

Humor versus Huaji

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Abstract

In 1923, Lin Yutang used the transliterated youmo for English humor. Some Sinologists argue that Chinese has an elegant word huaji coined in the Spring-Autumn Period (722-403B.C.); they see no need to borrow and/or create the term youmo. Modern Chinese humorologists in both Taiwan and Mainland China, generally use the term youmo, not huaji for highclass verbal humor; Taiwan-based Chen (1985) was the only exception, putting huaji as a general term, under which was a sub-kind called youmo.

The paper contains three studies. The first one investigates the modern meaning of huaji and youmo in essay questions given to 60 Ss (subjects; 55 females and 5 males). The second is an experimental study done with 131 Ss (78 females, 53 males) on five funny/humorous situations in six scenarios for judgments of laughter/smile as well as huaji/humor. The third is also an experiment with 54 Ss (27 females and 27 males) on six huaji stories recorded in Shi-ji Huaji Liezhuan. Dependent and independent Student t-test, along with Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used to Studies II and III for inferences. Results of the first study show humor as a highclass speech act lubricating some potentially embarrassing situation, triggering thoughtful smile by its profundity; huaji describes funny, shallow and ridiculous actions. Results of the second study in which the two genders are similar: the clown's performance and slipping on banana skin are significantly more huaji than humorous; verbal jokes are more humorous than huaji; a practical joke is neither huaji nor humorous; Charlie Chaplin was equally huaji and humorous, perhaps because of his international fame as a humorous comedian, which plays a role in the Ss' judgment. Slipping on banana skin causes more laughter than smiles; verbal jokes trigger more smiles than laughter. In most cases, correlation between humor and smile is stronger than that between humor and laughter. Results in which the two genders differ: Males enjoyed self-bragging jokes in the macro (national) level more than females; clowns' performance triggers laughter in male Ss more than in female ones. The former proves Tannen's observation (1994) that American men like bragging more also holds true for Taiwanese linguistic phenomena. The latter proves that the Chinese culture pattern permits men to guffaw more than women. The third study proves that the so-called huaji about 2500 years ago should be termed youmo nowadays because they are verbal, trigger more smiles than laughter, more youmo than huaji. It cannot prove Carrell's observation (1997) that a recycled joke is no longer appreciated.

Introduction

In 1923, Lin Yutang used the transliterated youmo for English humor. Some Sinologists argue that Chinese has an elegant (ancient) word huaji (and insist the word is pronounced guji but offer no valid reason. If I keep on being inquisitive, they might think that I was stubborn or else just answer that there were too many things beyond explanation. Here, non-Sinologists' pronunciation convention is followed,) coined in the Spring-Autumn Period (722-403B.C.); they see no need to borrow and/or create the term youmo. Modern Chinese humorologists (Dai 1996, 1997; Duan 1992; Hsue 1990; Lao 1987, 1993; Wang 1998; Wu 1997), in both Taiwan and Mainland China, generally use the term youmo, not huaji for highclass verbal humor; Taiwan-based Chen (1985) was the only exception, putting huaji as a general term, under which was a sub-kind called youmo. Lin (1997) used both huaji and youmo, the former denoting funny action and the latter highclass verbal humor.

Shi-ji Huaji Liezhuan (Huaji-ists in Record of History), written about 2000 years ago, narrated episodes of three huaji-ists in the Spring-Autumn and Warring States Periods (722-221 B.C.), which should at least have implied that its author, Si-ma Qien, if not Chinese people at large, was fond of humorists/huaji-ists. Confucius and disciples were also humorous (Kao 1974; Liao 2001).

The huaji-ists' stories in Shi-ji Huaji Liezhuan should be categorized as humor from the modern viewpoint. However, huaji referring to verbal humor has become less popular since 1923; later on, new meanings were attached to it. Only pure Sinologists (e.g., Chen 1985) would try to persuade people to embrace the old term huaji to include humor. No one can deny that language is ever changing. For

example, in the 18th century, intercourse was a neutral word, not linked with sex as it is.

In this paper, first I asked 60 NCHU (National Chung Hsing University) students to write short essays for five minutes to distinguish huaji and youmo. Second, 131 FCU (Feng Chia University) students were asked to judge if each of the six scenarios (mentioned below) trigger their smiles or laughter, and if they were humorous or huaji. Finally, I translated into English six stories of huaji-ists narrated in Shi-ji huaji Liezhuan for 54 FCU subjects (27 males and 27 females) to judge if they were huaji or humorous and triggered smiles or laughter, and finally how frequently they had been exposed to them.

Literature Review

Hsu (1992) translated *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic* by Henri Bergson (1859-1941) into Chinese by giving the Chinese title *Xiao-Lun Huaji de Yiyi* ('Laugh-On the Meaning of Huaji'). Instead of the word youmo, he chose huaji for the English 'comics', maybe implying how youmo denotes something highclass. Bergson's comic includes awkward things. For Hsu, awkwardness was not humor at all.

Ruch (1998: 6) proposed to define humor narrowly as something benevolent (see Nicolson 1956: 18). Thus it is impossible for jokes to be 'aggressive humor.' Nicolson contends that humor does not seek to wound others, only to protect self; it is not a sword but a shield. The broad definition of humor treats it as a neutral term; i.e., not restricted to positive meanings. In this context, humor can be 'aggressive.' Lampert and Ervin-Tripp (1998) accepted broadly-defined humor; hence there exist tendentious, non-tendentious and hostile forms of humor.

Wan (1993) and Lin (1997) treated the broadly defined English humor as Chinese youmo. The former labels satire/irony/sarcasm as attacking humor (pp. 1-7). The latter used humor to include funny actions and behavior. Lin (1997) wrote humorous stories around him to explain how humor can solve problems but create disasters too. He (p. 33) warned that laughing stuff should not be fengci ('stinging') because stinging words anger the other party. It is unknown if fengci here means sharp direct speech or irony/sarcasm. He gave the example of 'I find that our recent performance has reached the highest-however we need the invert the graph (p. 31),' where the first part of the utterance is irony, well-known to insiders. Even outsiders understand it after reading the latter part. The front part flouts Grice's quality maxim (1975); the latter clears it.

Shi-ji Huaji Liezhuan narrated episodes of three huaji-ists-Chun-yu Kun, You Meng and You Zhan from the Spring-Autumn and Warring States Periods (722-221B.C.) and Qin Dynasty (221-205BC). Its author, Si-ma Qian pointed out that huaji-ists are witty and speak relevantly to solve conflicts (Bai-hua Shi-ji 1985: 1675). They are good at finding the right time to speak the right words in the right way (p. 1679) and are influential (Si-ma 1983: 656). Chun-yu Kun lived more than 100 years before You Meng; the latter more than 200 years before You Zhan. Therefore, for 300 more years, Si-ma only located three huaji-ists, hard to find according to Chinese standard.

Huang (2002) opined that huaji means 'humor in the palace.' Stories in the appendix are indeed about interaction between the king and his officials/subjects. According to Chen (1985: 1-2), from the third century when Han-dan Chun collected a joke book called *Xiao-lin* (Laughing Forest) till the end of Qing Dynasty (1911), 93 joke books were compiled, among which three were called huaji books, compiled in Sung and Yuan Dynasties (960-1368). However, they were not humor happening in the palace. Huang (2002) seemed to define huaji from her reading of *Shi-ji Huaji Liezhuan* without referring to the titles of those joke books. For well over 540 years, during the Ming and Qing Dynasties (1368-1911), huaji was not used in the titles of joke books. In 1923, Lin Yutang used the transliterated youmo for English humor.

Liao (1998) offered Taiwanese people's definitions of receptive and productive humor. The first defines a person with a sense of humor as able to (1) react quickly to people's words and understand jokes without joke-tellers' explaining further and (2) tolerate practical jokes played on him/her. Productive definition of a sense of humor includes ability to (a) use "others" as the butt of jokes, but later be willing to apologize; (b) make people smile thoughtfully and understandingly; (c) know when (not) to be humorous; (d) downgrade oneself; and (e) avoid using "others" as the butt of joking.

The Study

This research encompasses three sub-studies: Sub-study I (September 2001) differentiates huaji from youmo, the Mandarin transliteration of English 'humor.' Sub-study II (February 2002) investigates perceptions of huaji, youmo, laughter and smile in six scenarios. Sub-study III (May 2002) lets undergraduates judge ancient huaji-ists' stories as huaji or humorous, as eliciting smiles or laughter, plus the relationship between frequency of exposure to jokes and the appreciation level.

Statistics used are descriptive means, the inferential t-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. A t-test p-value smaller than 0.05 means significant difference in compared groups; between 0.05 and 0.1, marginal; larger than 0.1, no provable difference. A p-value for the Pearson Product Moment Correlation smaller than 0.05 means the two variables are correlated; higher than 0.05 means variables are independent of each other.

Sub-study I

Sixty NCHU students (5 male, 55 female) were asked to write an essay on the differences of huaji and youmo as viewed from modern persons' viewpoint, not what their Chinese/history teacher instructed. They were prompted to explain differences of the Sentences (a) and (b), if they felt the question too abstract:

(a) Nage ren hen youmo.

That person is very humorous.

(b) Nage ren hen huaji.

That person is very huaji.

Their answers are analyzed below. Humor means highclass verbal behavior, which lubricates a potentially embarrassing situation, cheers up a boring atmosphere, or cools down an overexciting environment. It evokes thoughtful smiles by its profundity. Humorous persons need profound knowledge and some self-deprecating jokes to entertain people or advise. When a teacher can change a boring textbook to a vivacious classroom activity, s/he is humorous.

Huaji is making up awkwardly or funnily for hilarious festivals. It describes some ridiculous behavior or speech. It is shallow comical performance, not so highclass as humor. A person who has slipped looks huaji. A clown making him/herself ugly to entertain people should be huaji, meaning something negative. A quiet little child suddenly dancing to music is huaji. Another contemporary term for huaji is wu-li-tou-de-hao-xiao ('funny without sense').

Humorous cannot be used to describe a person's appearance, only traits of one's speech, while huaji can mean funny appearances of an animal or person. Humor is a gentleman's witty speech, huaji a clown's body language. Huaji stands for some ugly, despicable behavior, humor for appreciable verbal expressions. People guffaw at huaji, smile thoughtfully at youmo. Youmo contains more wisdom than huaji. Huaji persons like to act in front of people to win laughter; their behavior is intentional. Conclusion: humor is natural verbal behavior making people smile thoughtfully. Huaji includes clowning, joking, funny action/behavior and ridiculous speech. Huaji describes action and appearance, while youmo describes speech.

Study II

One hundred thirty-one FCU Ss (an average age 21.8, range 19-37) rated humor/huaji/laughter/smile in six scenarios: (a) a clown's performance, (b) Charlie Chaplin's performance, (c) A pulls a chair away when B is about to sit down, (d) A slips on a banana skin, (e) Verbal Joke I (VJI), and (f) Verbal Joke II (VJII), shown below:

VJI: Q (lawyer): "All your responses must be oral, OK? What school did you go to?"
A (witness): "Oral."

VJII: A Chinese, Japanese, and Korean argued about which country was most advanced in medicine.
"Well, in our hospitals," the Korean bragged, "we had a lady who had lost her arm. We put in a mechanical arm, and now it works just as if it were her own!"
"Hah, that's nothing," said the Japanese. "In our hospitals, we had a person without a heart. We put in an artificial one, and now he is running for the Olympics!"
"Ha-ha-ha," said the Chinese. "We had a person who had gotten his head chopped off. We put on a cabbage, and now he is in the Legislative Yuan (parliament)!"

After each scenario, four questions were posed, taking a clown's performance as an example:

- Q1: A clown's performance is humorous.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
- Q2: A clown's performance is huaji.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
- Q3: A clown's performance triggers my laughter.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
- Q4: A clown's performance triggers my smile.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

Table 2.1 Means of being humorous: males versus females

	Grand (range)	Males (SD;N)	Females (SD;N)	t-value	p-value
Clown	4.49 (1-7)	4.83 (1.70; 53)	4.26 (1.55; 78)	-1.97	0.0517
Practical Joke	1.72 (1-7)	1.66 (1.13; 53)	1.76 (1.45; 78)	0.43	0.6712
Banana Skin	2.27 (1-7)	2.42 (1.68; 53)	2.18 (1.55; 78)	-0.81	0.4186
Charlie Chaplin	4.57 (1-7)	4.38 (1.81; 40)	4.70 (1.73; 57)	0.89	0.3751
VJI	4.09 (1-7)	3.69 (2.02; 52)	4.36 (2.07; 78)	1.83	0.0702
VJII	4.79 (1-7)	4.60 (1.87; 53)	4.92 (1.71; 78)	0.99	0.3240

Table 2.1 plots the most to least humorous: VJII, Charlie Chaplin's performance, clown's performance, VJI, slipping on banana skin and pulling a chair away. The first four grand means are higher than neutral value 4, the last two much lower (2.27 and 1.72). Marginally

more men than women see the clown's performance as humorous ($p = 0.0517$). This might support Crawford and Gressley's (1991) experimental study that men were more likely than women to appreciate slapstick (to which clown's performance belongs). Table 2.2 also demonstrates how men tend to judge a clown's performance more huaji than women.

The women judge VJI, a kind of pun, as marginally more humorous than the men, illustrating how women are more introverted, since introverts and extroverts differ in type of humor they prefer: extroverts sexual or aggressive, introverts nonsensical or incongruous (Eysenck 1942; Eysenck and Wilson 1976).

Study I highlighted a difference between humor and huaji, in that humor is highclass verbal speech acts, yet Table 2.1 also shows clown's performance and Charlie Chaplin's as humorous. Sub-studies I and II demonstrate that the Ss' perceptions and speech acts are contradictory.

Table 2.2 Means of being huaji: males versus females

	Grand (range)	Males (SD;N)	Females (SD;N)	t-value	p-value
Clown	5.40 (1-7)	5.62 (1.53; 53)	5.26 (1.50; 78)	-1.35	0.1787
Practical Joke	1.89 (1-7)	3.79 (2.00; 53)	3.88 (1.90; 78)	0.26	0.7924
Banana Skin	3.85 (1-7)	2.42 (1.68; 53)	2.18 (1.55; 78)	-0.81	0.4186
Charlie Chaplin	4.59 (1-7)	4.35 (1.81; 40)	4.75 (1.81; 57)	1.09	0.2806
VJI	3.56 (1-7)	3.62 (1.90; 53)	3.53 (1.89; 78)	-0.29	0.7747
VJII	4.10 (1-7)	4.57 (1.91; 53)	3.78 (1.81; 78)	-2.36	0.0203

Table 2.2 tallies the most to least huaji: clown's performance, Charlie Chaplin's performance, VJII, slipping on banana skin, VJI and practical jokes. The first three scored means higher than neutral value, the last three lower. VJII obtaining the grand mean of 4.10 and that of 4.57 from the males indicates verbal humor can be huaji too. Sub-study I proves huaji can be ridiculous speech. Table 2.1 even lists VJII as more humorous than VJI. The two facts combined seem to imply that demarcation of huaji and humor is vague.

Thirty-four subjects (26%) had not watched Charlie Chaplin's films or movies and thus did not respond to the related questions. Charlie Chaplin is widely known to Taiwanese university students. All other items have 131 responses. Taiwanese men and women are generally alike in their assessment of five different scenarios as huaji. The only exception: men think the self-bragging joke (VJII) significantly more huaji than do women ($p < .05$), attesting that Tannen's observation (1994) of American men liking (self-)bragging more than women also holds true for Taiwanese linguistic phenomena. To be specific, men enjoy self-bragging much more than women.

Table 2.3 Summary of dependent t-test (Humor - Huaji)

	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value
Clown	-0.92	-6.33	0.0001*
Practical Joke	-0.18	-1.45	0.1489
Banana Skin	-1.57	-8.83	0.0001*
Charlie Chaplin	0.03	0.24	0.8084
VJI	0.52	2.63	0.0095*
VJII	0.69	4.13	0.0001*

* $p < .05$

Reading Tables 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 together, we find that clowns' performance and a person slipping on banana skin are more huaji than humorous ($p < .05$). The practical joke of pulling a chair away is neither humorous nor huaji ($p > .05$). However, Charlie Chaplin is equally humorous and huaji (means of 4.57 and 4.59 with $p > .05$). Verbal jokes are significantly more humorous than huaji ($p < .05$).

Table 2.4 Means of causing laughter: males versus females

	Grand (range)	Males (SD;N)	Females (SD;N)	t-value	p-value
Clown	4.42 (1-7)	4.79 (1.57; 53)	4.17 (1.65; 78)	-2.18	0.0307*
Practical Joke	2.72 (1-7)	2.66 (1.95; 53)	2.76 (1.89; 78)	0.2798	0.7802
Banana Skin	3.96 (1-7)	4.00 (2.01; 53)	3.94 (1.81; 77)	-0.19	0.8509
Charlie Chaplin	4.22 (1-7)	4.33 (1.76; 40)	4.14 (1.53; 57)	-0.54	0.5931
VJI	3.45 (1-7)	3.06 (1.84; 53)	3.71 (1.98; 77)	1.94	0.0549
VJII	3.88 (1-7)	3.85 (1.84; 53)	3.91 (2.08; 77)	0.17	0.8629

Table 2.4 avers that a clown's performance and Charlie Chaplin's ranked highest for causing laughter in both men and women (4.42, 4.79 and 4.17 for clown's means versus 4.22, 4.33 and 4.14 for Charlie Chaplin's). The clown and Chaplin perform to amuse people. The Taiwanese undergraduates might be heard to laugh more at these entertaining situations than at others. Males judged the clown significantly abler to cause their laughter than did females. Females judged VJI marginally abler to cause their laughter than males. In all other scenarios, the sexes displayed no significant or marginal difference in their judgment.

Table 2.5 Means of triggering smile: males versus females

	Grand (range)	Males (SD;N)	Females (SD;N)	t-value	p-value
Clown	4.55 (1-7)	4.81 (1.54; 53)	4.37 (1.63; 78)	-1.56	0.1207
Practical Joke	2.51 (1-7)	2.19 (1.44; 53)	2.73 (1.93; 78)	1.84	0.0685
Banana Skin	3.59 (1-7)	3.64 (2.00; 53)	3.56 (1.81; 77)	-0.24	0.8095
Charlie Chaplin	4.57 (1-7)	4.48 (1.65; 40)	4.63 (1.84; 57)	0.44	0.6617
VJI	4.27 (1-7)	4.02 (2.13; 53)	4.45 (2.04; 77)	1.15	0.2517
VJII	4.63 (1-7)	4.62 (1.69; 53)	4.63 (1.82; 77)	0.01	0.9898

*p<.05

Tables 2.4 and 2.5 together indicate Taiwanese smile more than laugh because two other means exceed 4. Practical jokes and slipping on banana skin trigger neither smile nor laughter. Though both men and women judge practical jokes seldom trigger smile, women's mouths are not so tight as men's ($p = 0.0685$). Women are more ready to be entertained in the meaning-to-entertain situation.

Table 2.6 Summary of dependent t-test (laughter - smile)

	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value
Clown	-0.13	-0.80	0.4276
Practical Joke	0.21	1.90	0.0590
Banana Skin	0.37	2.67	0.0085
Charlie Chaplin	-0.35	-1.93	0.0569
VJI	-0.85	-4.49	0.0001
VJII	-0.77	-4.95	0.0001

Tables 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 together imply the clown causing laughter and smile equally, Charlie Chaplin causing marginally more smile than laughter. Practical jokes and slipping on banana skin fail equally to trigger laughter or smile, the former evoking the least (Tables 2.4 & 2.5). Verbal jokes cause significantly more smile than laughter (mean differences counted by laughter minus smile are -0.85 and -0.77, respectively). Taiwanese who know that they are to be entertained are ready to laugh and/or smile. They hate practical jokes and sympathize with those accidentally falling on the banana skin. Their responses to verbal jokes are often more smiles than laughter.

The independent and dependent t-tests show that very shallow things such as a practical joke only cause laughter, not smiles. An accident of slipping on banana skin is shallower still, causing significantly more laughter than smiles ($p=0.0085$). Table 2.7 reveals further the relationship of scenario with humor/huaji/laughter/smile.

Table 2.7 r (p-value) of Pearson Product Moment Correlation

	Q1-Q2	Q1-Q3	Q1-Q4	Q2-Q3	Q2-Q4	Q3-Q4
Clown	0.448 (0.0001)	0.454 (0.0001)	0.521 (0.0001)	0.477 (0.0001)	0.439 (0.0001)	0.340 (0.0001)
Practical Joke	0.501 (0.0001)	0.494 (0.0001)	0.598 (0.0001)	0.415 (0.0001)	0.507 (0.0001)	0.776 (0.0001)
Banana Skin	0.348 (0.0001)	0.231 (0.0082)	0.409 (0.0001)	0.426 (0.0001)	0.398 (0.0001)	0.650 (0.0001)
Charlie Chaplin	0.548 (0.0001)	0.546 (0.0001)	0.594 (0.0001)	0.340 (0.0007)	0.547 (0.0001)	0.439 (0.0001)
VJI	0.367 (0.0001)	0.573 (0.0001)	0.576 (0.0001)	0.304 (0.0004)	0.207 (0.0178)	0.432 (0.0001)

VJII 0.449 0.667 0.652 0.436 0.402 0.569
 (0.0001) (0.0001) (0.0001) (0.0001) (0.0001) (0.0001)

Table 2.7 shows being humorous (Q1), being huaji (Q2), causing laughter (Q3) and triggering smile (Q4) are closely linked. All p's are under 0.05, yet the correlation values (r) of Q1-Q4 of all scenarios are higher than those of Q1-Q2. This means [being humorous and smile] correlate more closely than [being humorous and being huaji]. In five scenarios, the r's of Q1-Q4 are higher than those of Q1-Q3, indicating that humor and laughter does not so closely correlate with humor and smile. VJII is an exception: the r's of [humor and laughter] and [humor and smile] are almost the same. Four r's of [huaji and laughter (Q2-Q3)] exceed those of [huaji and smile (Q2-Q4)]; two r's (Charlie Chaplin and Practical joke) are the reverse. That shows that [huaji and laughter] are more closely correlated than [huaji and smile].

Study III

To prove meanings of the ancient word huaji have been altered, this study was founded on huaji stories from Shi-ji Huaji Liezhuan, to see if modern undergraduates rate them as more youmo than huaji. If they evaluate them so, we are very sure that the meanings of huaji has been changed. Fifty-four subjects (27 males and 27 females) filled in the five questions for each of the six huaji episodes:

- Q1 Extremely unhumorous 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely humorous
- Q2 Extremely un-huaji 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely huaji
- Q3 I've (1. never; 2. seldom; 3. sometimes; 4. usually; 5. always) heard the story.
- Q4 It triggers my laughter. Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
- Q5 It triggers my smile. Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

The reason for Q3 is to verify Carrell's claim (1997) that recycled jokes are no longer humorous. Liao (2001) refuted her qualitative observation or intuition by using Confucius' and Lin Yutang's funny episodes. Of the huaji stories, I have been most familiar with 'Bird not flying;' the other stories seem equally (un)familiar to me. We treat five choices [1. never; 2. seldom; 3. sometimes; 4. usually; 5. always] as consecutive variables, listing the means each story obtained (Table 3.1). The Ss seem to share my experience.

Table 3.1 The frequency of exposing to the stories

	Grand (range; SD)
Bird not Flying	2.17 (1-4; 1.04)
Envoy to Zhao	1.76 (1-4; 0.82)
Horse Funeral	1.72 (1-4; 0.88)
Sun-shu's Son	1.63 (1-4; 0.88)
Deer Soldier	1.31 (1-4; 0.67)
Guard Shifting	1.31 (1-4; 0.67)

Table 3.2 Means of being humorous: males versus females

	Grand (range; SD)	Males (SD)	Females (SD)	t-value	p-value
Bird not Flying	3.67 (1-6)	3.19 (1.39)	4.15 (0.99)	2.94	0.0049*
Envoy to Zhao	3.67 (1-6)	3.44 (1.58)	3.89 (1.34)	1.12	0.2695
Horse Funeral	4.20 (1-7)	3.74 (1.77)	4.67 (1.39)	2.14	0.0369*
Sun-shu's Son	3.52 (1-7)	3.33 (1.33)	3.70 (1.41)	0.99	0.3252
Deer Soldier	3.98 (1-7)	3.74 (1.77)	4.22 (1.34)	1.13	0.2644
Guard Shifting	3.81 (1-7)	3.52 (1.72)	4.11 (1.42)	1.38	0.1734
Grand Mean	3.81	3.49 (1.21)	4.12 (0.88)	2.19	0.0329*

*p<.05

Table 3.2 shows women judging all huaji stories significantly more humorous than do men ('Bird not Flying' and 'Horse Funeral') or slightly more. Overall, women judged them significantly more humorous and huaji (grand means as in the last row of Tables 3.2 and 3.3). In Tables 3.2 and 3.3, the ranking of most humorous/huaji to least is roughly the same, 'Horse Funeral' and 'Deer Soldier,' respectively, being the first and second most humorous and huaji and 'Sun-shu's Son' the least, indicating the difficulty in demarcating between humor and huaji.

Table 3.3 Means of being huaji: males versus females

	Grand (range; SD)	Males (SD)	Females (SD)	t-value	p-value
Bird not Flying	3.17 (1-6)	2.81 (1.55)	3.52 (1.25)	1.84	0.0717
Envoy to Zhao	3.26 (1-7)	2.85 (1.20)	3.67 (1.14)	2.55	0.0136*
Horse Funeral	3.98 (1-7)	3.33 (1.80)	4.63 (1.50)	2.88	0.0058*
Sun-shu's Son	3.07 (1-7)	2.89 (1.31)	3.26 (1.46)	0.98	0.3306
Deer Soldier	3.65 (1-7)	3.48 (1.60)	3.81 (1.52)	0.78	0.4364
Guard Shifting	3.19 (1-6)	3.00 (1.30)	3.37 (1.08)	1.14	0.2601
Grand Mean	3.39	3.06 (1.07)	3.71 (0.79)	2.54	0.0141*

*p<.05

Table 3.4 Summary of the dependent t-test results (Humor - Huaji)

	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value
Bird not Flying	0.50	2.47	0.0169
Envoy to Zhao	0.41	2.42	0.0189
Horse Funeral	0.22	0.88	0.3839
Sun-shu's Son	0.44	2.52	0.015
Deer Soldier	0.33	1.50	0.141
Guard Shifting	0.63	3.43	0.0012
Average	0.42	3.47	0.0010

Positive mean differences of humor minus huaji show that all six verbal jokes are judged more humorous than huaji (the last row in Table 3.4). The p's bigger than 0.05 for the first and second most humorous and huaji items demonstrates that being huaji and humorous can be the same highclass idea. One difference is that when a story is not so humorous, one calls it huaji. However, four not-so-humorous stories are still significantly more humorous than huaji.

Table 3.5 Means of triggering laughter: males versus females

	Grand (range; SD)	Males (SD)	Females (SD)	t-value	p-value
Bird not Flying	2.61 (1-5)	2.11 (1.34)	3.11 (0.97)	3.14	0.0028*
Envoy to Zhao	2.81 (1-7)	2.44 (1.42)	3.19 (1.18)	2.08	0.0421*
Horse Funeral	3.24 (1-6)	2.74 (1.51)	3.74 (1.06)	2.82	0.0068*
Sun-shu's Son	2.78 (1-5)	2.56 (1.25)	3.00 (1.11)	1.38	0.1731
Deer Soldier	2.87 (1-6)	3.22 (1.12)	2.52 (1.42)	2.02	0.0488*
Guard Shifting	2.59 (1-5)	2.22 (1.12)	2.96 (1.02)	2.54	0.0141*

Table 3.6 Means of triggering smile: males versus females

	Grand (range; SD)	Males (SD)	Females (SD)	t-value	p-value
Bird not Flying	3.78 (1-7)	3.00 (1.49)	4.56 (1.22)	4.19	0.0001*
Envoy to Zhao	3.59 (1-7)	3.00 (1.78)	4.19 (1.39)	2.73	0.0086*
Horse Funeral	4.06 (1-6)	3.07 (1.59)	5.04 (1.06)	5.34	0.0000*
Sun-shu's Son	3.50 (1-7)	3.15 (1.43)	3.85 (1.32)	1.88	0.0663
Deer Soldier	3.67 (1-7)	3.30 (1.90)	4.04 (1.48)	1.60	0.1158
Guard Shifting	3.44 (1-7)	2.89 (1.42)	4.00 (1.41)	2.88	0.0058*

Tables 3.5 and 3.6 demonstrate that 'Horse Funeral' detonates the most laughter and smiles. Six negative mean differences of laughter

minus smile prove that all six verbal jokes generally triggered more smiles than laughter (Table 3.7).

Table 3.7 Summary of the dependent t-test results (Laughter - smile)

	Mean Difference	t-value	Prob value
Bird not Flying	-1.17	-6.32	0.0001
Envoy to Zhao	-0.78	-4.40	0.0001
Horse Funeral	-0.81	-4.31	0.0001
Sun-shu's Son	-0.72	-4.66	0.0001
Deer Soldier	-0.80	-5.47	0.0001
Guard Shifting	-0.85	-5.42	0.0001

Table 3.8 r (p-value) of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (All Ss)

	Q1-Q2	Q1-Q3	Q1-Q4	Q1-Q5	Q2-Q3	Q2-Q4	Q2-Q5	Q3-Q4	Q3-Q5	Q4-Q5
Bird not flying	0.407 (0.002)	-0.042 (0.762)	0.521 (0.000)	0.562 (0.000)	-0.145 (0.296)	0.472 (0.000)	0.353 (0.009)	-0.079 (0.571)	0.000 (1.00)	0.557 (0.000)
Envoy to Zhao	0.592 (0.000)	0.010 (0.940)	0.656 (0.000)	0.737 (0.000)	-0.068 (0.627)	0.519 (0.000)	0.451 (0.001)	0.163 (0.238)	0.064 (0.646)	0.656 (0.000)
Horse Funeral	0.405 (0.002)	0.092 (0.506)	0.484 (0.000)	0.666 (0.000)	0.216 (0.117)	0.589 (0.000)	0.527 (0.000)	0.149 (0.282)	0.127 (0.360)	0.599 (0.000)
Sun-shu's son	0.556 (0.000)	-0.124 (0.370)	0.592 (0.000)	0.683 (0.000)	0.009 (0.950)	0.581 (0.000)	0.415 (0.001)	-0.031 (0.823)	-0.146 (0.293)	0.628 (0.000)
Deer soldier	0.452 (0.000)	0.042 (0.765)	0.709 (0.000)	0.672 (0.000)	0.018 (0.898)	0.419 (0.001)	0.447 (0.000)	0.240 (0.080)	0.273 (0.046)	0.785 (0.000)
Guard shifting	0.563 (0.000)	0.003 (0.985)	0.516 (0.000)	0.732 (0.000)	0.067 (0.629)	0.491 (0.000)	0.599 (0.000)	0.224 (0.103)	0.027 (0.847)	0.652 (0.000)

If Carrell's proposal (1997) that a recycled joke is less enjoyed than a first-time-heard joke is true, we expect the Pearson Product Moment Correlation to be negative between Q1 and Q3. If Liao's finding (2001) that recycled jokes are more appreciated than first-time-heard ones, we expect to get significantly positive correlation between Q1 and Q3. Table 3.8 proves frequency (Q3) of exposure independent of judgment as humorous (Q1)/huaji (Q2), or triggering laughter (Q4)/smile (Q5) (shaded areas). This refutes Carrell's proposal (1997) that recycled jokes are no longer humorous and/or trigger no laughter/smile. Brouwer et al. (1979: 47) and Wolfson (1989: 40) pointed out the inadequacy of an intuitive approach.

Discussion and Conclusion

The fact that every item for Sub-study II received almost a full range of the scale (1-7; Tables 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5 and 3.6) implies that everybody is not amused by the same thing. Still, the means show the majority's preference. Accusing someone of not having a sense of humor is quite offensive (Chiaro 1992: 16). I agree with Chiaro's proposal that 'when we accuse a person of not having a sense of humor, what we really mean is that they do not find the same thing funny as we do.'

Lin Yutang's proposal (1974) that humor should be able to trigger thoughtful smiles (not laughter) was proven true in all six scenarios in the second study and in five in Sub-study III because correlation between humor and smile is bigger than that between humor and laughter. Smile of the meeting of hearts is sophisticated, while the American humor of belly laugh is shallow (Kao 1974: xxvi; Raskin 2001). [Huaji and laughter] correlated more closely than [huaji and smile]; in other words, the meaning of huaji is not the same as it was two thousand years ago.

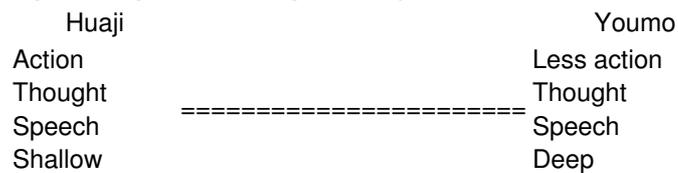
For more than three centuries, Si-ma Qien only located three huaji-ists. Huaji-ists, or modern humorists, are hard to find according to the Chinese standard. Modern Chinese people can locate few humorists, so huaji of about 2000 years ago should mean the same thing as humor nowadays. They refer to highclass verbal stuff. While the ancient word huaji means modern humor, etymology cannot prevent the old term from evolving. Language change is arbitrary. Chen (1985) was a pure Sinologist, loving etymology, which may offer some standard or criteria in language use, but sometimes language change cannot be directed by etymological knowledge.

Huaji was an elegant word during the Spring-Autumn and Warring States Periods (772-221 B. C.) meaning roughly the same as modern youmo. In the Sung and Yuan Dynasties, huaji seemed to be the equivalent of laughing/jokes (Chen 1985: 2). Lin Yutang and people nowadays prefer transliterated youmo as the equivalent of humor. One possible reason: Chinese pride/arrogance about their own country until the Opium War (1839), when China was defeated by England. From then on, Chinese have admired many Western things and prefer youmo to huaji to show they are fashionable, up-to-date, modern, highly educated, etc. This phenomenon also exists in English names of Taiwanese people (Liao, 2000).

In modern Chinese society in both Mainland China and Taiwan, huaji should mean the broadest definition of English humor and youmo

the verbal, beneficial jokes. When we asked Ss to write essays about differences between youmo and huaji, they drew a definite line between [funny actions, ridiculous speech] and [humorous speech act]. However, Sub-studies II and III show that the line is not so definite. Some funny verbal stuff can also be huaji. Thus a more precise definition of huaji should be funny, less profound thoughts, actions or speech, while humor pertains more to highclass interesting and profound speech act. Perhaps it is a matter of degree: huaji is on the shallow and humor on the deep end of thought. Huaji is more action than words. A vague gray area exists between the two concepts (Fig 1).

Fig 1: The gradient change of Huaji and Youmo



Limitations

Some readers might claim that a sample size of 245 (60 + 131 + 54) is too small. When 245 is too small, 400 or 1200 should not be big enough because the population in Taiwan is 24 million; 1200 is but 0.0005% of the population. In statistics, too many subjects connote wasting data, time and money. Sometimes a group of 25-30 subjects is sufficient (Hogg and Tanis, 1983). The impracticality of using a whole population or too big a sample in research results in establishment of departments of statistics for undergraduates and graduates in universities. We always welcome other researchers who include more subjects to get the same or different results from this study.

In Study I, we find Ss quite sure about demarcation of humor and huaji. However, Studies II and III point to strong correlation between the two terms: a person judging a scenario or verbal joke as humorous also regards it as huaji. The disparity between what people claim and what they perceive still demands investigation. Investigating German compliment responses, Golato (2002: 548) reported the same disparity between what people claim they do and what they actually do can be two entirely different things. However, her explanation cannot be borrowed here.

In this study, we find women judging the pun-like joke (VJI) as more humorous, while men rate the self-bragging (VJII) significantly more huaji. Further study should be invited to prove if men systematically love self-bragging jokes more than women. Women as a group generally love all such over-literal pun-like jokes more than men.

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Appendix

#1 King Wei of Qi liked riddles, drank alcohol, and had fun with women. He left all administrative jobs to his officials. Consequence: corruptive officials and deteriorated politics. Kings from neighboring kingdoms invaded Qi, putting it in imminent danger. The ministers close to King Wei dared not advise. Chun-yu Kun asked His Majesty to guess what bird it was, saying, "The bird is huge, staying at the King's court. He has not flown or howled for three years." King Wei replied, "When he begins to fly, it darts into the sky; when it howls, it surprises people." Thereupon the King summoned 72 county magistrates, rewarding a good one, killing a bad one and ordering soldiers

to defend the kingdom. The neighboring kings were afraid, returning Qi the previously occupied land. The prosperity lasted 36 years.

#2 In the eighth year of King Wei of Qi, the Kingdom of Chu sent a huge group of soldiers to invade Qi. King Wei sent Chun-yu Kun to Zhao to ask for military assistance. The former gave the envoy 100 pieces of gold and 10 chariots. Chun-yu Kun guffawed, facing the sky and breaking his hat tie. King Wei asked, "Are you implying the gifts are insufficient?" Chun-yu replied, "How dare I imply the gifts are insufficient?" King Wei continued, "If the gifts are not insufficient, why were you laughing?" The envoy answered, "This morning, on my way here, I saw a farmer pray to the gods for huge harvest by using a piece of pig foot and a glass of wine. I laughed because I felt the farmer was ridiculous to pray for immense harvest with so small sacrifice." King Wei added 900 pieces of gold, 10 pairs of white jade, and 90 chariots. The ambassador went with them to Zhao, whose king sent 100,000 soldiers together with 1000 leathered tanks. King Chu, hearing the information, retreated that night.

#3 King Zhuang of Chu had a favorite horse, dressed beautifully, sleeping on the bed in a grand house and eating dried dates. One day, the horse died of obesity. His Majesty ordered the officials to prepare a funeral using the ritual to bury an official. Those close to His Majesty argued about its inappropriateness. The exasperated King ordered, "Anyone coming in to offer suggestions against the horse's funeral shall die!" You Meng entered the court, crying loudly, facing the sky. King Zhuang asked, "Why are you crying in such a strange way?" Meng answered, "The horse was Your Majesty's favorite. Chu is a great kingdom. Using the ritual to bury an official for the horse is despising the horse. I plead Your Majesty to use the ritual of burying a king to bury the horse." King Zhuang asked, "How can I use the ritual of burying a king?" Meng replied, "Your Majesty can order a carved jade coffin. Order the soldiers to dig a hole, elderly people and children to carry soil away. Ask the envoys from Qi and Zhao to stand in front, those from Han and Wei to guard the rear. Assign an area and its people to protect and maintain the grave. Knowing it, all officials will say that Your Majesty valued the horse more than human beings." King Zhuang felt ashamed. Listening to Meng's suggestion, he ordered the horse be cooked and eaten. He did not want people to know that he valued a horse more than a human being.

#4 Prime Minister Sun-shu Ao of Chu knew You Meng was a wise man and treated him nicely. Dying, Sun-shu told his son, "After I die, you will be poor. You can go to You Meng, saying, 'I'm the son of Sun-shu Ao.'" Several years later, on his way home from cutting wood, the son of Sun-shu Ao met You Meng, saying, "I am the son of the late Premier. My father said that I could see you when I am very poor." You Meng answered, "Do not leave the Kingdom. Otherwise, the King will not find you. Dressed yourself like your father and emulate him in talking and acting." One year later, the son acted like his father. Even the King's officials could not tell the difference. At the King's feast, You Meng took the late Premier's son to drink a toast to His Majesty. The King made a mistake, thinking the Prime Minister resurrected from death. He wanted to hire the son as the Prime Minister because he liked Sun-shu Ao. You Meng said, "Wait. Let me go home and consult my wife. I will tell you in three days." Three days later, You Meng told His Majesty, "My wife said, it was not worthwhile to be the Prime Minister for Chu. You see Sun-shu Ao helped the King to become strong among kingdoms. Yet his son is starving and making a living by cutting wood. Had the late Premier been corruptive, he might have been killed. It was wrong to be a corruptive official. Still, the consequence of a good official is that his son is poor like that. It is not worth being a Prime Minister in Chu." Hearing this, King Zhuang met the son of the late Premier and had him rule a place of 400 households to show respect to Sun-shu Ao. The position was offered up to the tenth generation of posterity.

#5 The First Emperor of the Qin Dynasty wanted to expand the Palace Zoo, to cover a few counties. The theatrical worker You Zhan said, "Very good idea. When enemies come from the East, we send deer to attack them with their antlers. Enemies will be defeated." Thus the First Emperor gave up the idea of expanding the zoo.

#6 On a rainy day, the First Emperor was holding a feast. The guards outside were wet, freezing to the bone. You Zhan sympathized them, saying, "Do you hope to take a rest?" The guards answered, "Yes, very much." Zhan said, "When I call you, you answer loudly, 'Here!'" A moment later, officials drank a toast to His Majesty. Zhan called, "Guards!" They answered, "Here!" Zhan continued, saying, "You are tall and strong. Yet, you are useless, standing miserably in the rain. Though I am short, I am lucky to rest comfortably inside." Hearing it, the First Emperor ordered to shift half of the guards.