakes."* (PP, p.88). *The successful struggle of young children against overbearing pirates has*

*reduced the growing tension. The reader is expected to laugh as the funny struggles of the children remove the tension.*

The owner of the neighbouring shop, who represents the malicious character in the story called the *Joke Machine*, is very annoyed by the customers who gathered in the antique shop with the joke machine. He breaks the machine and even wants to steal it. This situation increased the tension, but the funny joke that came out of the machine unexpectedly took all the tension and gave way to laughter. *"When Jeffrey had finished reading, Uncle Jenkinson had begun to laugh. It was an incredible laugh. Evidently Uncle Jenkinson had not laughed for years."*(JM, p.66). In the story, the tense waiting is dispersed by the laughter of the neighbouring shopkeeper and relief is experienced. It is expected that the reader will laugh after such an unusual event.

In the story *The Banana Machine*, Grandpa is lost half of his banana plantation in gambling years ago. The aunt and children, who had difficulty making ends meet with the remaining banana plantation, wanted to sell what they had and move to the city. This situation are increased the tension in the reader. Meanwhile, the flat banana machine invented by Patty, the main protagonist of the story, has created a financial relief in the family, and with the money they earned, the lands lost by the grandfather in gambling has recovered. *"The fact that her aunt's problems had been solved and that she could continue to live on the plantation as they always did was enough to make Patty happy."*(BM, p.78). A lot of money is made with the production of the banana machine, and both the aunt and the children overcame the problem they experienced. Along with the relaxation of the aunts and children, the tension in the reader decreased and it was thought that this relaxation would make the reader experience a laughing situation.

In the story called *Calculator Annie*, the fact that a child who was desperate in mathematics class suddenly found a way to become a genius reduced the increasing tension and created joy in the reader. *"Annie: I'm better at math now. I don't understand how it happens, but I know the answers."*(CA, p.18). Annie's acquisition of genius-level mathematical knowledge and skills has reduced the tension she has been experiencing. It has been thought that this relaxation can create a laughing situation in the reader.

*The frequency and percentage values of the humour elements related to the relief theory in Alexander MacCall Smith's children's stories, which have been explained with examples above, are given in Table 5 below.*

**Table 5:** Elements of humor related to the relief theory in the stories of the AMS

S.n.	Story Name	f	%
1.	Teacher Trouble	2	14,28
2.	Muscle Machine	2	14,28
3.	The Doughnut Ring	2	14,28
4.	The Bubblegum Tree	1	7,14
5.	The Bursting Balloons Mystery	1	7,14
6.	The Chocolate Money Mystery	1	7,14
7.	The Spaghetti Tangle	1	7,14
8.	The Popcorn Pirates	1	7,14
9.	The Joke Machine	1	7,14
10.	The Banana Machine	1	7,14
11.	Calculator Annie	1	7,14

According to Table 5, fourteen humour elements related to relaxation theory were identified in Alexander McCall Smith's children's stories. The table shows how many elements of humour exist in the author's children's stories that create relief and their percentages according to the humour elements that indicate relief in all the author's children's stories. In each of the stories Teacher Trouble, Muscle Machine and The Donut Ring, two humour elements were determined at a rate of 14,28%. In each of the stories The Bubblegum Tree, The Bursting Balloons Mystery, The Chocolate Money Mystery, The

Spaghetti Tangle, The Popcorn Pirates, The Joke Machine, The Banana Machine, Calculator Annie, one humour element was determined at a rate of 7.14%.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study, analyses were conducted to determine the humour elements in the children's stories of British author Alexander MacCall Smith and to disclose how these humour elements were arranged according to various humour theories. In the research, humour theories are considered, and an expansive and varied perspective of the humour formations in the stories is offered.

Alexander Mccall Smith's works had been supplemented with absorbing, daring humorous aspects. Frequently, the protagonists in the stories take actions that induce cognitive dissonance and comfort the reader. In all of the author's stories, aspects of humour related to the theory of relief may be recognized, but the theory of dissonance appears to have been used more frequently. Similar studies that analyse literary texts according to humour theories have revealed that the theory of dissonance is the most frequently employed humour theory (Akıncı, 2015; Emedov, 2004; Tarhan, 2020). Humour aspects suited for the theoretical underpinnings of the least superiority hypothesis were obtained in the stories.

The author frequently uses occurrences and situations that produce discord to maintain the reader's interest and arouse their curiosity. The ability of the child protagonists in the stories to perform tasks that adults are capable of and to solve complex problems causes a lot of disharmonies and conflicts in the human mind. Berding (1965) came to the similar conclusion that humorous children's book authors use incompatible states, exaggerated language, and manners to make their works entertaining. Every humorous literary genre is structured by a conflict and contrast inside a cause-and-effect connection (Koestler, 2014; McGhee, 1979). However, the research findings indicate that it is not sufficient to be able to identify the aspects of comedy using solely the discordance theory.

The relief theory of humour in children's literature and children's characters representing authority oppressive tyrant, malicious characters are all observed. Thus, the reader's mounting anxiety is replaced by calm and contentment. Laughter and happiness, according to Meyer (2000), result from the discharge of nervous energy. According to the relaxation theory proposed by Usta (2009), laughter is the transition of spiritual energy into mechanical energy.

The author makes the villains in his novels humorous by imbuing them with perplexity, awkwardness, and idiocy. The reader laughs at the scenario in which persons with negative emotions and attitudes and who engage in improper behaviour fall. Knowing that bullying, rudeness, and bad intentions would not result in a positive outcome and that he will find himself in a humorous situation in front of the public, he provides the reader a sense of satisfaction for having good intentions. In *Don Quixote*, which is believed to be the first modern novel in the world, a humorous knight is fictionalized, and the reader experiences a chuckle associated with superiority (Mentioned, 2020). Berding (1965), after deciphering 75 hilarious children's books created between 1950 and 1960, concluded that authors frequently exploited foolish mistakes and exaggerated behaviour to make the plot humorous.

Humour relies on the cognitive aspect rather than the emotional and physiological aspects, according to current studies on humour and laughing and humorous literary works. This study revealed that Alexander MacCall Smith's children's stories make greater use of the theory of dissonance's humorous components. Furthermore, this study is limited to the children's stories of Alexander McCall Smith. Since Alexander MacCall Smith's sense of humour cannot be consistently discerned from his children's books alone, this study recommends exploring the author's other works. In addition, it is suggested that research be conducted to determine how authors of hilarious literary works structure their sense of humour.

It is advised that study be undertaken based on the humour comprehension of contemporary comedy theories of both domestic and international authors who produce works in the field of children's literature, as well as studies comparing the humour aspects in children's books from other countries. In a sense, this research points to the use of humor in children's literature. In accordance with visual, linguistic and situational comedy, the research recommends that children's literature writers include humor components that indicate incongruity in their works.

**Conflicts of Interest:** No potential conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

**Funding Details:** No funding or grant was received from any institution or organization for this research.

**CRedit Author Statement:** Dr. Bekir YILDIZ: Conceptualization, Methodology, Resources, Investigation, Supervision, Writing – Review & Editing, Original Draft Preparation, Translation. Prof. Dr. Esma Dumanlı KADIZADE: Conceptualization, Methodology, Supervision, Writing – Review & Editing,

**Ethical Statement:** This study does not require ethics committee approval since researchers used the children's storybooks as the sole data source.

## REFERENCES

- Aerila, J. A., Laes, and Laes, T. (2017). Clowns and explosions: Drawings as reflections of children's humor. *Journal of Early Childhood Education Research*, 6(1), 108–135.
- Akıncı, Ş. (2015). *Resimli çocuk kitaplarında yer alan mizahi unsurların incelenmesi* (Yayımlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi). Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Ankara.
- Andersson, M. (2004). Watching the detectives. *Social Dynamics-A Journal Of African Studies*, 30(2), 141-153.
- Anılan, S. O. (2020). *With choices in Turkish and world children's literature comparison of smile theories* (Master's thesis). Mersin University Institute of Educational Sciences. Mersin.
- Arık, M. Bilal (2002). A theoretical perspective on the humor of Kemal Sunal, Levent Kırca and Cem Yılmaz. *Journal of Istanbul University Faculty of Communication*, (14), 111-129.
- Berding, M. C. (1965). *Humor as a factor in children's literature* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Cincinnati. Dissertation Abstracts.
- Berger, A. A. ve Wildavsky, A. (1994). Who laughs at what. *Society*, 31(6), 82-86.
- Bermejo, D. M. (2021). Humour in children's and young adult literature: The work of Gilles Bachelet. *Children's Literature in Education*, 20(3), 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10583-021-09463-8>
- Berns, G. S. (2004). Something funny happened to reward. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 8(5), 193-194.
- Bilge, E. (2008). Cem Yılmaz Narrations in the Context of Superiority Theor. *Turkbilig*, (16), 16-23.
- De Koning, E. ve Weiss, R. L. (2002). The relational humor inventory: Functions of humor in close relationships. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*. (30), 1-18.



- Dereli, K. (2017). *Rıfat Ilgaz's humor features in children's novel's investigation on children's literature* (Master's thesis). Adıyaman University Institute of Social Sciences. Adıyaman.
- Dinç, Ü. G. and Cemaloğlu N. (2018). Examining relationship between primary school administrators' humor style and teachers' perceived stress level according to some variables. *Turkish Journal of Educational Studies*, 5(2), 1-37.
- Dirican, R., Bekir, H. and Bayraktar, V. (2020). Verbal humorous elements in picture story books. *Motif Academy Journal of Folklore*, 13(29), 243-261.
- Dominguez-Rue, E. (2018). The art of doing good. Aging, creativity and wisdom in the Isabel Dalhousie novels. *Journal of Aging Studies*, (44), 22-27.
- Donoghue, M. R. (2009). *Language arts*. London: Sage.
- Duncan, W. J. (1982). Humor in management: Prospects for administrative practice and research. *Academy of Management Review*, (7), 136-142.
- Emedov, Ş. (2004). *A research on the types of Turkoman anecdotes* (Master's thesis). Erciyes University Institute of Social Sciences, Kayseri.
- Fenoglio, I. ve Georgeon, F. (2000). *Humor in the east* (Trans. Ali Berktaş). Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Publications.
- Finnegan, L. (2006). 'A completely satisfactory detective': The detective fiction genre in Alexander McCall Smith's Botswana novels. *English Studies in Africa*. 49(2). 123-147.
- Güler, Ç. ve Güler, B. U. (2010). *Humor, the science of laughing and laughing*. Ankara: Yazıt Publishing.
- Kalua, F. (2007). New perspectives in African literature: The case of Unity Dow and Alexander McCall Smith's Botswana. *English Academy Review-Southern African Journal of English Studies*, 24(1), 71-84.
- Karababa, S. & Alamdar, S. G. (2017). Humour in children's literature books: Saftirik example. *International Journal of Language Academy*, 5(8), 331-347.
- Karasar, N. (2017). *Scientific research method: Concepts principles techniques* (32nd ed.). Ankara: Nobel.
- Keith-Spiegel, P. (1972). Early conceptions of humor: Varieties and issues. In J. H. Goldstein ve P. McGhee (Eds.), *The psychology of humor: Theoretical perspectives and empirical issues* (pp. 5-13). New York: Academic Press.
- Klos, S. (2020). *Humour and translation in children's literature. A Cognitive Linguistic Approach*. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.
- Koçak, D. (2019). *Humor in chosen novels of Aziz Nesin* (Master's thesis). Çukurova University Institute of Social Sciences. Adana.
- Koçer, H., Eskidemir, S. and Özbek, T. (2012). Analysis of 6-year old children's humorous responses in respect of Paul E. McGhee's humor development stages. *Journal of Education and Training Research*, 1(4), 82-93.
- Koestler, A. (2014). *The act of creation*. Londra: Last Century Media.

- Kulka, T. (2007). The incongruity of incongruity theories of humor. *Organon F*, 14(3), 320-333.
- Leung, S. K. Y. & Yuen, M. (2022). Exploring talented children's humour through creating pop-up storybooks. *Education*, 3(13). 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2022.2071453>
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2014). *Designing qualitative research*. New York: Sage.
- Martin, D. M., Rich, C. O. and Gayle, B. M. (2004). Humor works: Communication style and humor functions in manager/subordinate relationships. *Southern Communication Journal*, (69), 206-222.
- McGhee, P. E. (1979). *Humor: It's origin and development*. New York: Freeman
- McGhee, P. E. (2013). *Humor and children's development: A guide to practical applications*. London: Routledge.
- Meyer, J. C. (2000). Humor as a double edged sword: four functions of humor in communication. *Communication Theory*, 10(3), 310-331.
- Morreall, J. (1983). *Taking laughter seriously*. Albany: State University of New York Press
- Morreall, J. (1997). *Taking laughter seriously* (Trans. Ş. Aysevener and Ş. Soyer). Iris Publishing: Istanbul.
- Öğüt Eker, G. (2009). *Human culture humor: humor as an object of consumption in the entertainment industry*. Ankara: Graphics Publications.
- Örge Yaşar, F. (2010). Tongue-twisters within the framework of the incongruity theory in humor. *Zeitschrift Für Die Welt Der Türken/Journal of World of Turks*, 2(1), 49-57.
- Poncela, F. and Maria, A. (2019). Laughter: Concept, approaches and reflections. *Ockham Scientific Journal*. 17(1), 95-103.
- Raskin, V. (1985). *Semantic mechanisms of humor*. Netherlands: D. Reidel Publishing Company.
- Ruiz-Gurillo, L. (2017). Humour production in children's narratives in Spanish. *Caleidoscopio*, 15(2), 222-231.
- Sarpdere, Y. (2008). When you say humor. *Journal of Universal Culture*, 9(201), 71-73.
- Sauthom, M. (2005). Humor development: An important cognitive and social skill in the growing child. *Physical and Occupational Therapy in Pediatrics*, 25(1/2), 105-116.
- Scott, S. K., Lavan, N., Chen, S. and McGettigan, C. (2014). The social life of laughter. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 18(12), 618-620.
- Scheel, T. and Gockel, C. (2017). Definitions, theories, and measurement of humor (Ed. Scheel T, Gockel C). *Humor at Work in Teams, Leadership, Negotiations, Learning and Health*. Cham: Springer; (2017). p. 9-29.
- Smith, A. M. (2017). *The Popcorn Pirates* (Trans. Nazlı Tancı). Sunshine Library: İstanbul.
- Smith, A. M. (2017). *The Doughnut Ring* (Trans. Nazlı Tancı). Sunshine Library: İstanbul.
- Smith, A. M. (2017). *The Spaghetti Tangle* (Trans. Nazlı Tancı). Sunshine Library: İstanbul.

- Smith, A. M. (2017). *The Bubblegum Tree* (Trans. Nazlı Tancı). Sunshine Library: İstanbul.
- Smith, A. M. (2015). *Teacher Trouble* (Trans. Levent Cinemre). Business Bank of Turkey Cultural Publications: İstanbul.
- Smith, A. M. (2015). *Calculator Annie* (Trans. Levent Cinemre). Business Bank of Turkey Cultural Publications: İstanbul.
- Smith, A. M. (2017). *Muscle Machine* (Trans. Berrak İdiman). Hep Books Publishing House: İstanbul.
- Smith, A. M. (2017). *Banana Machine* (Trans. Berrak İdiman). Hep Books Publishing House: İstanbul.
- Smith, A. M. (2017). *Joke Machine* (Trans. Berrak İdiman). Hep Books Publishing House: İstanbul.
- Smith, A. M. (2012). *The Bursting Balloons Mystery* (Trans. Levent Cinemre). Business Bank of Turkey Cultural Publications: İstanbul.
- Smith, A. M. (2011). *The Chocolate Money Mystery* (Trans. Levent Cinemre). Business Bank of Turkey Cultural Publications: İstanbul.
- Susa, A. M. (2002), *Humor type, orgnizational climate and outcomes; the shortest distance between an organizations environment and the bottomline is laughter, unpublished doctoral dissertation* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database.
- Sorensen, S. (2011). Alexander McCall Smith and the Gentlewoman's Whodunit. *Modern Language Association Female Detective Fiction across Cultures session*, Los Angeles, January 2011.
- Şahin, H. İ. (2010). Bektashi anecdotes and laughter theories. *Turkish Culture and Hacı Bektaş Veli Research Journal*, (55), 255-268.
- Şahin, A. (2018). *Yöneltil ve eğitsel araç olarak eğitim kurumlarında mizah*. Ankara: Anı Yayıncılık.
- Şahin, A. (2018). *Humor in educational institutions as a managerial and educational tool*. Ankara: Memoir Publishing.
- Şahin, H. İ. (2010). Bektashi jokes and theories of laughter. *Turkish Culture and Hacı Bektaş Veli Research Journal*, (55), 255-268.
- Tarhan, E. (2020). *Examination of jokes in adana in terms of humor theories, context, function and structure* (PhD Thesis). Çukurova University Institute of Social Sciences, Adana.
- Turhan, S. (1998). *Graphic Humor* (Ed. Turgut Çeviker). İstanbul: İris Humor Culture Publishing.
- Usta, Ç. (2009). *The mystery of the language of humor*. Akçay Publications: Ankara.
- Vandaele, J. (2002). Humor mechanisms in film comedy: disharmony and superiority. *Poetics Today*, 23(2), 221-249.
- Wandrenova, J. (2016). The humanistic aspect of Alexander McCall Smith's African detective fiction. *Ars Aeterna*, 8(2), 33-40. <https://doi.org/10.1515/aa-2016-0008>
- Wu, C. L., Yen, Y. F. and Chen, H. C. (2021). How humor styles affect humor comprehension and appreciation: A typological approach. *Current Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-01641-7>

Wikipedia. (21 August 2022). *Alexander McCall Smith*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/>

Wilkins, J. and Eisenbraun, A. J. (2009). Humor theories and the physiological benefits of laughter. *Holistic Nursing Practice The Science of Health and Healing*. 23(6). 349-354.

Wu, C. L., Yen, Y. F. and Chen, H. C. (2021). How humor styles affect humor comprehension and appreciation: A typological approach. *Current Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-01641-7>

Yıldırım, A., Şimşek, H. (2018). *Qualitative research methods in the social sciences* (11nd ed.). Ankara: Seçkin Yayınları .