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and Languages Department of
Foreign Languages

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Languages English
Sciences of the language

Submitted and Defended by:

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**The Use of Humour to Enhance Learners' Attention and
Retention in Foreign Language Classes.**

**The Case of Third Year Students at "Omar Idriss" Secondary
School in El-Kantara.**

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DECLARATION

I, Sawsen Khelifa, do hereby declare that the work that I presented in this thesis is my own, and has not been submitted before for any other institution or university for a degree.

This research was conducted and completed at Omar Idriss Secondary School Biskra, Algeria.

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DEDACTION

To my family and friends

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ABSTRACT

Attention and retention are closely related concepts that affect learning a foreign language at different levels. However, it is observed that in English as a foreign language (EFL) students show many deficiencies in attention and retention of the classroom materials. Besides, some English teachers find it challenging to manage their classes in a way that creates an appropriate environment to keep the students' interest and increase their retention. Teachers' lack of using various teaching strategies or techniques may be barriers that impeded them from improving these EFL learners' mental capacities. The study aimed to highlight the impact of using humour on enhancing EFL students' attention and boosting their retention by examining to what extent humour can raise their interest toward learning English and promote their retention. Therefore, it was hypothesized that humour could be an effective tool that would contribute to enhancing learners' attention and retention. However, since this kind of learning is not widely adopted, we sought to explore teachers' perceptions towards implementing this tool for future practical pedagogies. To test the validity of the research's main hypothesis, a mixed-method approach was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data through a semi-structured questionnaire administered to 13 secondary school teachers. In addition to, a classroom observation with Third Year students at Omar Idriss Secondary School in El Kantara was conducted to examine their adaptation to the employment of humour. The analysis and interpretation of data revealed that they both had positive perceptions of the impact of humour to enhance the attention and retention of the students. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was confirmed because the results were in favour of the research assumptions. Hence, teachers at Omar Idriss are recommended to integrate humourous tools in future pedagogical tasks.

Keywords: humour, EFL, teaching strategies, attention, retention

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

&: and

ADHD: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

e.g.: *exempli gratia* (for example).

Et al.: *et alia* (and others)

HEQCO: the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO)

i.e.: *id est* (in other words)

PhD: Doctor of Philosophy

Q: Question

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المخلص

General Introduction

Introduction

With the development of educational systems, teachers struggle to find an effective teaching strategy for their students. Hence, using humour as a teaching helping tool can be helpful to improve many areas of the learning process. The purpose of this study is to explore the effects of using humour as a teaching strategy on the attention and retention of third-year students at Omar Idriss Secondary School. It is hypothesized that teachers will potentially enhance the EFL learners' interest and ability to retain and transfer the ideas being presented if they incorporate humour in their educational message.

1. Statement of the problem

In the context of the foreign language classroom, students suffer from high levels of anxiety due to the difference between their cognitive capacities and their linguistic skills. Sometimes, some students get bored in class and do not acquire the expected knowledge in the target language. They also become less interested toward the classroom lessons that probably affect their learning process as well as their achievement. Furthermore, teachers often impose order and control foreign language classes, which discourages students from sharing the difficulties they face in the target language. As a result, learners become less engaged in the learning process due to classroom settings and inappropriate learning conditions, such as classroom management problems and lack of learners' motivation towards the lessons. Hence, all these factors influence learners' attention and retention of information gaining.

Therefore, and to enhance the EFL learners' attention and retention, an EFL teacher needs to know how to keep them interested towards lessons and engage them in the learning process as well as encourage their creativity and productivity in the target language. The study is a suggestion to use humour as a pedagogical helping tool to teach the foreign language

lessons that may result in gaining students' attention and holding their interest, which is one of the primary reasons to use humour as a teaching tool in the college classroom. The attention-gaining is the power of humour, that elevates students' understanding of the material. Because of the students' interest, the information will be stored in long-term memory, which enhances students' retention in tests and exams, (Deiter, 2000). In short, using humour as an instructional tool in foreign language classes can be presented in such a manner as to raise students' attention and retention, and thereby the learning process will be improved.

2. Literature Review

It is generally accepted that Baccalaureate learners have difficulties in being interested toward the lessons, and most of the time showed no engagement in what is going on in the classroom. During the presentation of lessons, most of them have been witnessed chatting with their classmates, others were drawing on the tables, and some other students were playing with their phones. Depending on piloting stage results using instructed observation, evidence suggests that humour is among the most important tools that offer EFL opportunities to enhance their attention and retention to develop their level in order to pass the baccalaureate exam. Different works exist in the literature regarding the effect of using humour as a teaching strategy on the educational attention and retention of EFL learners.

Learning has been associated a long time ago with the same traditional way of teaching in addition to the dominance of the formal rules of classroom settings. This learning context made students less interested and motivated about lessons. As a result, learners feel bored and they became less involved in the learning process. Hence, teachers and researchers opt for humour as an effective tool in teaching that may enhance learners' attention and retention,

and even creates a relaxed classroom environment to make them more engaged in classroom activities. Hillman (as cited in Lowenstein and Bradshaw, 2004) proved that by saying:

Despite the recognition of the importance of humour, nursing educators have made little attempt to consciously or to deliberately use humour in the educational setting. The planned use of humour in the educational process as content in the curriculum and as a learning tool remains an uncommon occurrence. Unfortunately, the educational process has long been associated with formal discourse. Regardless of how good an educator is at presenting, content alone is not necessarily going to keep everyone's attention and interest for the entire presentation. Using humour in the classroom enhances the learning process and fosters student- teacher relationship, and can become the vehicle for developing the student's ability to relate in a warm and friendly way to others (p.56)

Humour has been identified as a powerful tool, which may the teacher has to attract students' attention and build a strong relationship with them to avoid classroom anxiety and boredom. Hillman (as cited in Lowenstein & Bradshaw 2004) asserted that, "One of the most important functions of humour is to create a positive learning environment. Throughout history, humour has been accepted as an important tool for the teacher in college classrooms. Most students can recall a learning experience they will never forget because it was presented humourously".

Additionally, several reports have shown that humour contributes effectively to enhance EFL' attention towards the lecture, and decreases their level of anxiety so they will become more active. Aboudan (2009) confirmed the same idea that humour has a beneficial

THE USE OF HUMOUR TO ENHANCE EFL LEARNERS' ATTENTION AND RETENTION

influence on the reduction of anxiety, attracting attention, and retention of the information. As for the fundamental role of humour in the classroom that may enhance the learners' attention towards the lecture, learners will become more active, as it has been suggested, "humour has a beneficial influence on reduction of anxiety, attracting attention, and retention of the information" (p.30).

Furthermore, Aboudan (2009) also emphasized the importance of matching humour with teaching in order to motivate and attract students' attention. The implementation of humour in education is not a new thing for educators. Many researchers Bergen (et al.1992) proved that humour created a healthy learning environment. Mary (2008) asserted that humour has many benefits such as activate brainpower, improve learners' creativity and make an optimal environment for learning.

There is a large literature that recognizes the importance of humour as an example of enhancing EFL learners' retention of information. Oppliger and Teslow (as cited in Nartin, 2007) confirmed that lecture material that is associated with humour might be learned and remembered better than the one that is accomplished with a serious way.

Using humour as an effective pedagogical strategy may also help to avoid the negative impact of teachers' negative characters since "students enjoy being entrained and amused" (Harmer, 1998, p.1). Therefore, the happier about learning students feel, the more successful they will be. Vossler (2011) claimed that in classroom humour is not only being funny or saying what is laughable, but also is giving the impression of being friendly and having an affinity with learners. Therefore, the teacher can discuss something very seriously and be funny and laughing at the same time with the learners.

Other benefits of applying humour in the teaching-learning process are motivation and engagement. For instance, Martin (2007) found that motivation could be raised with humour. He believed that humour has been told to increase motivation, enhance their retention of new information and even facilitate a positive learning environment in order to decrease anxiety.

Similarly, Tews et al. (2015) revealed that maintaining students' engagement during a long lecture session could be challenging for the teachers. They agree that students are more interested in lessons sessions and engaged in learning activities when a teacher adopts humour. However, most of these studies have not focused on the importance of humour to enhance EFL learners' attention and retention in particular within the same research study. Therefore, the researcher intends to explore the field EFL teaching learning in connection with humour as a pedagogical tool. The more humour evolves; the more students' interest and ability to retain are raised.

In all the reviewed studies within this section, humour is deemed as a powerful pedagogical tool that contributes increasing the quality of the teaching-learning process. These interesting findings stimulated the researcher to explore teachers' and students' perception of the benefits and challenges of such an application to enhance learners' attention and retention in particular

3. Research Questions

Based on investigating the impact of humour on the EFL learners' attention and retention, the present study will attempt to answer the following questions:

- 1) How can teachers use humour in order to enhance EFL learners' attention and retention?
- 2) To what extent can humour promote students' retention of classroom materials and information?

3) What are the teachers and learners' views and attitudes towards the use of humour to gain student's attention during the lesson?

4. Research hypothesis

In accordance with our research questions, this work is designed to test the following hypothesis

If the EFL teachers use humour in class, they will enhance the EFL learners' attention and retention and promote the learning process as well.

5. Research Aims

The general aim of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of humour in foreign language classrooms, specifically to gain learners' attention and increase retention of what has been learned. To realize this overall research aim, the researcher stated the following specific aims:

- 1) To determine how humour influences the EFL learners' attention.
- 3) To identify teachers and learners' attitudes toward the use of humour.

6. Significance of the study

This study addresses and focuses more on how teachers and learners respond to using humour in teaching since the latter is an achievable strategy that goes with the learning process. Therefore, the study is meant to emphasize more on humour as a teaching helping tool, which may enhance Third-Year EFL learners' interest and memory at Omar Idriss Secondary School in El Kantara. Likewise, according to some previous studies agreed that humour is closely related to memory, as it is usually easier to recall an experience that occurred in a humorous context.

This study also highlights the positive effects of humour that may create an interesting environment to attract the students' attention and promote their learning so far. Hence, when the teacher offers this kind of relaxed atmosphere in the classroom, she/he will reduce students' boredom. As a result, learners will become more motivated toward lessons and they will be more encouraged to take part in the learning process.

Thereby, this research mainly emphasizes the importance of using different types of humour, which can enable the learners to be more productive, and creative by enhancing their attention and retention and make them more involved in class activities especially Baccalaureate classes. Thus, the study will examine teachers and students' views about the importance of humour in EFL classes. Therefore, this research work seeks to help teachers to make their students more active through enhancing their attention and retention.

7. Research Methodology

Research works come in many different forms. The use of methods vary according to the nature of the issue treated. Thereby, research methodology is an important area that should be well clarified among researchers, since methodology usually linked with a research plan, or the tools used to treat the validity of the research findings. Accordingly, when designing this study, the researcher needs to consider which research design to be adopted: qualitative, quantitative, or a mixed-methods research. Moreover, the selection of the research design depends on considering the philosophical worldviews that shape the research work. Examples of these philosophical assumptions are post positivism, social constructivism, and pragmatism. Then, a researcher chooses what procedures of inquiry and data collection and analysis methods will best suit the research design (Creswell, 2009). He also added that choosing a research design takes into accounts the nature of the researcher problem, his or her personal experiences,

and the audience selected for his/her study. Such methodological decisions contribute to augment the quality of the research and increase opportunities to meet the researcher's objectives

7.1 Research approach

Regarding to the nature of the study, a mixed method approach will be used to investigate the role of Humour as a Teaching Strategy to Enhance Third Year EFL learners' Attention and Retention at "Omar Idriss" Secondary School in El Kantara, Biskra. The researcher will employ the mixed method research methodology to collect and analyze data. This type of research seeks to find out opinions and views about the effectiveness of using humour in teaching learning process. Moreover, this study aims to validate the suggested hypothesis seeking correlation between two variables; namely, the implementation of humour as independent variable, and students' attention and retention as the dependent variables. This kind of investigation may represent a precious clue for further and more rigorous investigation.

7.2 Research Design

There are various research designs for each research approach. Due to the choice of the mixed method, a case study design will be used to provide real action situations that enable the researcher to explore valid data about the issue. "The main benefit of a case study then is that the form is one or few instances that usually allow the researcher to deal with the subtleties and intricacies of complex, social situations "(Houadjli, 2015, p.38). This type of design tends to give a detailed description of specific learners. Therefore, the case study is the one which investigate a limited number of EFL learners to answer specific research questions with its real life context.

7.3 Population

This study will be conducted in Omar Idriss Secondary School of El Kantara. It deals with the impact of humour on students' attention and retention. Both third year EFL learners and teachers will represent the population as a case study. Students distributed in six groups, whereas teachers will be four. The number of the whole population is expected to vary from 200 to 240, aged from 18 to 21. This number includes male and females students with the same degree of experience as they have been learning English for seven years or more. My choice fell in this population based on piloting study by using observation. I noticed that third year classes especially the literary section are less motivated and interested toward lessons. They feel depressed most of time because of syllabus overload; they do not have time for break. As their teacher suggests, these classes need a psychological care to enhance their interest and to increase their motivation that may help them to pass their Baccalaureate exam.

7.4 Sample

Sampling in general means to involve a certain number of people in the research to take part in the problem existed on that population. In the target population, the number is 38 students because it is so difficult to work with the whole population since it requires a great deal of effort and much time to carry out the research. A representative sample of the population has to be chosen. Depending on non-probability purposive sampling method, the researcher is able to select who can offer the best information to achieve the goals of one' study (Kumar, 2011). This study aimed to enhance third year secondary school students' attention and retention of information by using humour as a pedagogical tool in learning. The researchers also aimed at collecting perceptions of the target population about the implementation of using this technique;

therefore, literature third year learners at Omar Idriss Secondary School are likely to provide valuable original data that increase the quality of work.

7.5 Data Collection Methods

Research methods are forms of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Accordingly, to collect and analyze data, the researcher used a mixed research. Moreover, the questionnaires are good instruments that provide “efficiency in terms of researcher time, researcher effort, and financial resources” (Dörnyei 2003, p. 9). In the current study, the researchers will rely on two data collection methods, classroom observation for 3rd year EFL learners and a questionnaire for EFL teachers on the context of Secondary School, in order to investigate the role of using humour among them.

7.5.1 Observation

According to Mackey and Gass (2005), observation can frequently take place within a classroom context. The latter often allows the study of behaviour at close range with many important contextual variables. Classroom observation is an important and useful means for gathering in-depth information about any researched phenomena. In order to gain insights about the implementation of humour on students' attention and retention and how students interact during lessons presented within a content-based humour, a classroom observation will be conducted with a secondary school third year class.

7.5.2 The Aim of Observation

The researchers will be opt for classroom observation as a data gathering tool which aimed to involve the real learning context to get more realistic and reliable data. It will be conducted with Third year class at Omar Idriss Secondary school in El Kantara in order to observe the impact of humour on EFL learners' attention and retention.

7.6 The Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire is well established instrument used in research methodology in order to gain data from a specific population. It consists of series of questions divided into separate sections. Because teachers are crucial factor in the successful of the teaching task, they are also concerned in this research study. They are required to provide the researcher with their attitude and perspective about the application of humour in the learning context, for the sake of explore the impact of humour using as a teaching strategy on learners' attention and retention of information.

7.6.1 The Aim of the Teachers' Questionnaire

For this study, a semi-structured questionnaire will distributed to four secondary school teachers, and it is useful tool since it takes less time to analyze and interpret the data. Our Questionnaire will be designed depending on both close-ended and open-ended questions. One reason to justify this choice is that the researcher intends to specify the type of information to be collected through the choices she will suggest in the Likert scales, rating scales, and multiples choice questions. Likert scales suite the nature of the researcher's investigation in that they are advantageous for enabling respondents to express degrees of opinions unlike the restriction found in yes/no questions. McLeod (2008) explained that they also facilitate the stage of analyzing data because they provide quantitative data that are easier to be measured than qualitative ones. However, the researcher also will provide a room via open-ended questions for allowing new information to emerge depending on the participants' opinions. In sum, the researcher needs to know teachers' attitude toward using humour in EFL teaching to decide whether humour is an effective teaching tool or not.

7.8 Data Analysis and Procedures

The data collected in this work was analyzed using statistics and descriptive statistics include percentages and frequencies with the questionnaire and the classroom observation checklist to see the impact of humour on students' attention and retention and to explore teachers' attitudes towards the role of humour in EFL teaching learning. Besides, data were summarized through different ways analogous to frequencies and bar charts.

8. Structure of the study

To write this study, the researcher used the sixth edition of the APA writing style (American Psychological Association). This style has been created to provide rigorous standards, style rules, and simple set of procedures to facilitate reading comprehension of scientific research (VandenBos, 2010). Besides, it offers guidance for making dissertations methodical, unified, and well structured. Moreover, the researcher divided the research work into three main chapters in which each chapter targets specific points

The **First Chapter** attempted to provide an overview about the EFL teaching context, and to explore the main psychological factors that affect third year students' learning in general, and students' attention and retention in particular. Besides, it is an attempt to provide what teachers and students need to know about the impact of humour as technique to reduce students' anxiety and demotivation. The researcher aims to reveal a clear picture of the EFL learning environment at Omar Idriss Secondary school in Baccalaureate classes in order to establish a relaxed atmosphere that may increase their attention, retention of classroom materials and information.

The **Second Chapter** is devoted to clarify the role of humour in promoting Secondary School learners' progress and success. Thorough this chapter, the researcher will provide some

of humor's theories based on scientific and psychological researches; in addition to providing types of humour and techniques of teaching using humour in classroom activities. Hence, it deals with the relationship between two research variables: humour and student's attention and retention, in order to provide a clear picture on our research topic.

Finally, the **Third Chapter** deals with the fieldwork and data analysis. This chapter includes a detailed analysis of students' feedback that will be obtained from classroom observation, teachers' feedback of questionnaire, and ultimately a discussion of the results obtained in this research work. Throughout this chapter, there are four main sections: the final research results, interpretation of the results, conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter One:

HUMOUR AND EDUCATION

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| 1.1 Definition of Humour | 15 |
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Introduction

Part of what it means to be human is how humans are characterized. Humour is a part of life that can be powerful when it is used correctly. The sense of humour can boost attractiveness and improve leadership skills. On the other hand, humour can reduce stress to a great extent. Hence, comedy is simply a funny way of being serious that can be adopted in teaching and learning settings to make students work with enthusiasm and enjoyment and that may lead to better results.

1.1 Definition of Humour

Many people think that humour exists for the sake of entertainment, or for adding spice to social life. Humour as defined by Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary (2008) refers to a comic, absurd, or incongruous quality causing amusement. Moreover, Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary (2008) defines humour as "the ability to cause or feel amusement or keep somebody happy by doing what they want". That is to say, humour refers to the tendency of experiences to provoke laughter and provide amusement. Similarly, the term humour is defined by Merriam Webster's dictionary as "the ability to be funny or to be amused by things that are funny". Many authors define humour in various ways; for instance, Morrison (2008) believes that humour in our lives affects mainly the cognitive development of human emotions. In addition, Romero and Cruthirds (2006) claim that: "humour is an amusing communication that produces positive emotions and cognitions in the individual or in the group." (p. 59), they believe that humour is a way of communication which gives a good impression and formulates some positive feelings and emotions.

To go deeper, (Martin, 2007) believes that humour is “as a psychological response characterized by the positive emotion of amusement, the appraisal that something is funny, and the tendency to laugh”. They emphasized humour is indicated by at least one of three responses: behavioral (laughing), cognitive (appraising something as “funny”), or emotional (experiencing the positive emotion of amusement). In relation with teaching, humour is considered as a message communicated by teachers which often increases enjoyment, boosts creativity, facilitates coping, and mitigates the perceived intensity of negative life events. One of them Fredrickson (1998) who claimed that: “humour can also improve social interaction and development by increasing tolerance for social differences and by facilitating approach toward novel, mildly stressful stimulation”.

1.2 Theories of Humour

There are several main theories that attempt to explain what humour is, why something is humorous, and how laughter works and why exactly we do it. Most theories developed around humour cover definite aspects of humour rather than others. This does not mean that these theories are unaware of the existence of others, but rather they complete one another giving us more a complete picture on the matter. An interesting point is that none of the theories has one theorist who is recognized as its originator. According to (Attardo, 1994) the theories on humour would be divided onto three main types: “cognitive, social-behavioral and psychological, each theory ought to suggest its competence in the field” (p.94). They may be divided into three main types: superiority, integrity, relief and Morreall's theories.

1.2.1 The Superiority Theory

The standard interpretation of the superiority theory of humour is attributed to the philosophers Plato and Aristotle originating in ancient Greece. According to them, this theory places feelings of superiority at the center of humour and comic amusement. In other words, we may deduce that the superiority theory focuses on the emotive aspects of humour.

Some presentations of the superiority theory are more measured. Starting with Monroe (1998) who stated that, "According to any superiority theory of humour, the laughter always looks down on whatever he laughs at, and so judges it inferior by some standard", (p.349). In another words, he tried to illustrate an example of this theory that is when sometimes people use humour to laugh at others, situation out of fear, ignorance, or losing our power and control.

In her discussion of offensive humour, Bicknell (2007) suggested that the superiority theory is a way of describing a sort of comic amusement we may have to a certain kind of humour. She also emphasized this theory explains the nature and value of some humour. Other principals of this theory stated by Spiegel (1972), who believed that the concept of comedy in superiority theory is the humour we found in life which is based on ridicule and laughter at the foolish actions of others because we feel superior, are also central to the humour experience. That is to say, ridicule and feelings are essential components of humour.

However, the theory could not account for the distinction people make every day between laughing at and laughing with others. In addition to that, not all laughter and humour could be explained by the superiority theory because humans may laugh out of surprise, amazement, or enjoyment. Therefore, a more recent theory came into existence: the incongruity theory.

1.2.2 The Incongruity Theory

Incongruity theory is arguably the most complicated humour theory at the same time it is the most convincing and widely applicable. According to Deckers and Kizer (1975) incongruity can be defined as “the divergence between an expected and actual state of affairs and has long been recognized as a condition for humour” (p.215). In another words, this divergence or incongruity with what was expected results in humour. Something is perceived as incongruous when it is interpreted as being in an unusual or unexpected theory with combination with something else.

The incongruity theory describes the cognition role of humour by reappraising a negative situation to a less negative situation by decreasing the threatening perspective (Wilkins & Eisenbranam, 2009). According to Martin (2007), the incongruity theory presents the cognitive process of humour, which provides a crucial understanding of the humour application. With specific reference to the classroom, Berk (2007) points out that the cognitive processes used in understanding a joke are similar to what is involved in the problem solving. Specifically, this mental processing occurs in the right hemisphere of the brain, where creativity and problem solving lie. Moreover, this theory states that the incongruous juxtaposition of two or more people, objects, ideas, or expectations is what makes something humorous. Morreall (1983) explains why people find a clown's face funny by saying: “what does not fit into our vision of how the world should be is possibly humorous to us” (p. 45).

The advocators of this theory stated conditions for the enjoyment of incongruities. The latter according to them should come in pleasant way, i.e. people do not feel threatened or challenged (Morreall, 1997). The second condition is that a person should enjoy the

incongruities, rather than viewing them as puzzles to be solved, or flaws or disorders to be corrected to find humour in them (Morreall, 1997). As an example for this condition, Morreall presented the case of cartoon in a magazine, instead of providing fun, triggered some readers to find solutions for the improbable situation it described.

1.2.3 The relief theory

Although the incongruity theory is currently dominant, it still cannot account for all incidents of laughter and humour. An example is a person's laughter after solving a puzzle. There is no incongruity in such a situation. To explain such cases, theorists like Freud and Spencer suggest the relief (release) theory. This theory considered laughter as the accumulation of nervous energy in a particular situation. Freud (1856) came up with a relief theory, where he stated that all laugh-producing situations are pleasurable because it brings to the person pleasant feelings and comedy. Freud also concludes that jokes are more than they seem. He believes that the humour we enjoy in jokes bears close relations with dreams; mainly because both have hidden benefits (enjoy hidden pleasure "unconsciously").

The relief theory of humour is when we are faced with a situation where tensions are created within us. As we try to cope with two sets of emotions and thoughts, we need a release and laughter is the way of cleansing our system of built-up tension and incongruity, and in this case, the laughter will be referred to as relief laughter. Furthermore, the relief theory is also used in movies and plays especially plots that deal with thrill and adventure. It is a technique used when the audience in a movie or play are experiencing high tensions, the plot will include comic relief at the right times. The tension or the suspense is built up as much as possible and

then it breaks down slightly with a side comment, allowing the viewer to relieve himself from what he is facing with high-tension.

1.2.4 Morreall's Theory

Morreall admitted that each of the three previous theories could explain some cases of humour; however, they fail to account for all instances of humour (Morreall, 1983). The latter formed a new theory in which he tried to incorporate all three previous theories. The essence of this new theory is presented in the formula: "Laughter Results from a Pleasant Psychological Shift" (Morreall, 1983, p.39).

This theory identifies three general features of laughter situations: the person who laughs undergoes a change of psychological states: this change is sudden, and it is pleasant. The psychological shift may be cognitive (as in the cases of incongruities), affective (as in the cases explained by the superiority and relief theories), or both (as in the cases of hostile humour). Hence, Morreall tries to take all humour instances that could be explained by each single previous theory into account.

Morreall's argument of laughter and security may be of great value for education settings where the presence of laughter could mean the introduction of not only pleasure, but also a sense of security to learners. Both pleasure and security are among the factors that facilitate successful learning. Therefore, the pleasant psychological shift that humour can be an effective antidote for learning anxiety, especially language learning anxiety.

1.3 Humour in Education

In relation to education, humour is considered as one instructional tool that can be used in the classroom to increase the teaching effectiveness (Wanzer, 2002). For instance, Teslow

(1995) states that “humour has long been recognized as a beneficial strategy in education as a tension reliever” (p. 9). Hence, many researchers (Bryant & Zillmann, 1989; Cornett, 1986; Hill, 1988) claim that once the teacher uses humour to explain the students’ errors they will be naturally accepted. They may even react positively by laughing at these mistakes, so that they communicate better and consider their mistakes in their future learning. Moreover, humour can be used for the sake of attracting and maintaining attention, Zillmann (1989) believes that most children prefer learning through humorous programs that is why he is suggested employing short bursts frequently to maintain students’ interest.

1.3.1 Forms of Humour

Different researchers have classified humour in a number of ways. These are mainly based on one or more of the following features of humour instances: types (forms of humour, e.g. jokes or comments), subjects (who/which humour is directed at, e.g. the teacher himself/herself, the students, or the topic, and the lesson. Tamborini (1981) for instance determined that humour classification is also based on whether the humour employed was related to the content presented during the lecture or not. Similarly, Zillmann and Bryant (1980) looked at the relevance of humour to the course content, course material, and students. They came up with six types of humour. Based on the data retrieved from their study, they stated that humour in the classroom may take the form of telling jokes, riddles, puns, humorous stories, or comments.

Shade (1996) in his book “License to Laugh” claimed that humour is not limited to puns, riddles, jokes, anecdote, yet it has numerous forms that requires the reader or the listener’s

competence to comprehend language-based incongruities. Therefore, according to these scholars, it may be fruitful to provide an EFL context with humour.

1.3.1.1 Pun

Pun has been defined by Shade (1996) as “the humourous use of a word so as to suggest a different meaning or application; a play on words. Sometimes a pun plays on words with the same or similar sound but different meaning. It has been said that it takes an intelligent person to create a pun, and brave person to use one!”(p.3). That is to say, that puns are creative way of using words since the speaker uses a word but he means another one. For example:

- What kind of flower grows on your face?
- Tulips! (Two lips).

1.3.1.2 Riddle

It is known as “a word game or a puzzling fact which is usually presented in a question and answer format” (shade, 1996, p.3). Similarly, Merriam Webster’s dictionary also defined the terms as “a mystifying, misleading, or puzzling question posed as a problem to be solved or guessed”. Riddle going back to the Old English word *rædan* that meant interpret or guess. It had also counterparts in Indo-European languages like German (Old Saxon). Then, Greeks especially “Aristophanes” who regard the life of men as so many riddles use it. At that time, poets used riddles in their writing because they thought they are a great brain-exercise, which had an effect on the power of brains that may solve them.

In relation to education, riddles are considered as successful tool that may help students memorize the content and understand the meaning of new vocabularies. In addition to their effects on keeping the students motivated by creating a relaxed atmosphere for learning. Marcy

(2008 as cited in Ratih 2011), states that doing the exercise using riddles is an activity through which the teacher can transfer the material and make the students relax in the class when they accept the material. Moreover, Frost (2009 as cited in Ratih 2011) confirmed that riddles are a way for students to identify words. That is to say, riddles can be useful to facilitate language-learning process.

1.3.1.3 Joke

Joke refers to something such as an amusing story or trick that is said or done in order to make people laugh, (Cambridge Dictionary, 2008). Shade (1996) also defined joke as “something said or done that provokes laughter” (p.3). The source of this common form of humour according to him can involve any or all of the following:

- Phonological: it is mainly based on the phonological structure of words. Example: Rebecca:

What is this?

Waiter: It is bean soup.

Rebecca: I do not care what is “been”. What is it now?

- Lexical: it contains multiple meaning of words.

Example: Dave: What has 18 legs and catches flies?

Lynn: A baseball team

- Surface Structure: based on the alternative grouping of words.

Example: Done: What kinds of flowers like to be kissed?

Joan: A tulip (two lip)

- Deep Structure: involves alternative interpretation of a word or phrase.

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Example: Sue: What animal can jump higher than a house?

Chris: Any animal. Houses cannot jump.

- Metalinguistic: based on the language form.

Example: Kathy: What is at the end of everything?

Tim: The letter "g".

These categories and classifications of jokes require students' abilities (cognitive, linguistic, and metalinguistic) in their appreciation and comprehension.

1.3.1.4 Tongue Twisters

A tongue twister is a specific sequence of words whose rapid, repeated pronunciation is difficult even for natives. Often these words are similar and follow one another, but differ in certain syllables. Cambridge Dictionary defines it as "a sentence or phrase that is intended to be difficult to say, especially when repeated quickly and often". Tongue twisters are made for amusement and raising laughs, and they are considered as a good articulation exercise to improve English pronunciation. They work the same as physical exercise, i.e. the more you practice, the better your pronunciation will be. Examples:

- How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood.
- She sells seashells by the seashore.
- Plump Peter Panda picks pears, pears and pumpkins.

Judson (2005) claimed "a part from usefulness, tongue twisters are a source of fun."(p.48).

1.3.2 Educational Benefits of Humour

It is often claimed that humour is a desirable factor in teaching and learning. Justifications for the use of humour include the promotion of understanding, holding the

attention of students and creating a positive attitude to the subject matter. A number of studies reviewed a connection between humour and learning and reported positive results. Some of these results come from speculations, anecdotes, or personal experience (Bell, 2009; Bruner, 2002; Kher 1999; Minchew, 2001; & Wang, 2006). From the findings of empirical studies, the benefits humour may bring about in an educational context can be by either that it helps to increase students' comprehension or retention of information, or contributes to the formation of an environment conducive to learning.

1.3.2.1 Direct Benefits

There have been some discussions on the benefits of humour to the classroom learning. Concerning the direct benefits, humour improved retention of information according to Garner (2006), comprehension of materials (Lucas, 2005) and increased student performance (Berk, 1996). To go deeper, Garner (2006) studied two groups of undergraduate students, humour condition group and control condition group based on randomization, to test whether humour really improves information retention or not. By the same instructor, the two groups watched a video about research methods and statistics. However, the humour group watched the lecture in form of humorous story. Results showed that the humour control could recall and retain more information about the lesson topic more than the control group.

Similarly, Ziv (1998) studied the teachers' use of humour during a semester. Then he made a test between two groups and he compared test results between a course that is presented by using humorous materials, and another one that is presented by using humour. The results indicated that learning with humour achieved positive and higher test results. Consequently, most studies advocate the direct benefits of humour in education, except the one that points the

need of calculating the amount of humour and its recurrence in order to be integrated into teaching.

1.3.2.2 Indirect Benefits

The implementation of humour in learning context may result in indirect benefits. Accordingly, it helps teachers to keep their students motivated. In addition, it is a facilitating tool for less sociable and shy students to participate and join class activities. Humour also may offer opportunities to enhance classroom communication, especially teacher-student interaction. All the mentioned benefits, may contribute in creating a positive teaching-learning atmosphere. Besides, Ackerman (1982) improves that teachers who participate in their students' laughter enable them to be engaged more, since humour in the classroom aims to "stimulate, illustrate, motivate, and ease tension" (as cited in Kelly, 1983). Humour plays a major role in facilitating learning, as Goodman (1983) believes that "laughter and learning can go hand-in-hand, and in many cases, laughter can liberate learning" (p. 4). Thus, it is evident that when teachers' sense of humour aims to motivate students, the learning process will be easier and will occur smoothly.

Despite the different outcomes of humour in teaching learning, it may also lead to some negative attitudes. The retrieved students perspectives about the cons of using humour in classroom was a question as a final item in Drew (1972) PhD thesis about the use of humour in college classroom. In his questionnaire, he tried to ask the students about examples of situations in which one of their instructors tries to use humour in the classroom, but was unsuccessful, and how this failure affected them. Most of the students' responses sounded good towards the use of humour in classroom when it is positive for the sake of relieving stress and tension, obtaining

students' attention, and creating a healthy atmosphere of learning. They also emphasized humour should be relevant to the subject matter being taught, and delivered in the right manner.

According to them, teachers should avoid using:

- Negative humour that involves demeaning or embarrassing students
- Humour that students do not "get" because of their lack of knowledge.
- Humour that is irrelevant to the subject matter being taught.
- Humour that includes disturbing violent or sexual content or references to minority groups.

Drew (2015) suggested that teachers should evaluate their use of humour. For example, if students respond to their humour by laughing, and appearing to enjoy it, then they continue to use the kind of humour that elicited these positive responses. Whereas, if they respond negatively, teachers should refrain from using humour in classroom, or they can simply change the type of humour they used to use. Therefore, teachers should be selective in their use of humour. That is to say, humour is a powerful tool that may enhance learners' attention and retention, yet it becomes ineffective if it is not used in the right way and conditions. As Garner (2005) observed, "When properly used, humour can be an effective tool to make a class more enjoyable, reduce anxiety and improve the learning setting , (p. 180). The 'ha ha' of humour in the classroom may indeed contribute to the 'aha' of learning from the student."

1.4 Styles of Humour

Humour varies from person to person, and what one person finds funny will not necessarily appeal to someone else. Humour can be found in four main styles based on the identification of the psychologist "Rod Martin" in the Journal of Research on 2003 of what he

called the four broad styles of humour. According to him, each style of humour has its advantages and disadvantages. Martin (2003) said that, "Not so much how funny you are, but how you use humour in advancing relationships or detrimental ways" (p. 112). He believes that the way people use humour is the most important.

1.4.1 Affiliative Humour

The purpose of using such style of humour is to enhance individuals' relationship with the others by creating humorous interaction in everyday life. It involves telling jokes about things that seem to be funny for most of individuals, (Riggio, 2015). The later suggested the comedians as leaders of this type, mainly "Jerry Seinfeld" who focused on the comedy in everyday life. Affiliative humour may create a sense of happiness, enhances conversations, and builds successful relationships. In short, affiliative humour is used to influence how others feel about you, rather than express how you feel about yourself. Therefore, Gournelos and Greene (2011) asserted that the more people use affiliative humour during discussion, the more others feel closer to them.

In his study which aimed to examine the usefulness of humour styles in classroom settings, Role's (2011) survey showed that teachers who apply this style of humour during the lessons, are able to gain their students' attention and make most of them laugh. Hence, affiliative humour seems to be an effective teaching tool that enhances teacher-student rapport.

1.4.2 Self-enhancing Humour

This style of humour is similar to affiliative humour in terms of enhancing social interaction. Generally, people who exhibit self-enhancing humour in their social situations stay positive and keep smiling while facing life's complexities. Besides, Martin (2007) asserted it

can deal with stress by maintaining a positive perspective because it is related with self-esteem and other favorable emotions such as agreeableness and openness. In addition, self-enhancing humour maintains humourous outlook in life even when not with others, i-e, use humour to cope with stress and sadness by remembering joyful memories (Martin, 2007).

1.4.3 Aggressive Humour

People who employ aggressive humour often aim to manipulate others by means of threat of ridicule (Janes 2000). It can be used to victimize and minimize (Zillman, 1983). This style of humour is marked by superiority theory, which assumed that people feel better over others expense in order to perceive that they have achieved higher rank or status (de Koning & Weiss). Moreover, aggressive humour is negatively related to agreeableness and conscientiousness (Martin, 2003). Greene (2010) believes that it is difficult to build a relationship or being closer to people who are using this style of humour. This style of humour, according to Berk (2000), tends to be used in order to manipulate or criticize others. Hence, since aggressive humour is relatively unhealthy, it should be avoided, especially in the classroom because it presents some negative human qualities among.

1.4.4 Self-defeating Humour

This style of humour is the opposite of self-enhancing. Self-defeating Humour involves putting yourself down in an aggressive situation that is called self-defeating humour. The late comedian Rodney Dangerfield would be an example (“I don’t get no respect” “I was an ugly baby”). Psychologically, this can be an unhealthy form of humour, and sometimes used by targets of bullies to try to avoid attacks_ making oneself the butt of jokes before others put you down (Martin, 2003). In other words, individuals ridicule themselves in an attempt to amuse

and seek acceptance from others (Martin et al. 2003) utilize self-defeating humour, i.e. their desire behind using this style of humour is to reduce their status level, to obtain others interest, attention, and make themselves more approachable.

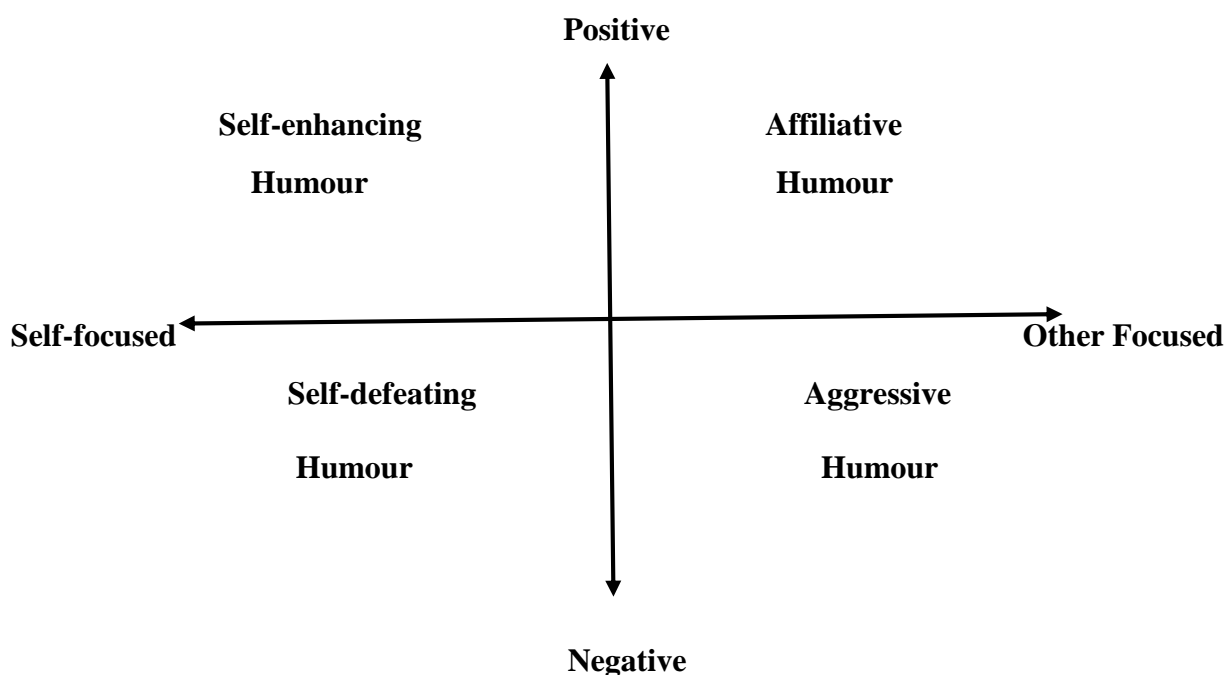


Figure 1.1 Two-dimensial Model of humour (as cited in Cooper, 2007, p. 221)

1.5 Principles of Using Humour in Classroom

The sense of humour is appreciated as one of the essential qualities of the teacher simply because it indicates his/her ability to capture students' attention, and help them to retain information more easily. Regarding the different benefits of using humour in teaching, Herbert (1991) pointed out a number of ways that teachers can look for to activate the learning process through humour. Sade (1996) shares the same idea "Using appropriate humour in a purposeful way in the classroom may yield numerous benefits. However, as most things in life, the benefits are accompanied by the potential costs" (p. 85). Moreover, Jonas (2010) believes that humour is based mainly on knowing its appropriate time to use, as well knowing the way of using it in order

to enhance the learning environment. Thus, there is a need to know the appropriate methods and times of using humour in classrooms, in addition to the principles of its usage.

1.5.1 Humour and Naturalness

The use of humour in the classroom should be natural, as Berk (2003) believes, simply because its naturalness provides an effective transmission. Chaisson (2002) states the same idea “do not try hard, let humour arise naturally, do not force it”, so there is no need to force humour. He believes that using humour naturally works better as an essential part of the teaching and learning processes. Moreover, being natural gives a sense of comfort, as Kerr (2001) suggests using humour naturally in order to be comfortable. Hence, teachers should be aware of their use of humour which is expected to be smoothly and spontaneously.

1.5.2 Humour and Subjectivity

People's sense of humour can be either positive or negative as Romero and Gruthirds (2006) state, “because it can be perceived as humorous by one person yet quite offensive to another person” (p.65). Accordingly, people should consider others' differences depending on their age, gender, religion and culture (Garner, 2005)

Kerr (2001) claims that our sense of humour involves general gender differences. For instance, Provine (2000) states that women react more towards humour than men. Berk (2002) noted that females show their emotional reaction easily, while males the contrast. However, he believes that men are more humorous than women in terms of telling jokes, in contrast to men; women prefer to describe humorous stories or situations without laughing at others.

Concerning culture, humour is an international phenomenon according to Apte (1985) which is used by most countries, regions and nationalities across the world. In addition, Kruger

(1996) states that teachers use of different types of humour should consider the cultural differences among the students. White (2001) points out that some cultures consider using different forms of humour as unacceptable attitudes in the society, because there are some cultures that consider expressing self-defeating humours as individuals' weaknesses. Therefore, teachers should be careful in their use of humour when the classroom involves students with different cultures, principals and attitudes.

1.5.3 Humour and Content

An effective humour is the one that is related to the lesson content. So teachers should be aware of how can they adopt the appropriate humour to the subject matter. According to Chaisson (2002), students should also understand the humour so they can make relation between the lesson and the humour themes. Furthermore, Bonjour (2011) sees humour as a communicative behavior which aims to make the lesson more dynamic and effective. However, if the humour and the content are not related, the learning process will be negatively influenced. As Shade (1996) considers when humour is not related to the topic may raise such negative attitudes as anxiety and tension of eliminating them. Consequently, humour should be used appropriately with regard to the content.

1.6 Humour in EFL Classes

1.6.1 The Importance of Using Humour in the EFL Classroom

Schmitz (2002) divided classroom humour into three categories: universal, linguistic and cultural. Others focused more on the effect of using different forms of humour in teaching. Harmer (2007) and Cook (2000) stated that it plays an important factor in language learning, the fact that, compared with 40 or 50 years ago, the fun element is virtually absent from English

textbooks today. Moreover, Medgyes (2001) stated that “when learning a language, interactions, messages, and communication needs that teachers and students share are not real, but ‘fake’” (p.112). According to him, this type of language is false when teachers and learners share the same native language. Then teacher’s use of humour in EFL class may include forms, content, and different strategies. Unlike ‘subject teacher’ who usually share the mother tongue, the cultural background, and the social knowledge with their students. An EFL teacher should consider not only the appropriateness or the relevance of humour to the lesson content, but also students’ comprehension of that humour so that they can enjoy.

From a limited number of researches on the use of humour in language learning, Maurice (1998) is founded that humour helps in breaking down the affective barriers in students, and thus increasing motivation, and reducing social distance between teachers and students. Most studies have confirmed that the employment of humour in foreign language classrooms has a great importance concerning its benefits on language acquisition, teacher immediacy, teacher-student relationship, and developing linguistic and cultural competencies.

1.6.2 Humour and Educational Psychology

One of the most important reasons for the use of humour in EFL classes according to the following authors is to develop an educational psychological area. Accordingly, humour is able to decrease anxiety, stress, tension and depression, improve self-esteem (Frecknall, 1994), and increase motivation (Cornett, 1986). These effects are obviously of great value to people facing much pressure and wishing to keep the mental balance (e.g. teachers), as well as to the learning process of students in general. It is obvious that learning activities always cause a certain level of tension and anxiety in learners. After all, learners are taking in new knowledge

or practicing new skills, which might be difficult to them, and hence the chance of failure. To learn effectively in such circumstances, motivation is needed. Humour may motivate learners so they receive the learning process as being fun and enjoyable, rather than a dead boring business (Berk, 1996; Kher, 1999). Even when failure does occur during the learning process, the employment of humour will lessen the seriousness of its impact, help learners to regain a sense of security and control over the situation and provide the “mental distance” (Morreall, 1997) needed for learners to accept the failure and reduce the stress it may cause.

1.6.3 Humour and Language Acquisition

Instructor humour serves a wide range of functions in educational contexts. Findings in some studies about using humour in EFL contexts indicate that using humour especially verbal one in foreign language classrooms facilitates access to linguistic and cultural knowledge resources, because students need to know much more than the vocabulary and grammar of the target language. The findings also suggested that EFL teachers must have specific (socio) linguistic and sociocultural humour competence to use humour in order to help learners to acquire these skills to be able to comprehend and use the target language effectively in social interactions. Instructor humour can also offer beneficial functions to EFL learners in language classes. For instance, verbal humour including funny stories, puns, jokes, riddles, and tongue twisters that refer to utterances the speaker intends to be amusing and linguistic clues is necessary to support understanding (Norricks, 1993; Holmes, 2000). Based on the support that humour gains from previous studies, it plays a significant role in understanding L2 or foreign language (Bell, 2009). Overall, from the linguistic perspective, the employment of humour in EFL classes may also help in motivating students and making them aware of certain

characteristics of their target language, concerning phonological, morphological, lexical and syntactic aspects within the target language (Deneire, 1995).

1.6.4 Humour and the Acquisition of Cultural Competence

Understanding and appreciating humour requires being informed about the cultural knowledge of the target language. Hence, exposing learners to culture-related humour can shed the light on the learners' sociocultural competence. There are many occasions for instilling humour in language education and expansion of cultural understanding, such as sharing funny experiences, telling cultural jokes and personal anecdotes. However, culture knowledge can be evoked by humour. Likewise, if humour classroom is related to the target language culture, it must be a means of assisting learners' cultural understanding and eventually their sociocultural competence several additional examples presented in the data support this understanding. The extract below shows the implications of using humour in the classroom by Jeder (2015), where the instructor is explaining to an undergraduate class how a host would treat a drop-by guest differently in Malaysian than in western cultures, and how a guest would/should behave in a different way according to the culture in which the event takes place.

T: In Malay culture, people invite you to lunch or dinner when you are a drop-by but two you are not supposed to accept quickly Am I right? [Laughs]

S: Yeah [laugh]

T: especially in their home they are about to have lunch and you happen to drop by, they would invite you to share whatever they have, so after a few repeated invitations. Coaxing and all that you reluctantly join them; of course, you are very hungry you know [laughs]

S: [laugh]

T: compare this to western who just ask you once. You say no, they say ok. [Laughing]
and life goes on [laughs] 11 [laughter]

This humorous scenario, while it attracts the students' attention and elicits laughter from the floor (lines 8-11), helps to create an awareness of a subtle cultural dissimilarity between Malay and Western cultures. In this example the instructor described how in Malaysian culture, drop-by visitors expect to be treated when they happen to visit acquaintances around meal times. For the international students who do not share the cultural norms of Malaysians, it is obviously a new piece of information to learn that people are not supposed to accept the host's invitation quickly (line 2) when they are drop-by visitors. While in similar situations in western culture such 'coaxing' (line 6) and standing on ceremony to join the host for a meal is rarely expected.

Ziyaeemehr and Kumar (2014) aimed to examine the functions of instructors' humour in academic setting. The findings demonstrated that the use of humour language in foreign language environment provides opportunities to insert new knowledge about the target language and culture.

Conclusion

This chapter reported the literature related to the effect of humour on teaching and learning according to many researchers and scholars. Besides, the chapter included a definition of humour, theories of humour, styles of humour, and the implementation of humour in EFL classes. Most studies have confirmed that using humour in the EFL classes has a significant role. Since it is a powerful teaching tool, it plays an important role in the effectiveness of teachers and the success of their students. Moreover, the use of humour cannot be an effective teaching strategy unless the teachers use it appropriately. In fact, teachers should follow the principles and rules of using humour in the classroom in order to be more effective. Hence, they will be able to employ it as an integral part of the material to be learned in a way that students will be at ease to learn and understand this material.

The next chapter attempts to provide definitions of students' attention and retention, in addition to the factors that affect students' attention. Furthermore, it discusses reasons behind forgetting words. Also, it suggests strategies to remember words and how they can be stored in long-term memory.

Chapter Two:

EFL LEARNERS' ATTENTION AND RETENTION

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Introduction

Many articles and books on teaching and psychology highlighted the importance of students' attention in acquiring any language mainly a foreign one, and of all the tasks, the human brain operates; maybe none is more significant for the performance of other tasks than attention and retention. When human beings attend, they perceive. When individuals attend and perceive, they remember. When human beings attend, perceive, and remember, they learn. When human beings learn, they can act deliberately and with forethought. Throughout this chapter, the researchers tend to define attention and explain features, types and the impact of attention on learning, define retention, strategies to remember and reasons behind forgetting words.

2.1 Section One: Attention

2.1.1 Definition of Attention

According to the Oxford student's dictionary (2012), attention is "watching, listening to or thinking about somebody or something carefully". Masquetiaux (2013) the French psychologist states that "attention has the meaning of fixing one's mind to something, and it is the concentration of the mental activity". The use of the term 'attention' has known different changes by philosophers and psychologists throughout time. According to Robinson (2003), attention is the process that "encodes language input, keeps it active in working and short-term memory, and retrieves it from long-term memory" (p. 631). Besides, William (1890, as cited in Styles, 2006) defines attention as a cognitive process of selectively concentrating on a discrete aspect of information, while ignoring others. He states, "It is the process of the mind in a clear and a vivid form and it implies withdrawal from some things in order to deal effectively with

others” (p. 1). The process of attention involves the selection of what to concentrate on. A person is able to select aspects of his environment in which he is interested in while ignoring others.

Styles (2006) states that attention is “characterized by a limited capacity for processing information and that this allocation can be intentionally controlled” (p. 16). He emphasized attention is so important to human cognition because it places limits on what people think about at the same time that it helps determine what our thoughts, words, beliefs, and deeds are about at any given time. He adds, “attention is an effect that emerges from the working of the whole system as inputs interact with schemata in long-term memory” (Styles, p. 9). Thus, attention narrows when the cognitive load increases.

2.1.2 Features of Attention

Many features are characterized attention: attention span, concentration, ability to switch, distribution, and selectivity.

2.1.2.1 Mental Activities

The process of focusing attention on any object or the aim is performed by the mind, but the activity of the mind requires that the aim of concentrating upon the object or the goal should be clear. In the absence of clarity, the mental process does not become active.

2.1.2.2 Presence of Volition

Attention is a conative act that needs the presence of volition. Because of attending some tasks, both physical and mental energy is consumed, the moment we feel fatigued, our volitional power decreases, and we begin to leave the task. That is to say, the ability to switch refers to the volition and purposeful transition of the mental flow from one object to another due to a selection of a new objective. This ability allows a person to adapt to different situations

efficiently and fast. It is indeed the reverse side of concentration. The more focused a person is, the harder it is to switch (Monsell, 2003).

2.1.2.3 Interest

Behind any act of attention, there is a motive, incentive goal or interest. 'Interest' is latent attention and attention is interest in action. Stronger the purpose, the more intense the attention. In fact, there two ways of looking at the same thing. Usually, we attend to a thing in which we are interested. McDuggal (2002) emphasized to have an interest in any object is then to be ready to pay attention to it. Hence, interest is the structure itself, and attention is the experience with which that structure is always ready to determine. Thus, McDuggal (2002) makes the right observation in "interest is latent attention which is interested in action". The same thing by saying "attention is interesting determining cognitive process". All this leads to the fact that interest is the cause of attention, we attend to those objects or experiences that interest us.

2.1.2.4 Selection

Attention is a selective activity of the mind. It is focusing on consciousness on an idea, or object of thought. When we focus our torch on any object, the vision becomes clearer; otherwise, with the diffusion of light over a vast area, the object will be presented dim. In the same manner, we focus our mind to one specific object. In addition, Throne and Thomas (2009) argue, "attention is captured by the multitude of stimuli and because it is impossible to attend to them all, we must decide which ones are the most important" (p.2). In other words, attention selectivity is the ability to capture certain objects out of a multitude stimulus, sort objects, and turn some of them into 'figures' and the others into "background.

Attention selectivity is influenced by a person's emotional state and information's relevance to his needs, as when a person is starving all the café signs on his way keep catching his eye, but he does not pay much attention to them when he is not hungry. Another example is "Party phenomenon". This latter is a good example of selectivity. If a person is at somebody's place, fully engrossed in an interesting discussion with his friends, suddenly, he hears his name softly mentioned by someone in the other group of people. He quickly shifts his attention to the conversation hoping to hear something curious about himself. Meanwhile, he stops listening to his friends and lose the thread of the conversation he took part in. It was not the strength, but the significance of the signal, which attracted his attention (Turton, 2014).

2.1.2.5 Attention and Concentration

Attention concentration is the degree of a person's focus on some objects or activities. It is a sign of attention "depth" and defines a person's ability to work in bad conditions. Interest and motivation trigger a person concentration. For example, when a person reads a thrilling story or watches an interesting movie, he forgets everything around him. Poor attention can be a key sign of behaviour and learning disorders such as hyperactivity and attention deficit disorder (William, 1890).

2.1.3 Types of Attention

Attention is the brain function that administrates cognitive processing resources to focus on information or stimuli. It refers to focusing on and processing information from our surroundings. While the nature of our attention can vary from event to event. In general, there are four main types of attention stated by Hitesh (2018) that are used in daily lives: selective,

divided, sustained, and executive attention. He also emphasized the types of attention depends on the circumstances and needs people may be facing.

2.1.3.1 Sustained Attention

It refers to the ability to focus on one specific task and ignoring the other distractions for long period (Bilimoria & Wheel, 1995). It is to react to two different events or tasks at the same time. It is the same when you think at the same time when you hear the words. This means, to split attention into two parts since there are several sources. Furthermore, it requires the ability to concentrate and focus on one single task while removing all other distractions. As an example of sustained attention would be reading a book, memorizing a formula, listening to a lecture or playing a game.

Amongst all types of attention, this type of is the most desired. Simply because it requires a large amount of concentration, it focuses and avoids being distracted. This is the highest level of attention anybody can give and the intensity required for this is extremely high. Another example, the kind of attention during an important announcement when everybody is quiet is also sustained attention.

2.1.3.2 Selective

Various kinds of stimuli are present in the environment in the case of selective attention. The listener chooses to focus only on a specific one while ignoring the rest. The brain is naturally tuned to avoid the unnecessary stimuli and focus only on the necessary ones. Giving selective attention in some situations would be difficult but with practice, it would become easy.

For example, trying to listen to a voice on the phone in a party where loud music is selective attention. In this case, it is very easy to focus selectively but in other cases, it may not

be easy. It is something that most of the individuals do in daily activities. It does not depend on the nature of the stimulus but on the attention of the observer. As an example, a woman may not wake up to the sound of an everyday train going past her home, but would wake up immediately to the sound of her baby.

Selective attention may be employed on either external or internal stimuli. For instance, in spite of having a lot of background noise a person tries to focus on his own thoughts is internal selective attention. While focusing on the words said by another person opposite to him in spite of having many thoughts in mind is called external selective attention.

2.1.3.3 Divided Attention

This type of attention is a critical form of attention when the responder focuses on more than one response and reacts towards them simultaneously. Due to divided attention, the user may be exhausted fast since it uses mental focus on a large scale, i.e. he may focus on two different tasks, and it is practically difficult to give the same amount of focus to both tasks. The brain has the limited amount of attention that it can provide and if the person is having two or more tasks, the percentage of attention does not increase but the entire available attention is split for different tasks. For instance, people cannot easily listen to two simultaneous audio streams or view two overlapping videos while detecting target events in each, especially when the two sources are spatially separated (Bonnell & Prinzmetal, 1998).

Divided attention at times requires muscle memory. Similarly, when you are learning how to ride a bicycle for the first time, it requires much sustained attention to learning and if you try to give divided attention, you may not perform the task. Once you know how to ride it, you can listen to music or even give your attention somewhere else because of muscle memory.

Hence, giving divided attention, in this case, is easy owing to muscle memory or habit. Other examples of divided attention would be checking email while in a meeting and texting simultaneously or making dinner while talking on the phone.

2.1.3.4 Alternating Attention

Finally, the Alternating Attention. The focus of attention here changes completely from one task to another task or “to shift the focus between two different tasks with different cognitive demands” (Kimberly, 2009, p. 7). At this level, the person consciously changed their focus completely from one task or event to another one, unlike the divided attention whose focus is divided into two different tasks happening at the same time

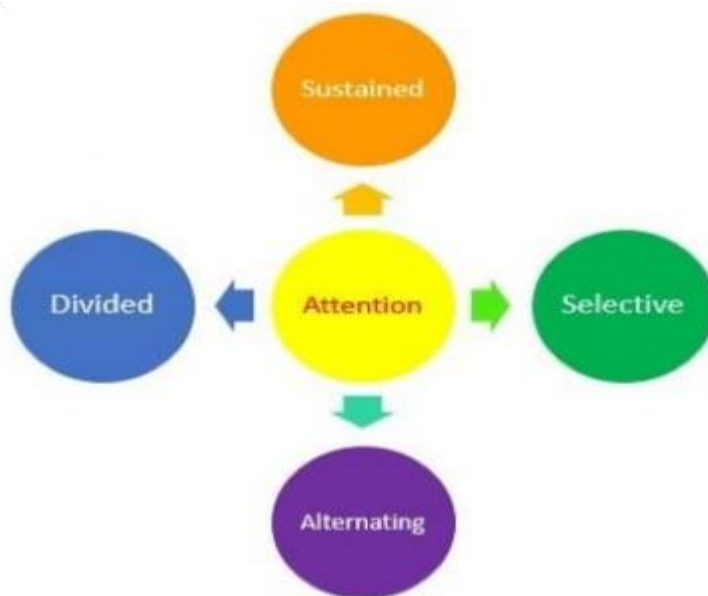


Figure 2.1 Types of attention (The park of Performance)

2.1.4 Factors Influencing Attention

It is conventional that attention is a selective activity, and volition of our mind is very important to determine our attention. However, according to psychology discussion, there are some factors in the objects as well as in the individual himself which can influence our attention known to be objective (external) and subjective (internal). The former is related to movement, intensity, novelty, size, change, repetition, colours and contrast. The latter is associated with interest, motives, mental set, emotional state and habits.

2.1.4.1 Objective Factors

These factors pertain to particular aspects of objects that are inherent in objects. This naturally attracts attention.

2.1.4.1.1 Movement

Unlike immobile objects, moving objects draw human's attention. For example, flickering lights draw our attention than non-flickering lights. A moving vehicle draws our attention more than a stationed vehicle. In other words, moving objects attract more attention.

2.1.4.1.2 Intensity

More intense sound, smell, the light catches our attention more easily than less intense one. For example, a high voltage bulb will be observed quicker than low voltage bulb, very bright colour than obscure colour, or a very loud sound than a normal or a high sound.

2.1.4.1.3 Novelty

New kinds of objects catch our attention quickly. Advertising agencies use this technique in nearly a perfect way. For example, the latest fashion dress, shoes, pen, etc.

2.1.4.1.4 Size

In contrast to smaller objects, bigger ones draw the attention of people very easily than the average level size of any object, For example, a 7' taller man, a 2' dwarf, a very fat man; a very huge multistoried building can attract our attention.

2.1.4.1.5 Change

A change in our environment draws our attention. For example, the regular sound of a moving clock does not draw our attention, but the movement it stops, our attention is changed. A showpiece placed in a new place, a radio playing a song stops due to electricity failure draws our attention.

2.1.4.1.6 Repetition

When a stimulus is repeated, several times our attention is diverted, For example, repeated horn of an ambulance.

2.1.4.1.7 Clarity

An object that is strikingly different from its background catches our attention. For example, a white spot on a black t-shirt.

2.1.4.1.8 Colours

Colourful objects draw our attention more easily than black or white objects.

2.1.4.2 Subjective Factors

These factors refer to individuals. These are inherent in people. Many subjective factors determine our attention.

2.1.4.2.1 Interest

Objects of our interest draw our attention immediately. For example, a sportsman is attracted towards the shop where sports materials are placed. That is to say, a person who is interested in a particular singer will immediately divert his attention the moment he listens to his voice. Therefore, interesting topics capture only the attention of individuals who are attracted to the ideas of the topic.

2.1.4.2.2 Motives

Motives are powerful forces which make us divert our attention. For example, a restaurant will draw the attention of a hungry person because he has a drive for food.

2.1.4.2.3 Mental Set

Our set or readiness of mind is crucial rises our attention to any stimulus. For example, when a person is in fantasy he may not listen to any call. Nevertheless, if he is waiting for a phone call eagerly, he will listen to that immediately.

2.1.4.2.4 Emotional State

Attention is affected during the emotional state. It also disturbs our perception. For example, when a person is highly excited due to fear, he may not listen or understand what others have said.

2.1.4.2.5 Habits

The things to which we are habituated divert our attention automatically. For example, a smoker remembers smoking even if he is otherwise busy in some work. A person who has the habit to take food at a particular time remembers food at the correct time.

2.1.5 Attention Distractions

The extent to which people can focus attention in the face of irrelevant distractions has been shown to critically depend on the level and type of information load involved in their current task. Schumm (1997) has defined distraction as the process of diverting the attention of an individual or a group from a desired area of focus and thereby blocking the perception of the desired information. Distraction is often caused by the lack of concentration and interest in the object attention. Distractions come from both external and internal sources. External distractions include factors such as visual triggers, social interactions, music, text messages, and phone calls. There are also internal distractions such as hunger, fatigue, illness, worrying, and daydreaming. Both external and internal distractions take part in distracting focus.

2.1.5.1. External Distractions

Numberless external distractions can keep someone from focusing on what is important. Some of these distractions are crucial, and we need to pay attention to them. Things happening around the individual are known to be environmental or external factors. Visual and auditory stimuli are part of external distractions.

Scientists as Ryan (2013) sees the classroom setting deemed important effect for learners' attention. He believes that there are physical and integral elements that have an impact on the students' focus and achievement. In other words, the physical environment is the structure as well as the colour, overcrowding, and uncomfortable seats; all of these affect student's attention because they are the first thing they see and have a comment on.

The non- physical environment refers to different aspects as the background noise, lighting, temperature and the aroma of the food (Ryen, 2013). To illustrate, dark rooms can

cause eyestrains and reduce concentration. Therefore, it is better to make sure that the study area, which should not be a place where you normally eat or sleep, but it should be selected specifically for studying, has enough light that does not flicker or cause glare. Moreover, warm temperatures can make students feel sleepy while cold temperatures may be uncomfortable. At home, adjust the thermostat to a preferred temperature. Both kinds of environments are distractions that divert the learner' attention. Despite aforementioned, these elements can be transformed into motives increasing students' attention in case they were organized.

Other kinds of external distractions in classrooms could be a ringtone of a mobile, a student coming late to class and loud noise or voice happening suddenly. These distractions have a serious impact on both the teaching and learning intentional processes.

2.1.5.2. Internal Distractions

Internal distractions are the inner dialogues and thoughts about what is happening in one's life (Cooper, 2014). They are emotional disturbances as anxiety, boredom, anger, fatigue, feelings of insecurity, and lack of motivation and interest. If a learner is suffering from an emotional distraction, he certainly has an attention issue. Hence, to combat classroom boredom that is resulted from a dislike of subject, students can find some reasons which motivate them to take the course. If they could not find any, they can talk to the instructor or form study groups to liven up study times. Furthermore, one helpful to diminish anxiety is to check the study skills, students have to make sure that they know the most efficient ways to learn the subject.

Other internal distractions are mental disorders that cause a mental deficit. Learners with such disabilities have different cognitive activities than normal ones. Damage in the left hemisphere of the brain (Wernicke's area) results in an inability to understand what others say,

this is known scientifically as Wernicke's aphasia (Yue, 2013). When personal worries interfere with studying, experts suggested doing something which concrete to help. Talking with a friend or family member.

Yet another internal distraction, which is also considered as a mental deficit, is the 'Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder' (ADHD). Tannock (2007) defines this mental issue as "a neurobiological condition with impairment on the levels of inattentive or hyperactive". In this case, all the mental executive functions and their processing are slow compared to normal ones.

2.1.6 Consequences of Inattention

Inattention is a state of mind in which a person receives information but is not focusing on it, so that information is not encoded (Kline, 1996). Attention and selection of the information as well as the ignorance of distractions deemed important for the processing of data. If one of these components is missing, the learning process does not take place. Hence, students diagnosed with attention disorder are at risk of experiencing lower academic achievement compared to their peers with a high level of attention.

Zero comprehension results from a breakdown in information processing that is due to the absence of attention. However, in some cases, inattention is essential for the state of attention as in an example offered by Lawrence (2012) when a student wants to pay attention to his lesson, he did divert his attention from the surroundings. Thus, this learner has created a system that enables him to focus more; this process of guiding attention is called attention control.

2.2.7 Attention Control

Attention control refers to an individual's capacity to choose what they pay attention to and what they ignore. It is also known as endogenous attention or executive attention. Attentional control can be described as an individual's ability to concentrate. Similarly, Shulman and Corbetta (2002) stated that attentional control involves the ability to direct attention to only those stimuli that are relevant to our current goals. Further, Eysenck et al. (2007) consider attentional control as a resistance to distractions interference, which is recognized as inhibition. This means that a fully focused person has to use the technique of attention control to execute distractions. In addition, Eysenck, Gruszka, Matthews and Szymura (2007) claim, "attentional control plays an important role in determining switching costs" (p. 346). That is to say, attention control plays a major role in directing one's focus to the intended point since stimuli-driven is powerful than goal-directed and human's attention is diverted automatically.

Attentional control is thought to be closely related to other executive functions such as working memory. Sources of attention in our brain create a system of three networks: alertness (maintaining awareness), orientation (information from sensory input), and executive control (resolving conflict). These three networks have been studied using experimental designs involving adults, children, and monkeys, with and without abnormalities of attention. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) present strategies for learners to boost self-motivation. They categorized them into five main classes. The First class is commitment control strategies that assist in rising learners' goals, by picturing the fruitful results. The second strategy offers learners self-reminders to focus, by reminding oneself of the deadlines that involve monitoring data and disregarding irrelevant tasks. This strategy is known as metacognitive control strategies. Third

one, the satiation control strategies comprise making tasks more active and not boring. As for the fourth class, the emotion control strategies that contain self-encouragement strategies to breed positive emotions. These positive emotions work as a halt for negative emotions. The last class is environmental control strategies, through this strategy, learners are setting aside environmental distractions and making good use of the positive environmental influences.

2.1.8 The Importance of Attention in learning

The term learning has been defined as “the activity or process of gaining knowledge or skill by studying, practicing, being taught, or experiencing something” (Merriam-Webster, 2018). It means that learning involves instruction and study because whenever the word learning is uttered the meaning is automatically related to “study, education, schooling, teaching, and all of these demand attention. Learning is related to the human being senses, according to Fatt (2000), “People use their five senses to gather information and then channel it through three separate routes, called representational systems, to make sense of it” (p.34). Those representational systems include visual, auditory, and kinesthetic types of learners (Fatt, 2000). Each individual shows a preference towards one of these systems, and specific communication accustomed to the learning style can improve communication with others (Fatt, 2000). He says that people with a visual learning preference “see the world by constructing or remembering mental images” (p.35), (cited in Ellington and Benders, 2012, p.6).

When we show the baby or the child a flower for the first time, he is going to take it to smell it and to taste it. As a result, he will recognize it when he sees the flower again, because he had stored the image, as well as the smell in his brain due to his attention as well as the person who guides this child. Thus, the kinesthetic learner remembers best by doing things with

his hands, the auditory learner by hearing, and the visual one by seeing. Moreover, the teacher, the mother or the broadcasting play a major role in teaching children, additionally to the process of the children's attention. Learning and teaching go hand in hand, and the teacher should understand the learning style of the pupil in order to facilitate his learning process. For instance, the visual learner learns best by looking at graphs or charts. However, the auditory one prefers to listen to a lesson orally explained by the teacher or a recording rather than reaching written forms like books or newspapers. The last style of learners is the kinesthetic learner learns better by touching, manipulating and doing things. This is why teachers' attitudes have a big impact on enhancing their students' attention

2.2 Section Two: Retention

2.2.1 Retention Definition

The concept of human retention was defined from different perspectives. The term retention is defined as "the continued use existence, or possession of something or someone" according to Cambridge Dictionary. While Merriam-Webster dictionary defined it as the act of continuing to possess, control, or hold moisture retention, simply it is the power or ability to keep or hold something memory retention. The word retention derived from Latin Anglo-French "retentio".

Many scholars and researchers tend to give different definitions to the term of retention from different angles. Scholars of higher, especially retention experts, have variously defined retention including certain elements based on their own theoretical perspective. According to Levitz (2001), retention refers to the successful completion of students' academic goals of degree attainment. In addition, it has been suggested that retention is an institutional-level

measure of success, and that persistence is an individual or student-level measure of success (Hagedorn, 2005).

2.2.2 Factors Influencing Retention

Students' retention is also the process of ensuring student success or graduation; institutions often assess "students' success" through a variety of metrics that address academic achievement, student engagement and retention. To assess student success through improved retention, the (HEQCO) suggests that institutions, schools and universities have to consider first a number of factors including repetition, meaningful learning, motivation and other factors that may influence retention.

2.2.2.1 Repetition or Practice

Learning a task involves repeating acts related to that particular task. Many tasks are such that one can learn perfectly only by repeating them. For example, if one wants to learn typing or riding a bicycle, one has to repeat the various acts involved in these skills continuously until one learns these skills perfectly. It has been shown that the greater the number of times we repeat or practice, the better is our retention.

2.2.2.2 Meaningful Learning

Learning often involves repeating a particular response or a given task. This type of learning, through repetition, is demonstrated when a child repeats mechanically his geography lessons or arithmetic tables. Similarly, a three or four-year-old child who simply repeats nursery rhymes while knowing little about stars and sky, says, "Twinkle, twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are ...in the sky."

2.2.2.3 Motivation

We often experience that when our learning is accompanied by a motive or purpose we are able to retain that particular matter for a longer time. Thus, repetition or practice accompanied by the intent to learn is more effective than mechanical repetitions because we become more receptive if we know that the matter will be useful to us later.

For example, a student who is least interested in the subject of history and has no intention of using the same may learn and reproduce everything in the examination and then forget everything soon after and even here his retention may not be very effective. Thus, motivation can play an important role in strengthening or weakening the process of retention.

2.2.2.4 Feedback

While performing a task or learning a particular material, if we stop and check at periodic intervals to see the results (e.g., how many correct responses one has made or how many errors have been committed), then this knowledge of results or feedback is likely to provide encouragement, correction and some sort of reinforcement. This may subsequently lead to effective learning and, therefore, to effective retention. This method of stopping, looking and then proceeding is sometimes discussed under the heading "Knowledge of Results".

2.2.2.5 Passage of Time

The time that has lapsed and the activities we perform in between learning and recall are said to exert a great influence over retention. This becomes evident, for instance, when we apologise for forgetting something very important by saying, "**I do remember, it was in my mind all the while but it just went out of my mind**". Thus, activities, ideas, events, etc.

occurring in between learning and recalling may act as interfering variables and decrease the probability of successful retention.

In a study conducted relating to this, it was found that sleeping (dreamless sleep) immediately after learning led to better retention of learnt matter. J.C. Jenkins and Dallenbach, in their experiment, found that after teaching ten nonsense syllables people who had gone to sleep could recall six, and those who stayed awake could recall only one. This, perhaps, may have occurred because sleep is a state with relatively no or few interfering factors acting on the individual's mind.

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2.2.3 Strategies to Boost Students' Retention

Student retention is one of the biggest topics in higher education. Accordingly, it is so tough for students to remember what they have learned. In the late 1880s, a prominent psychologist, 'Hermann Ebbinghaus' created 'the forgetting curve' which a measure that today researchers still refer to it to know how much people forget. Ebbinghaus (1880) concluded that students forget about 56 per cent of what they learn within one hour, 66 per cent within one day and 75 per cent within six days. In June 2017, an article published by neurobiologists explained that within out employing strategies to retain the acquired knowledge; the brain is wired to

forget. That problem clearly illustrates the importance of teaching students strategies to retain what they learnt. Moreover, one key to helping students retain lessons better is to apply different teaching strategies that may link new lessons to the existing memories to create a web of connections.

2.2.3.1 Repetition

According to Thornbury (2002), repetition contributes to the enhancement of retrieving words. For instance, learners study the same word more than one time. Then, Nation (2001) suggested that repetition can reinforce and can expand knowledge of words.

2.2.3.2 Retrieval

Thornbury (2002) considered retrieval as another opportunity for learners to use and to repeat the word, this done through tasks, such as using the new word in a sentence. According to Nation (2001), retrieval is a helpful technique for learning vocabulary. For this reason, teachers are required to give time to their learners to recall words they have learned (in activities, listening, reading texts).

2.2.3.3 Tests or quizzes

When students are given tests or quizzes that are not graded on frequently, they are able to review material in a low-stress environment. That is to say, stress can undermine memory retention.

2.2.3.4 Visual Aids

Visual aids are those instructional aids that are used in the classroom to encourage teaching-learning process and boosts students' comprehension towards lessons. Singh (2005) defined it as any device which by sight and sound increase the individuals' practice. There are

a famous Chinese proverb “one sighted is worth, a hundred words” it is the fact that we take the knowledge through our intellects. There is another maxim that “if we hear we forget if we see we remember”, that is to say, retention is increased by using different visual devices in teaching which help students to remember important information.

2.2.3.5 Memory Cues

One way to remember difficult vocabularies or mathematics' order of operation is to encourage students to develop memory cues that include acronyms. It is also an effective way that may help kids to remember the colours of the rainbow. Examples include acronyms like “Roy G. Biv” (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet). Another way to cue memories especially for kids is to create memory-boosting songs about the lesson, such as alphabet song.

2.2.3.6 Peer discussion or group works

Group-based learning and peer discussion naturally help students retain information, especially auditory learners. Simply because when students see their fellow classmates, visual will spark memories of what those students had to say about the lesson in question

2.2.3.7 Revision before bedtime

Encourage students to make lesson review the last thing they do before bedtime one way to boosts memory retention. Research shows the information circulates in the mind during sleep, bolstering retention.

2.2.4 Reasons Behind Forgetting Words

Memory and retention are the centers of education. Research in this area has determined the importance of recalling information. One of the latest brain research at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Experts connected learning with three types of memory.

Sensory memory is the information that is quickly passing through from the senses. When it is given attention, it passes into short-term memory in less than a minute; it is also walled "working memory". Moreover, if we focus on it further, it passed into long-term memory where it can be stored for various periods, and sometimes for the rest of our lives. Moreover, several factors determine whether the information is forgotten or moves into long-term memory, whether it has occurred under specific circumstances or it is related to other familiar items.

One of the main reasons behind forgetting words is retrieval failure because memory often is not brought to conscious. In addition, the interference of some sort from other memories or current circumstances; failure to store it for a variety of reasons; and intentional efforts to forget or minimize the information.

Often with students, they are not engaged enough to move information firmly into long-term memory, or they do not use and re-use the information to establish it in that portion of the brain and this is another cause of forgetting information.

Conclusion

To sum up this chapter, the concepts of attention and retention of students are considered among the most important abilities that keep learners involved in the learning process. Attention control is the human being's ability to refrain distractions away and concentrate on the target. In addition, the teacher's attitude is crucial in the teaching process. He/she has to take into consideration each student is a unique character (his age, sex, feelings and his needs). Hence, it is important to know learners styles before start teaching them in order to know how to attract their attention. However, most EFL learners fail to recall and to produce words which they have learned. More specifically, they can recognize words through listening and reading, but they cannot recall them to be used in writing and speaking. Therefore, teachers are required to select techniques and strategies that can improve vocabulary retention. This chapter shed the light on the importance of vocabulary. Precisely, it stresses the causes of forgetting words and techniques of teaching vocabulary

Chapter Three:

DATA AND INTERPRATION OF THE RESULTS

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Introduction

The present chapter is devoted to the practical part of this research. It yields a detailed analysis of the collected data followed by a thorough discussion of the gathered results in an attempt to check the research hypothesis. The questionnaire was designed and distributed to secondary school teachers of English language at Omar Idriss Secondary School of El Kentara. Additionally, classroom observation was selected as another data collection tool for this study in order to observe pupils closely to check the effectiveness of humour on EFL learners' attention and retention as well. Furthermore, another part presents a detailed analysis and interpretation of the gathered data. Besides, discussing and synthesizing the findings. In addition, it presents the results to check the validity of the suggested hypothesis

3. 1 Data collection Method

Data collection methods are the techniques that a researcher uses to gather data. According to Walliman (2006), data collection methods can be defined as “ ‘raw materials’ ”that any researcher needs when doing her research depending on the research problem besides depending on the methods used by the researcher” (p.83). Besides, data collection methods are essential to have effective results; thus, the researcher should carefully choose them taking into consideration her research theme. Additionally, there are several methods to collect data such as questionnaires (structured, semi-structured, and unstructured), interviews (structured, semi-structured, and unstructured), observations (active and passive), focus groups, and quasi-experiments.

In this study, we dealt with both, a semi-structured questionnaire to gather data from EFL secondary school teachers about the impact of humour on students' attention and retention.

Moreover, the researcher conducted a passive classroom observation with Third Year students at Omar Idriss Secondary School in El Kantara to examine their adaptation to the employment of humour.

3.2 The Questionnaire

The first data gathering tool that the researcher used was a semi-structured questionnaire, which aimed to collect EFL teachers' feedback, comments, and attitudes towards the use of humour to enhance EFL learners' attention and retention.

3.2.1 Aim of Teachers' Questionnaire

The researcher opted for the questionnaire as a data gathering tool whose aim is to collect EFL teachers' different views, attitudes, comments and feedback about integrating humour in the teaching learning process.

3.2.2 Validating and Piloting Questionnaire

The construction of a well-structured questionnaire necessitates the stage of validity and piloting. To validate the tool, the researcher submitted the questionnaire to experts to check the extent to which the designed questions measure the target issue. However, in piloting we provided the instrument to a sample that is similar to the one we have chosen as the intended research sample. The sample's feedback reflected the quality of questions and enabled the researcher to reveal the weaknesses. Such practice contributes to design a comprehensible effective final version (Dörnyei, 2003).

For this reason, the questionnaire was provided to the supervisor, a teacher of research methodology at our department to be validated, to a high school teacher, to master one student and two students of master two at Biskra University to be piloted. Accordingly, the supervisor

and the university teacher of methodology agreed that the questions meet the objectives of the tools. Nevertheless, changes included decreasing close-ended yes/no questions because single items decrease reliability, thus we relied more on open-ended questions. One reason to justify this choice is that the researcher intended to enabling respondents to express degrees of opinions through the choices she had suggested in the Likert scales questions. Accordingly, Likert scales were suitable substitutions that correspond to the purpose of this study, investigating perceptions. Finally, it was suggested that the administration of the questionnaire via the Internet would be more adequate than the one executed using hard copies.

3.2.3 Description of the questionnaire

The study questionnaire was the first tool of the under-investigated study. It was a semi-structured questionnaire addressed to four EFL teachers at the Secondary School of El-Kantara "Omar Idriss". It was used to collect data for investigating teachers' perceptions of incorporating humour to enhance attention and retention of information. The factual, behavioural, and attitudinal questions aimed at exploring the three main variables of this research, mainly humour, attention and retention. Accordingly, we developed the questionnaire to include five sections structured as follows:

Section I: General information (four items)

This section collected data about the teachers' information. This section encompassed five items: experience in teaching at secondary school, the grades that they are teaching. It also contributed to further teachers' perceptions or opinions about the main reasons behind students inability to retain, and if they looked for ways to improve their retention.

Section II: Humour in EFL classes (13 items)

The ultimate goal of this section attempted to investigate the reasons behind the importance of teaching using humour. In addition, it aimed at elucidating the different obstacles faced by the teacher when humour is adopted in EFL classes. Additionally, it explored perceptions of the relationship between humour and learning. The right way of integrating humour in teaching was also included in section two. Besides, this section attempted to discuss bad ways of using humour that teachers have to avoid because they may affect the learning process. It also collected the teachers' information about the extent to which humour is an essential component of a successful classroom environment. Nevertheless, two items were included in this section the negative angle of using humour to explore whether humour can be ineffective in teaching.

Section III: Perceptions of Integrating Humour to Enhance students' Attention and Retention (10 items)

Section three included teachers' perceptions about the use of humour on EFL classes, and about the extent to which they are satisfied with the impact of integrating different types and forms of humour on increasing students comprehension and retention of the subject matter. Moreover, it aimed at reporting the frequency of using humour in EFL classes along with the different kinds they used for such purpose.

Section IV: Some benefits of using humour in EFL classes (5 items)

The fourth section contained some benefits of adopting humour in EFL classes and is aimed at investigating at what level may humour improve students' knowledge of the language and create a cooperative learning environment.

Section V: The challenges of teaching using humour in EFL classes (2 items)

The last section attempted to investigate the main challenges that teachers may face when integrating humour in EFL classes. It also sought to enrich the quality of the research by taking advantages of the teachers' evaluations concerning the issue being investigated.

3.2.4 Administration of the Questionnaire

After the piloting and the validating stage, we designed the final draft of the questionnaire. For the administration phase, we decided to distribute the questionnaire online to participants via the internet; emails and some Facebook groups were used to contact some high school teachers as the main digital platforms to reach participants. Later on, after discussing with the supervisor, we decided to work with English teachers of Omar Idriss Secondary School at El Kantara. The questionnaire was posted on Secondary School teachers' groups on Facebook. Then, it was distributed to some other English teachers from different Secondary Schools in Algeria on email. The online questionnaire was designed using the services of the survey software Google Forms. The platform provides many facilities to vary the structure of the questions including Likert scale, multiple-choice, open questions, and a section to improve the overall. In fact, the idea of using Facebook and email was successful because we had the chance to receive the intended number of participants in two weeks. From April 16th, 2020 to March 30th, 2020, we intended to reach many numbers of participant. Then, we received totally clear and completed answered questionnaire

3.2.5 Analysis and Interpretation of Teachers' Questionnaire

As a first tool to collect data for the under-investigated study, we designed this questionnaire to collect information, opinions, and thoughts from the EFL students, then analyze and interpret them to test (prove/ reject) our hypothesis.

Section One: General Information (From item 1 to item 4)**Item 1: Teachers' experience**

From this item, we wanted to have an idea about how long have teachers been teaching English at secondary school by giving them choices (1-5 years, 6-11 years, 12_17, or more than 17 years). Teachers' responses indicate that their EFL teaching careers are nearly the same. Twelve teachers (n=12) teach EFL from 1_5years; whereas only one teacher (n=1) teach EFL from 6-11 years. That is to say, the majority of our participants are fresh teachers that may not mind to vary different tools to teach the target language, such as humour. Additionally, percentages of their experience are more explained in figure 3.1.

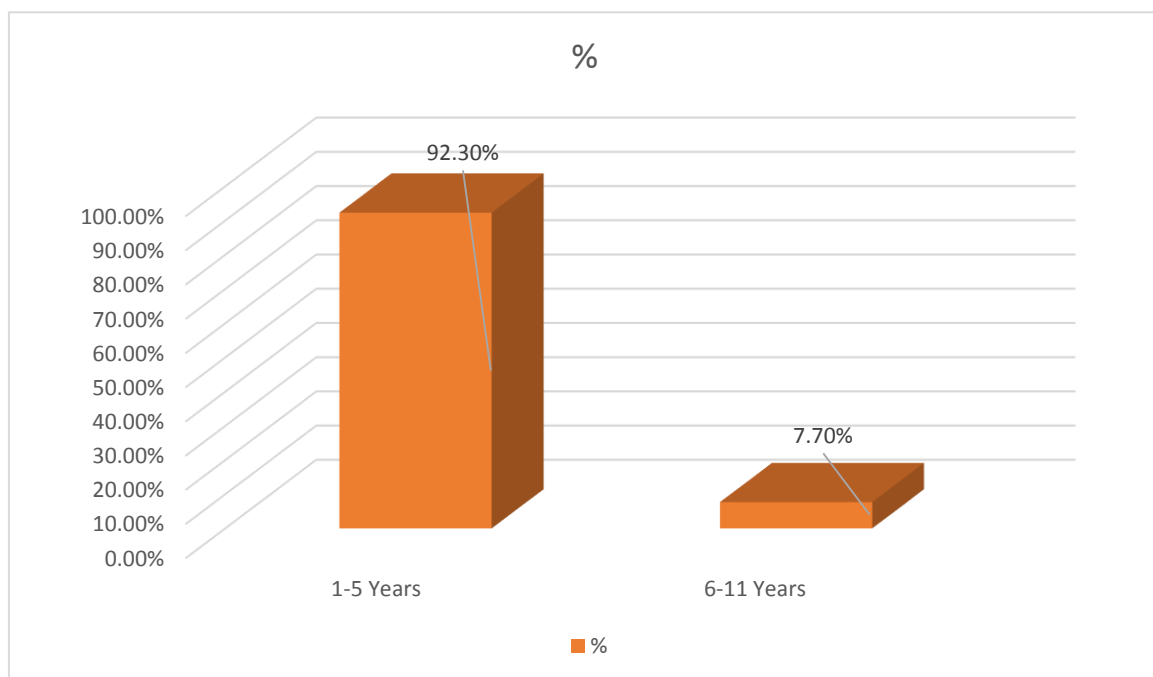


Figure 3.1 Teachers' Experience

Item 2: Teachers' grades of EFL classes

The foci of this item is to know the grades our teachers' are teaching, whether (first year, second, or third year). Besides, teachers were asked to mention the level they are teaching. The Figure 3.2 below shows the highest percentage of third-year classes (n=5) teach third-year classes (baccalaureate students). While four teachers (n=4) teach second-year classes. Whereas, the other four teachers (n=4) teach first-year students. The variety of teachers' grades in EFL teaching at secondary school is positive for our research because it guarantees that the next responses will be gathered from teachers with different teaching grades at the secondary school level.

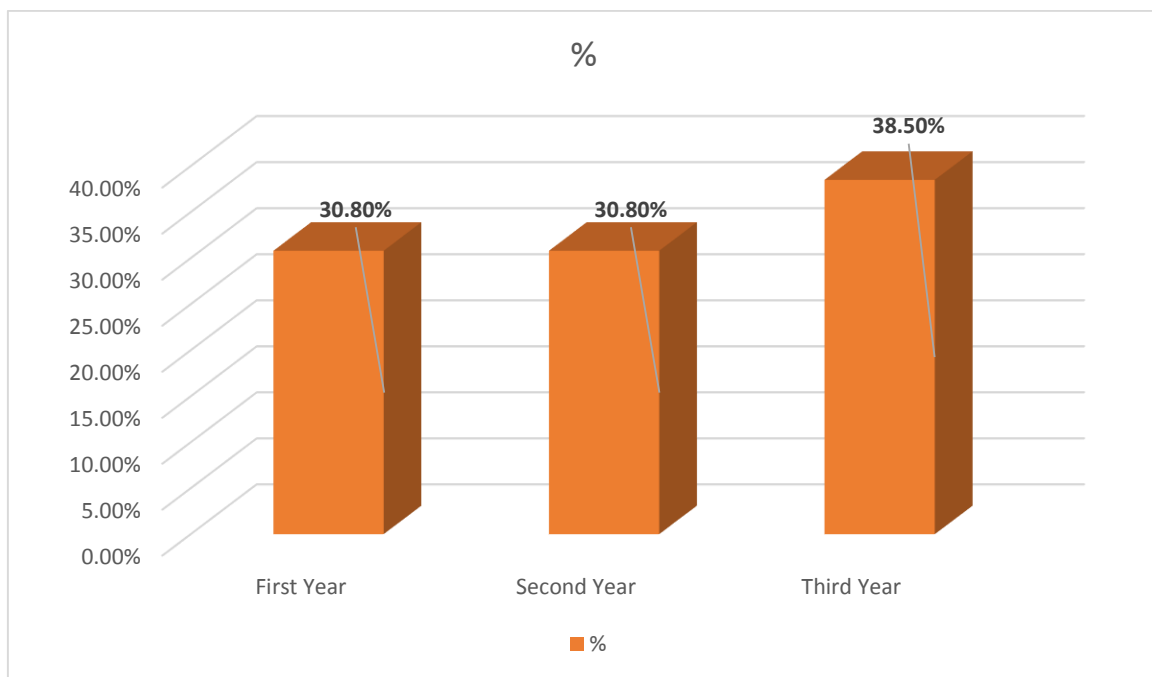


Figure 3.2 EFL Teachers' Grades

Item 3: Students' inability to retain

This item was for checking whether the teachers notice that some of the students face difficulties to retain information, and if they are aware of their inability to retain (yes or no). Then, we asked them to give opinions about the main reasons behind their disability.

As can be seen in Figure 3.3 below that the majority of teachers (92.3%) agreed that they have noticed students' inability to retain some of the classroom materials and information, only one teacher (n=1) responded with no. Moreover, while teachers gave perceptions about the main reasons those unable the students to retain better, the majority of them asserted that the students' lack of interest and attention along with the lesson explanation, are among the most reasons behind this disability. Others relate it to the poor linguistic background and lack of knowledge of the language. Moreover, another teacher assumes that neglecting home assignments and homework has a fair unpleasing effect on learners' retention of information and achievement too. Other teachers mentioned some psychological factors that may affect their ability to recall especially when the students are less motivated or even when they are stressed. Besides, the fear of making mistakes may lead to a poor memory.

From the aforementioned, the majority of teachers (n=12) agreed there is a strong relationship between students' attention and retention, the more they are interested in the lesson and the subject matter (i-e whenever attention is high), the better they retain. For enhancing students' attention toward the subject matter, some teachers suggested using different teaching strategies to attract their interest rather than the traditional way of teaching. Besides, the overloaded programs according to them are an obstacle that obliged the teachers to stick with the content rather than opt for new ways of teaching.

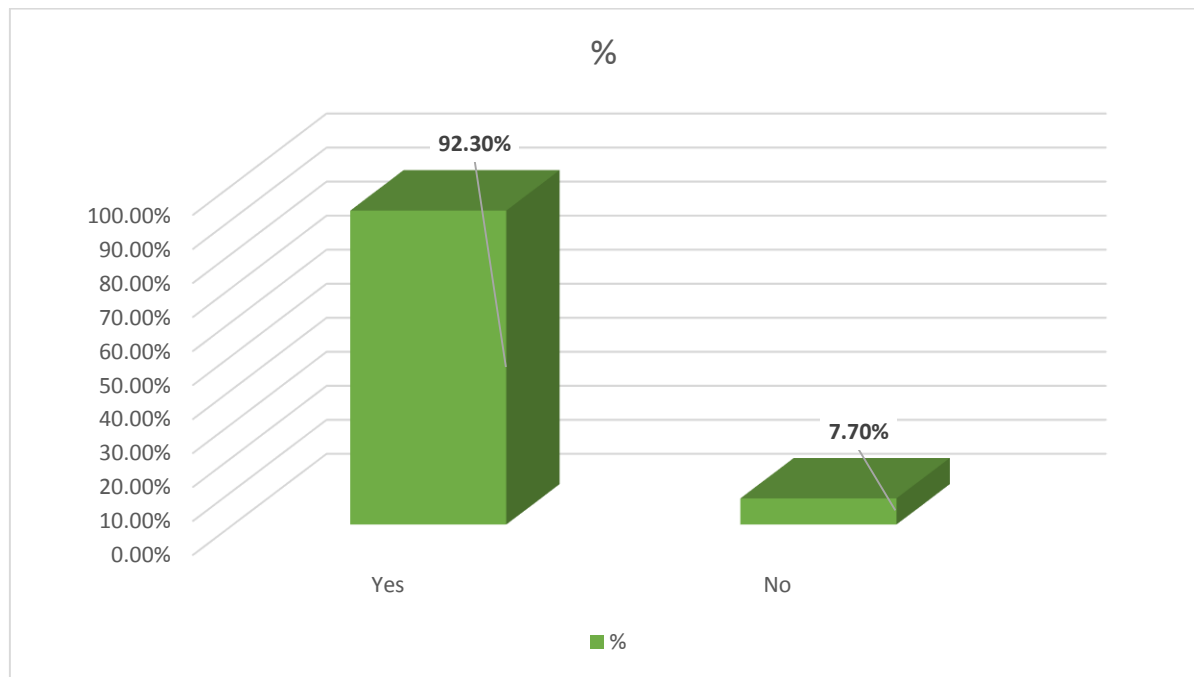


Figure 3.3 Teachers' Noticing of Students' Obstacles to Retain

Item 4: Teachers difficulties to improve the EFL students' retention

This item was to highlight teachers' difficulties to help their students remember better. Then we asked them to give suggestions about the main strategies or tools they followed to raise their retention. As can be seen in Figure 3.4 that majority of the teachers (n=12) have encountered many difficulties and problems to improve the students' ability to recall. However, only one teacher (n=1) did not face that issue. Thus, teachers were struggling to help students' with poor memory by using different strategies; one of them used songs and role-play model to attract his students' attention and to raise their retention toward the lesson. Another teacher said that audiovisual aids and crosswords worked better with his students when the information is hard to be retained. Another instructor recommended using a notebook to write the keywords at

the end of the copybook to rely on it whenever the information is forgotten. Some teachers suggested creating mental linkage as a technique that can be fruitful.

Furthermore, peer discussion and group-based learning are among the best ways to make the students engaged in the learning process which make them an effective part of the teaching-learning process. As a result, the information will be hard to forget as a teacher asserted. Other teachers proposed other funny tools such as the rehearsal, funny games, realia and vocabulary games. Another response given by a teacher affirmed that he usually provides the students with definitions, opposites, and giving sentences containing the targeted words to make the information at ease to them so that they can remember it easily.

However, another one asserted that the best way to make the students comprehend and remember the content they have learned is to use various teaching strategies and tools each time, starting with using pictures, synonymy, and antonym, audio and through utilizing those words in meaningful sentences by the learners themselves. Similarity, another teacher shared the same idea so that he uses the same context differently and asks for related vocabulary to be used. This way, the student will just make a connection between the previous knowledge that he knows and the present one.

Despite the different strategies suggested by the EFL teachers, it is observable that the majority of them tried variety of strategies and tools to attract their students' attention so that they retain better which extremely supports our research hypothesis. Some teachers affirmed that they have integrated funny tools in teaching such as games and role played to break up the boredom of the traditional way of teaching. Thereupon, improving students' retention is based on adopting different strategies that require much more training.

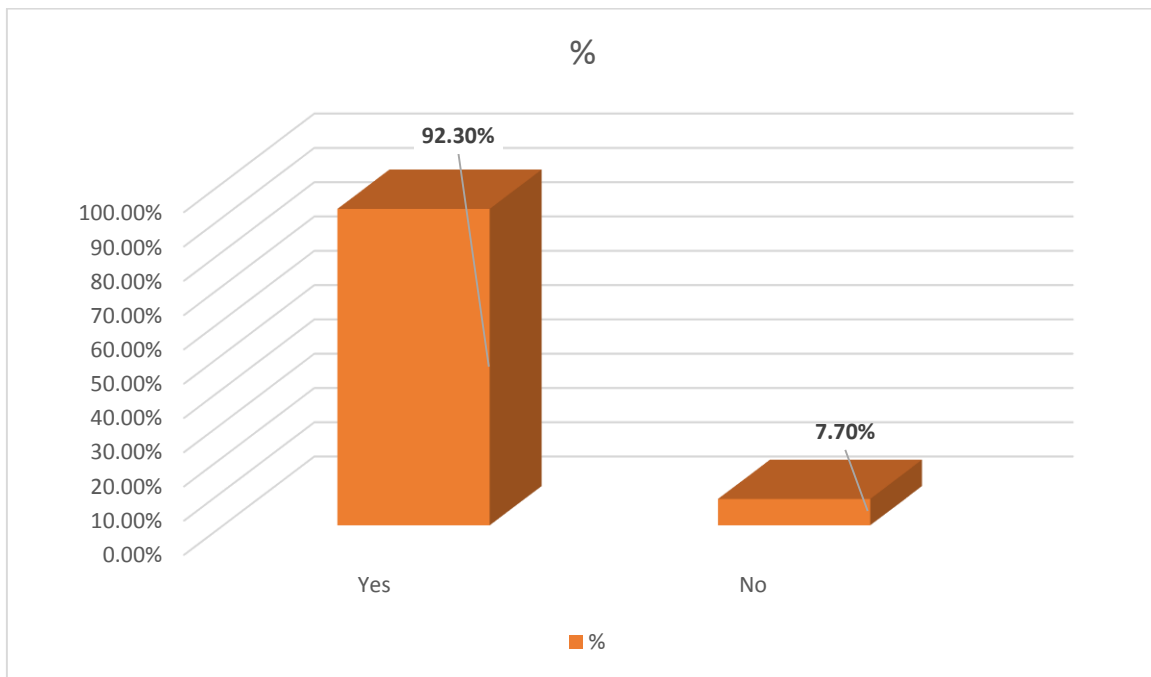


Figure 3.4 Teachers Challenges to Improve the Students' Retention

Section Two: Humour in EFL Classes

This section was designed to focus more on the variable of humour. It attempts to gather information about the levels humour can affect the EFL learning settings. Accordingly, it sought to determine the impact of humour in EFL learners' skills. Furthermore, it aimed to collect Secondary School teachers' of English thoughts about the importance of integrating humour at this level of learning. Finally, to see when the humour could be a helpful tool in teaching.

Item5: Teachers' agreement or disagreement with the following statement**5.1 Humour is important to foreign language classes**

The aim behind this question is to discover the extent to which humour is an important component in EFL class. Teachers were asked to indicate to what extent they agree with the statement which indicates that humour is important to foreign language classes. The Figure 3.5 below indicates a notable percentage of the teachers answered with "agree" (61.54%), while (23.08%) is the percentage of teachers who responses with "strongly agree" making the (84.62%) of positive responds. Whereas, (15.38%) of the teachers who answered with "neutral". These results clearly indicate that the majority of teachers believe that humour is a very necessary teaching tool in foreign language classes.

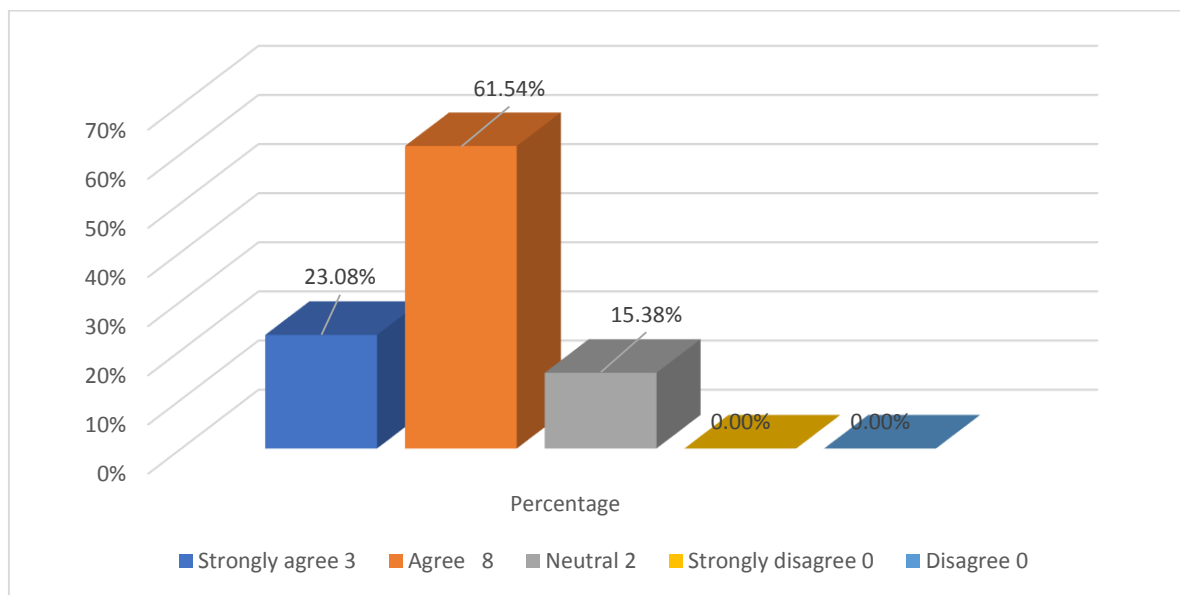


Figure 3.5 The Importance of Humour to the Foreign Language Class

5.2 Humour is an important characteristic for a foreign language teacher

From this item, we attempted to know the impact of humour on student-teacher intimacy. In order to check teachers' perceptions about using humour in teaching a foreign language, teachers were asked to indicate to what extent they agree with the statement which indicates that humour is an essential characteristic of the foreign language teacher. Figure 3.6 indicates teachers' highest percentage of agreement (61.54%), while (30.77%) of them mention their strong agreement about the crucial role of humour at making the teacher closer to their students. That is to say, (92.31%) is the percentage of positive responses about the stated item. Therefore, it is clearly observed that most of the teachers think that the sense of humour is a vital characteristic of a foreign language teacher which is highly appreciated by EFL learners. However, only one respondent teacher (7.69%) believes that teacher sense of humour is not a crucial characteristic in foreign language teaching. Overall, improving teachers' relationships with the students has positive implications for both, as well as attaining higher levels of achievement for and decreasing conflicts.

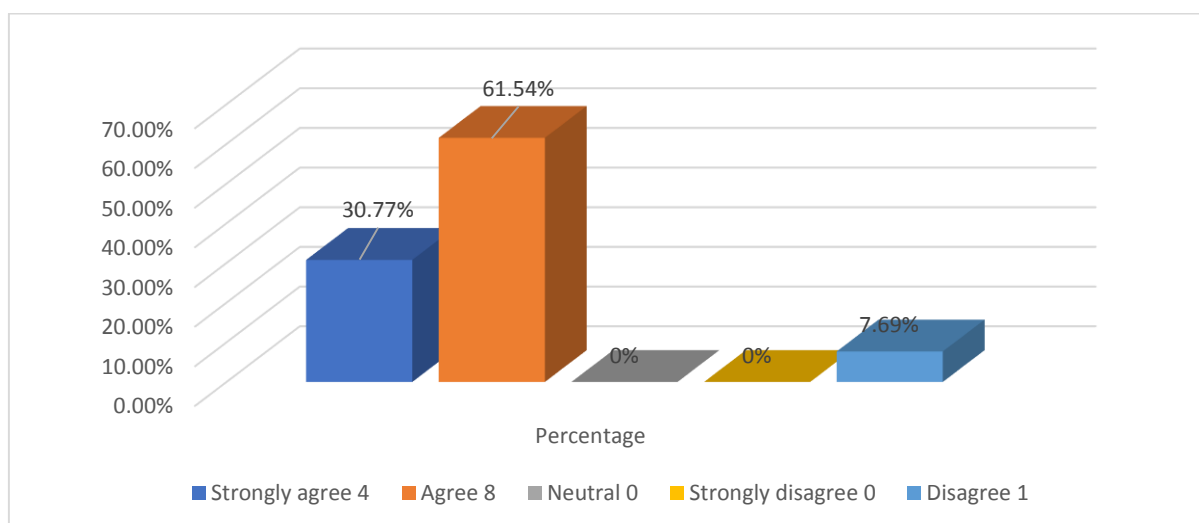


Figure 3.6 Humour as an Important Characteristic for a Foreign Language Teacher

5.3 If my class is laughing and joking, the students are not leaning

According to some teachers, bringing laughs to the classroom is a kind of breaking the seriousness of the learning process that may affect the quality of the delivered content. This item aimed to collect teachers' perceptions about teaching with fun using some jokes while learning. The results retrieved from Figure 3.7 below show the teachers highest percentage of strong disagreement (38.46%); in that, (30.77) of them indicate their disagreement and only (7.69%) of them respond with "agree". Whereas, (23.08%) opt for "neutral". From these results, it is clear that the majority (n=9) of teachers have a positive attitude toward the use of humour in their classes and they believe that students concentration cannot be distracted by the integration of humour. Besides, the correctly used of humour can be an effective intervention to improve students' concentration and retention due to their comfortable feeling during the session. Thus, we can deduce that our teachers are aware of the importance of humour in learning EFL.

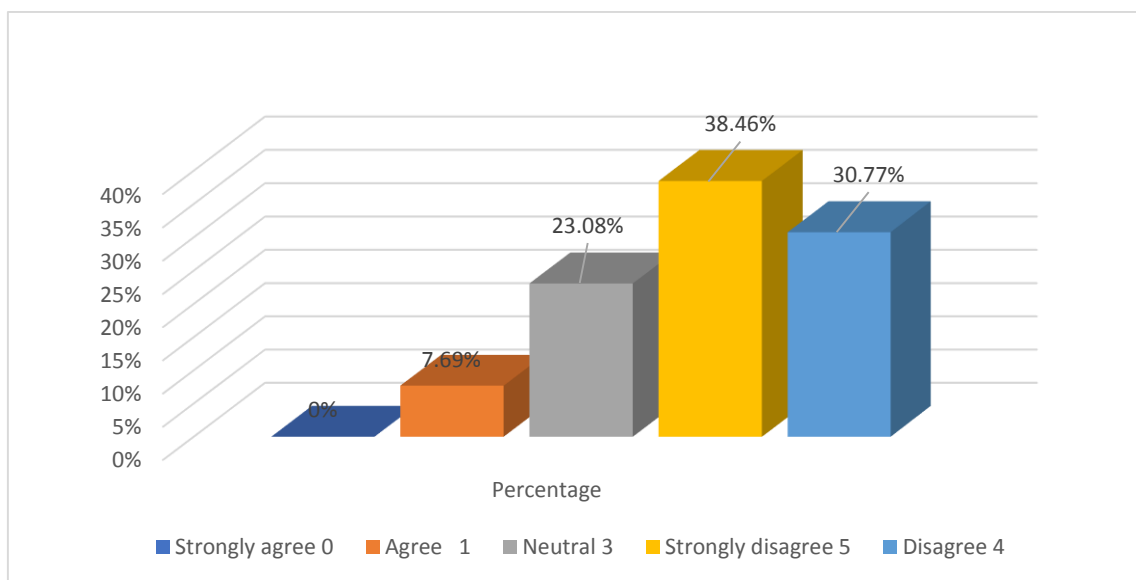


Figure 3.7 Teachers' Views about the Effect of Students' Joy on their Learning

5.4 The use of humour makes me close to my students and can improve communication with them.

Teacher students' relationship plays a major role in changing learners' attitudes towards learning. Hence, teachers' were asked to mention to what extent they agree with the statement which states that the use of humour makes me close to my students and can improve communication with them. The results show the teachers' highest percentage of agreement (100%); in that, (30.77%) of them indicate their strong agreement, and (69.23%) of them respond with "agree". From these results, it is clear that all of the teachers gave humour importance, as it is a way of intimacy which increases communication with them and can leads to the establishment of student-teacher rapport that. However, Humour does not tend to work well if the students are not already in a close relationship and immediacy with their professor, (Pineiro, 2016)

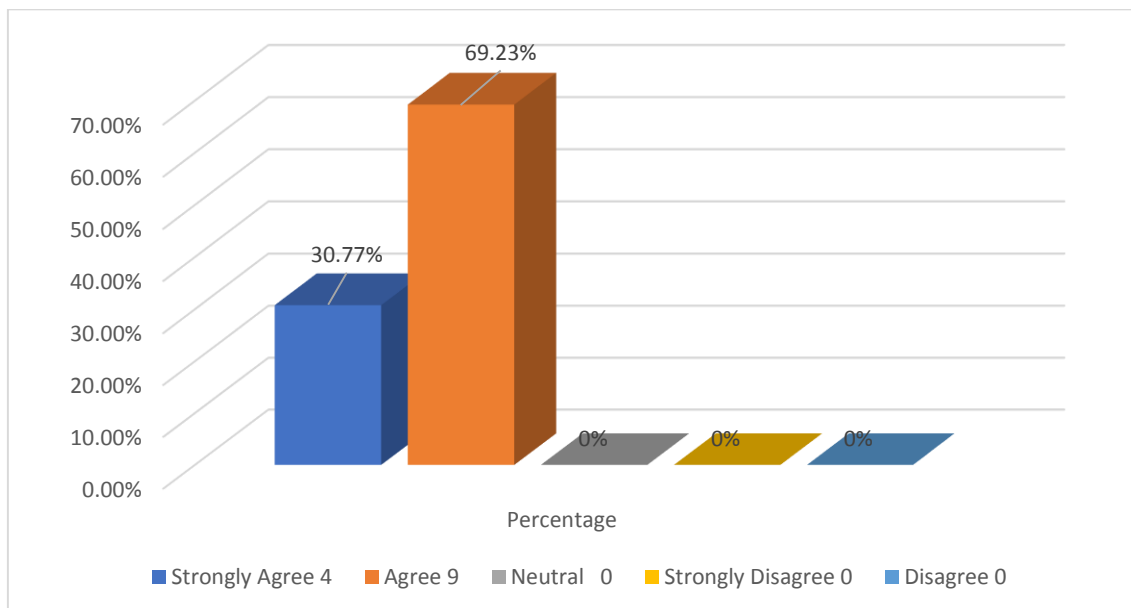


Figure 3.8 The Role of Humour on Enhancing Teacher-Students Rapport

5.5 Humour should never be used to embarrass or ridicule the student

This item sought to check if there are some teachers utilize humour passively to embarrass students or ridicule them. Since the way of using humour while teaching is crucial, teachers in this item were asked to indicate at what extent they agree or disagree with the statement that states humour should never be used to embarrass or radicle the students. The majority of teachers reported their strong agreement (n=7) that the misuse of humour in the classroom may have a negative effect. Besides, four teachers (n=4) indicate their total agreement about the mentioned statement. Whereas, one teacher (n=1) answered with disagreeing, and another teacher (n=1) holds a neutral position toward the provided statement. This suggests that some teachers, though even a slight number, find it appropriate using humour to ridicule other students through sarcasm or forced humour. Additionally, the percentages of responses are more explained in figure 3.9. Since the total number of the teacher (84.62%) indicate their agreement that humour should never be used negatively, consequently; the majority of them are aware of its the appropriate use in the learning settings. Thus, there are guidelines in which humour can be incorporated in the classroom

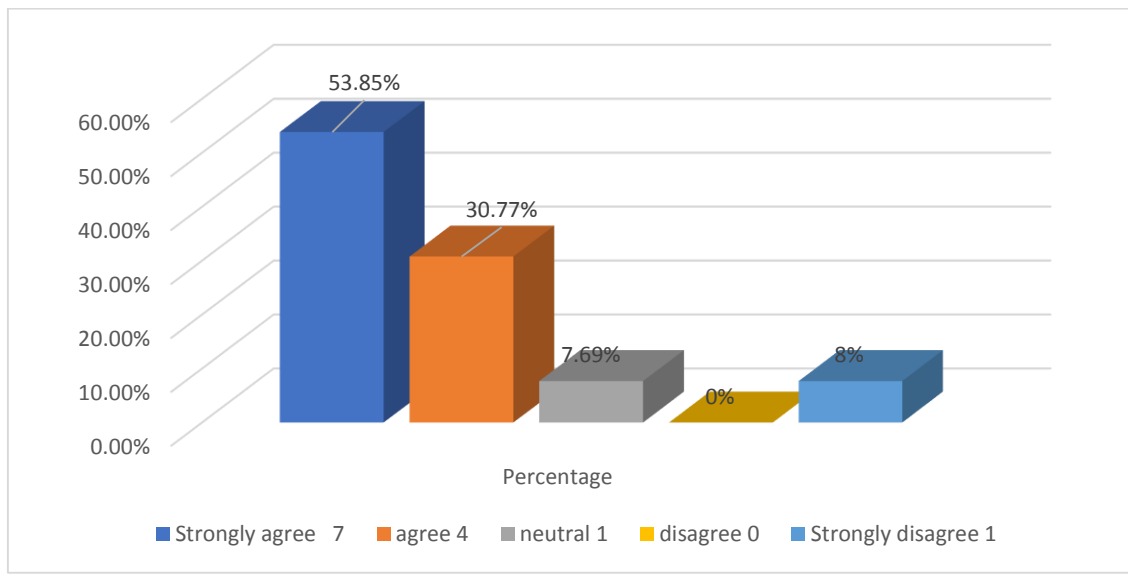


Figure 3.9 The Inappropriate use of Humour in the EFL Class

5.6 Learning requires a serious work in an environment with a little time for humour

The evidence suggests that humour maximizes learning rather than the traditional way of teaching. Hence, the following statement, which indicates that learning required a serious work in an environment with a little time for humour, was designed to collect data about the teachers' opinion regarding the amount of using humour while teaching. Results of their answers are provided in Figure 3.10 in which teachers' agreed that learning requires serious settings to work with a small room for humour. It was expected that teachers' answers would belong to "strongly disagree", or "disagree" categories; nevertheless, the results show the teachers' highest percentage of agreement. In that, (30.77%) of them indicate their agreement, and (23.08%) show their strong agreement.

The rest of the teachers were against teaching in a serious environment with the limitation of using humour, except one teacher (7.69%) who holed the neutral position. Besides,

(30.77%) see that learning does not have to be serious to be effective. Accordingly, humorous teachers can promote student enjoyment of learning by telling jokes or funny stories. Therefore, teaching using relevant, interesting and light-hearted examples to highlight important point enable the students to perceive more than being in a serious environment.

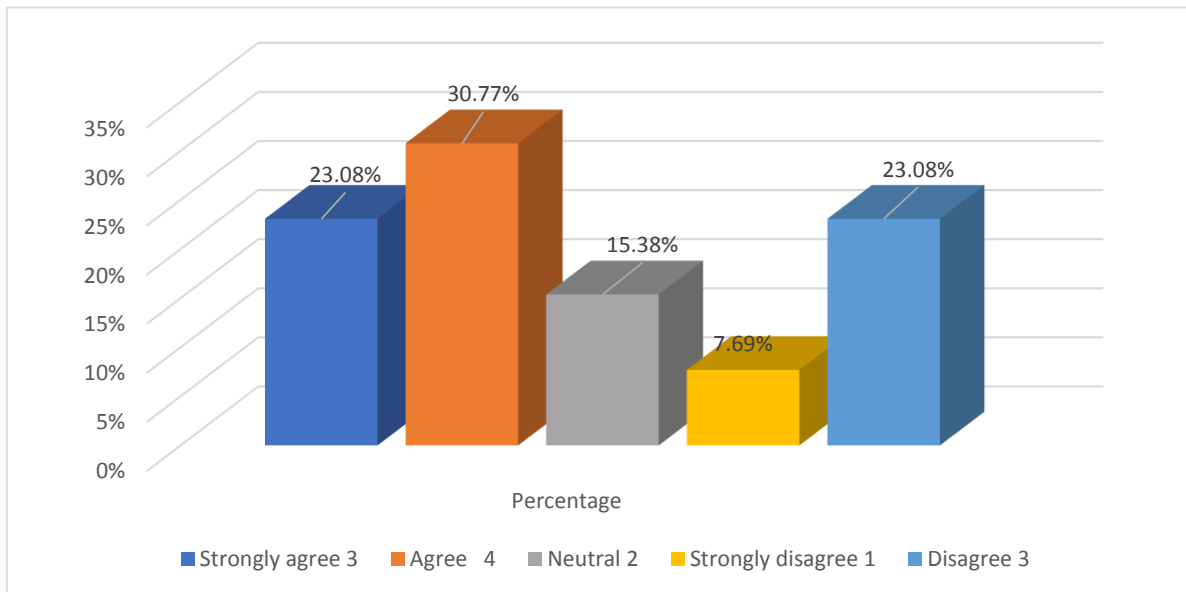


Figure 3.10 Humour Impact on the Seriousness of Learning

6.7 Humour is a waste of precious learning time in the classroom

The teachers strongly disapprove the statement that reads, as ‘humour is a waste of precious learning time.’ Their disapproval is shown in Figure 3.11. A total of (n=11) out of (n=13) teachers disagree with the same statement, making up (84.62%) of the total responses. These teachers do not think that the learning time is being wasted by the use of humour. On the contrary, they believe that humour is a valuable learning tool. That is why only (7.69%) of the responses side with the statement and only (7.69%) holds a neutral position. We may deduce

that too much use of humour becomes ineffective especially when it is not content based-humour.

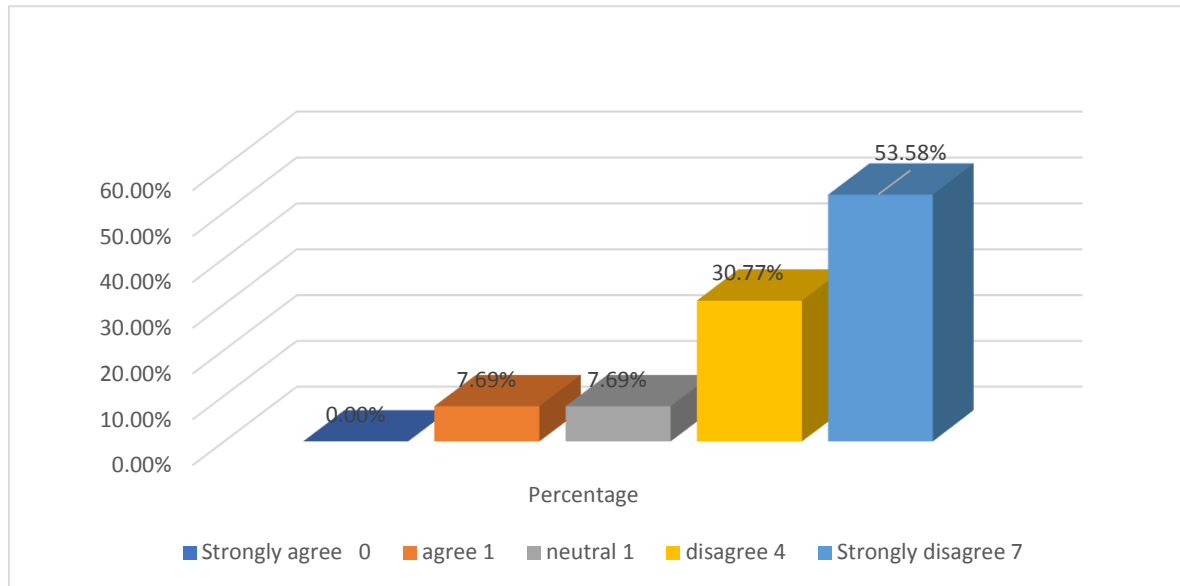


Figure 3.11 Humour Impact on Lesson Deviation

5.8 Using humour boosts students' participation and increases motivation

One reason for using humour is that it is a self-effacing behaviour, which allows the shy or timid student in the class to participate and interact with the teachers. Hence, the following statement aimed to examine how humour can be an effective teaching tool in terms of enhancing the students' participation and motivation toward learning. It is observed below that (92.31%) of teachers think that humour has a positive impact on students' learning. They believe that humour has a vital role in the progress of EFL learning. However, only (7.69%) of them (n=1) holds a neutral position. Based on the teachers' total agreement about this statement, we may deduce that humour increases students' communicative and social skills by reducing tension

and stress, so students become more involved in the learning process so that they will take part from the lesson by the participation. Overall, humour can improve student performance by boosting participation and increasing students' motivation to focus on the material. (Stambor, 2006)

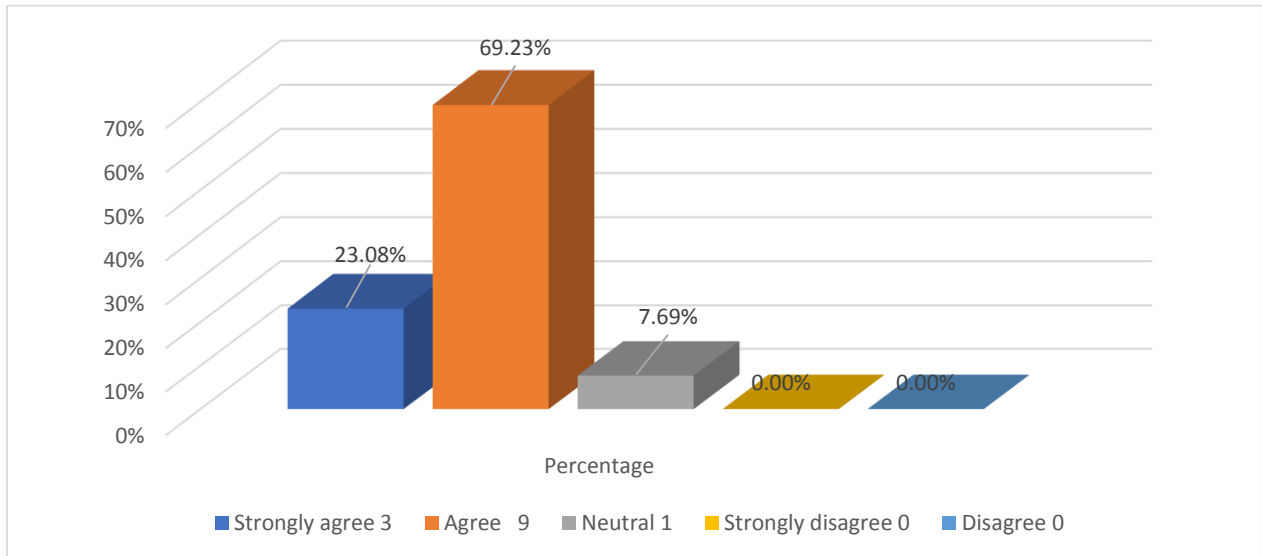


Figure 3.12 Humour as a Participation and Motivation Stimulus

5.9 Humour is beneficial to relieve students' stress, tension and classroom boredom

The purpose of this statement was to explore to what extent participants relate humour to reducing classroom boredom and decreasing students' stress and tension. The Figure 3.13 reveals that humour can be a great remedy for stress, tension. In addition, approximately the number of teachers, who claimed that humour has a significant role in reducing students stress and classroom boredom equals twelve teachers (92.31%). Whereas, the rest of the teachers equals only one (7.69%) who has a neutral position. Strong agreement was observed in their vital role of making students' relax and even engage in learning by becoming more motivated

and interested in learning languages. As reported in Figure 3.13, (92.31%) of the teachers considered humour as significant integrative tools in language teaching.

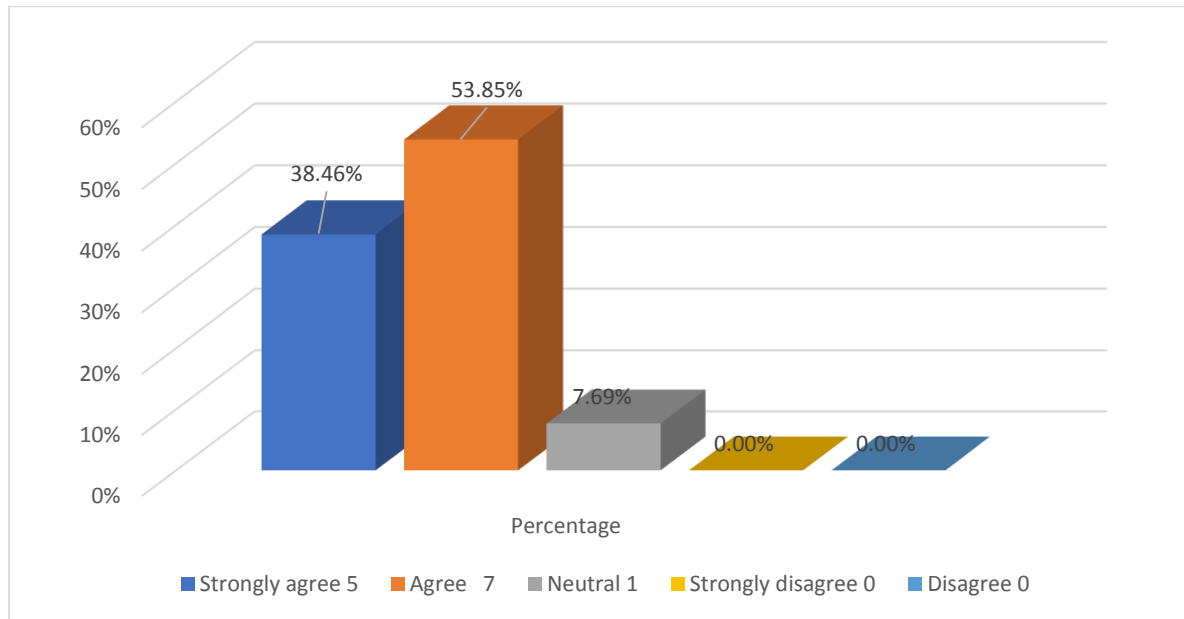


Figure 3.13 Humour Effect on Reducing Students' Stress and Classroom Boredom

5.10 Effective use of humour in academic settings must be specific, appropriate to subject matter and ethically sounds

The reason behind constructing this statement was that we wanted to reveal whether teachers are aware of the appropriate use of humour in classroom settings and if they really respect the guidelines of integrating humorous patterns in teaching. Results reported in Figure 3.14 revealed that most of the teachers (n=11) have agreed with the statement that indicates effective use of humour in academic settings must be specific, appropriate to subject matter and ethically sounds. Concerning others who claimed other options are only two teachers (n=2) out of thirteen one who holds a neutral position. According to these results, it is clear that the majority of teachers believe that humour can be beneficial if it is tied to the lesson's material,

properly timed and ethically sound. However, inappropriate humour must be avoided in academic settings, since it may offend and distance students from the instructor such as humour that targets sex, race, gender, political views or that criticizes a student for ignorance, poor performance or personal beliefs

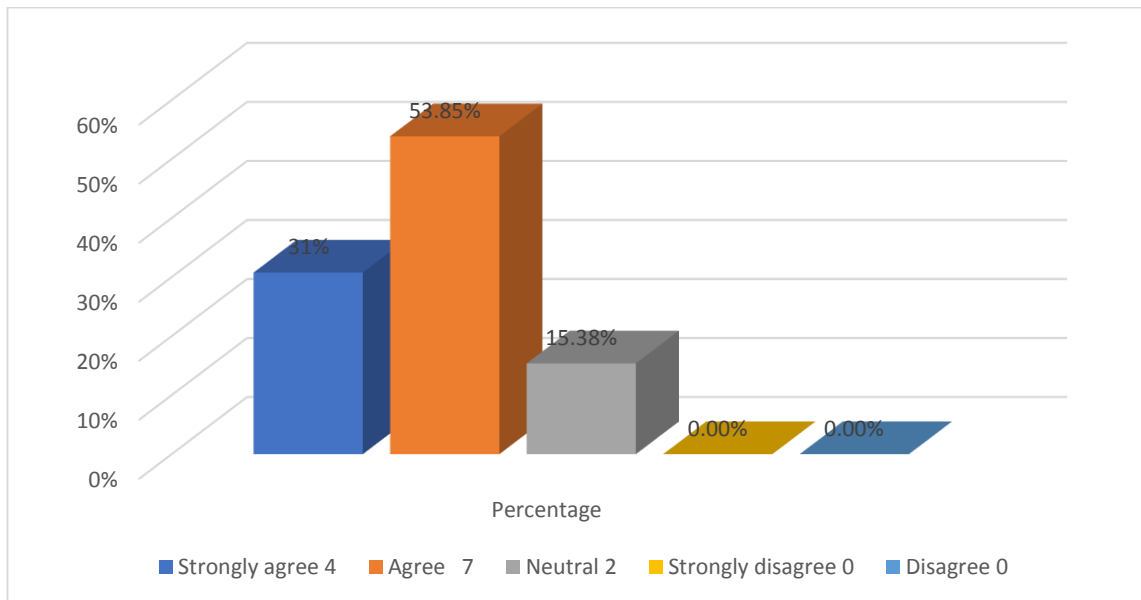


Figure 3.14 The Effective Use of Humour in an EFL Class

5.11 Teachers need to focus on learning FIRST and have humour that will help meet that goal

Humour may distract the attention from the essential content, so this statement aimed to collect teachers' attitude about the extent at which the content of the lesson should be first then the use of humour will be as helping tool that may boost the learning process. The results show that (31.77%) of teaches indicate their strong agreement that the focus should be on leaning and humour is a helping tool that helps them to meet that goal. Similarly, (53.85%) of teachers

believe that the focus of teaching is on learning by using humour as a facilitating tool. Nevertheless, (15.38%) of teachers neither agree nor disagree with the mentioned statement, yet they have chosen the neutral position.

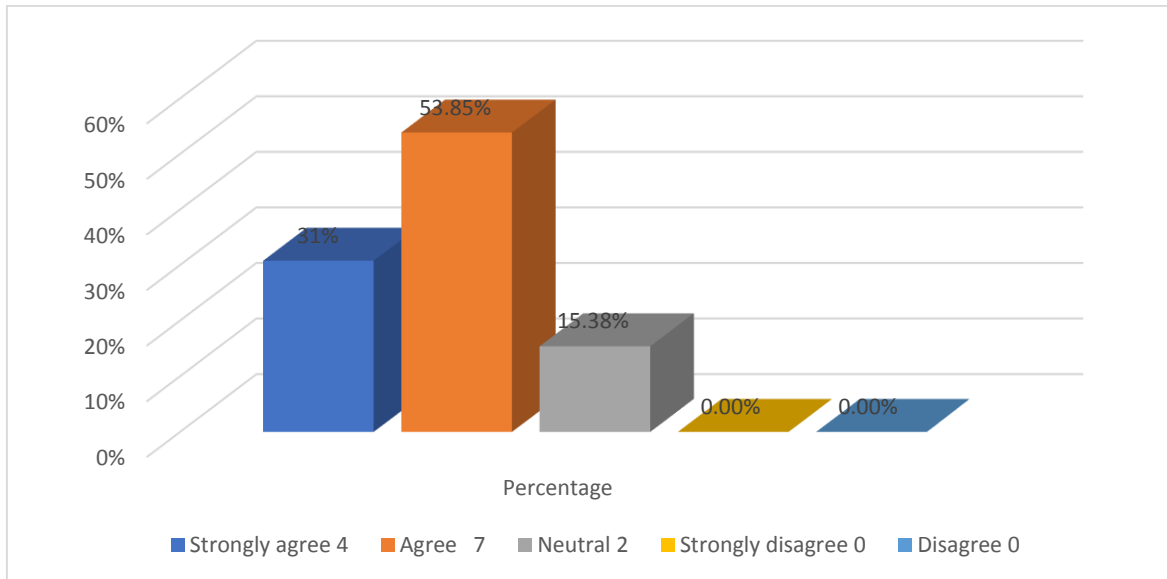


Figure 3.15 Humour as a Facilitating Tool of Learning

5.12 The use of humour fosters a positive, comfortable, and conducive learning environment

Since the learning environment is a very important element in the EFL classroom, this aims to discover the teachers' point of view concerning the role of teachers' sense of humour in creating a good learning environment. Eleven teachers (84.61%) mentioned their agreement with, while two teachers indicate their strong agreement (15.38%), that teachers' sense of humour creates a good learning environment for their learners. Figure 3.16 is an example of the results that determine the reasons behind preferring teachers with a sense of humour which

enables students' to participate, encourages and enhance their amount of interaction, as well as creating the appropriate learning environment. Hence, it is clear that most of the teachers believe that their sense of humour has a significant impact on their students' interaction and concentration. This high amount of students 'concentration could be due to their feeling comfortable through the teachers 'employment of humour during the lesson

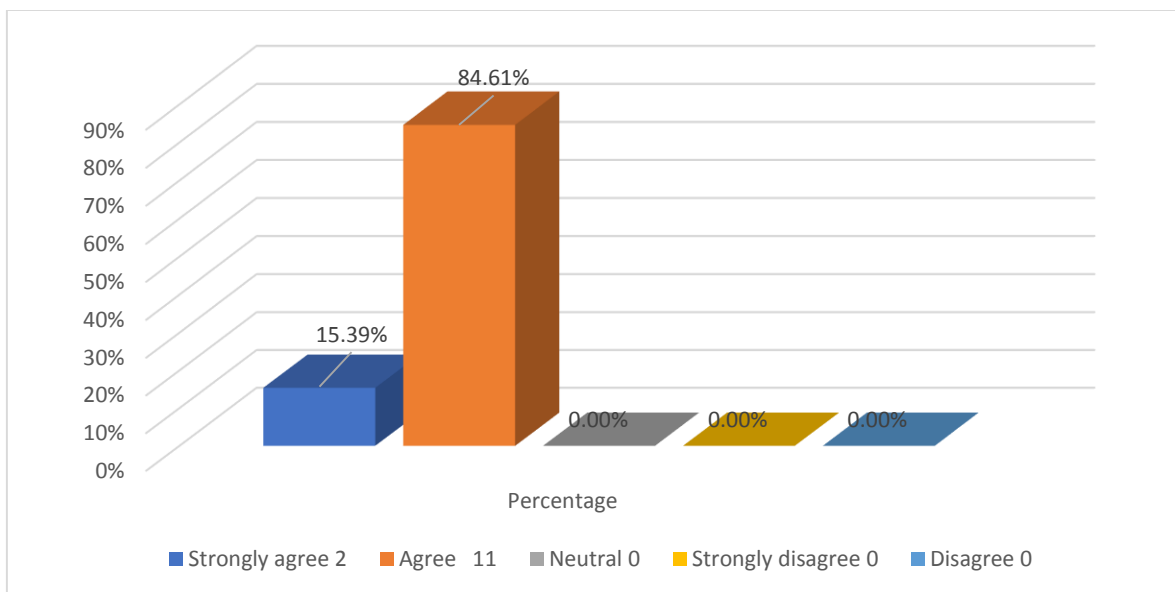


Figure 3.16 Humour Effect on Students' Repose and Involvement

5.13 Students appreciate the integration of humour in learning and want teachers to use it

Students are a crucial part of the learning process. The following statement was designed for teachers to indicate whether their students' appreciate the integration of humour in learning and want them to use it. Figure 3.17 shows that seven teachers (53.84%) answered with "agree", and three teachers (23.08%) state their strong agreement. In addition to that, the other three teachers (23.08%) answered with "neutral". These results may confirm the

teachers' views about students' appreciation of the use of humour since they are in direct contact with the students. The majority of teachers (76.92%) reported the importance of humour and its benefits for their students. Then, they confirm the students' point of view by indicating that students are high to like the lesson that is explained with different patterns of humour which enables them to participate, encourages and enhance their amount of attention, as well as improve their ability to retain.

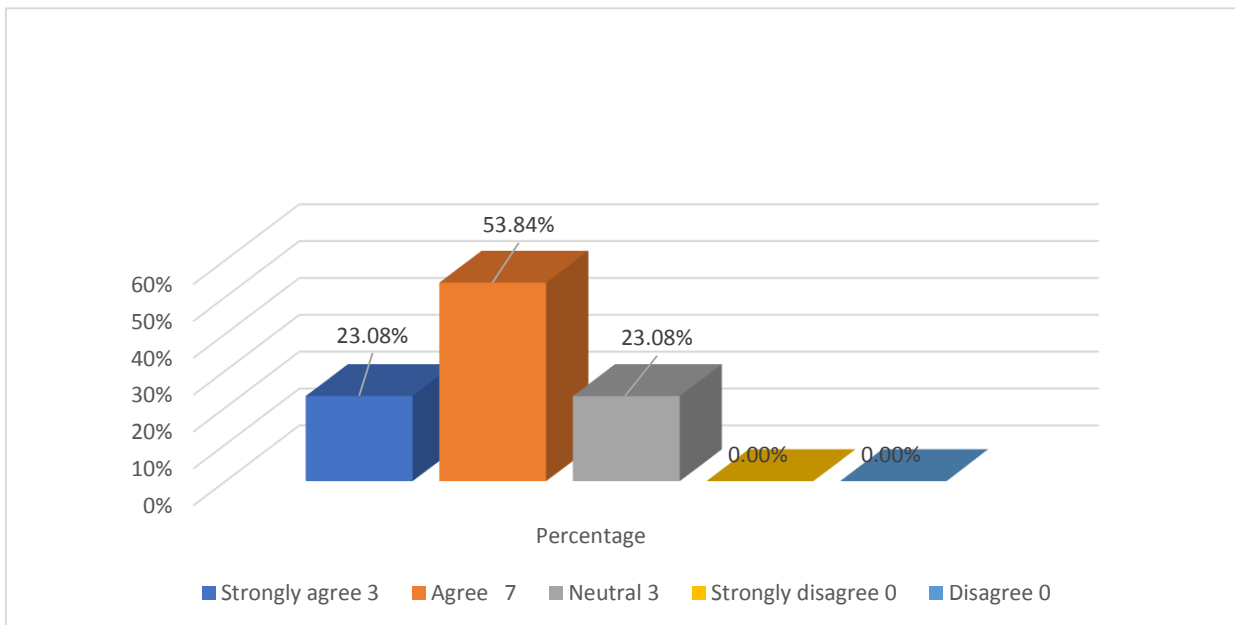


Figure 3.17 Teachers' Views about the Students' Perceptions of Using Humour

Section Three: Perceptions of Integrating Humour to Enhance students' Attention and Retention (From item 6 to item 15)

Through this section, we spotlight on teachers' views and attitudes on the impact of integration humour on EFL students' attention and retention. First, it aimed to collect teachers' perceptions about the usefulness of humour in raising students' attention towards

lessons. In addition, it attempted to look at teachers' frequent use of some humorous patterns while teaching the subject matters. Moreover, it estimated to shed light on the most effective forms of humour that gains more students' attention. Furthermore, it sought to check if teachers find humour helpful to increase EFL students' comprehension and cognitive retention of what they have been learned. Finally, it purposed to explore the possibility of improving the mental well-being of the students and the instructor by using humour

I. Teachers' attitudes towards the impact of humour on students' attention

Item 6. The effect of humour on enhancing EFL students' attention

This item sought to gather teachers' opinions about humour as a helping tool which may assist them to attract their students' attention (yes or no). Statistically speaking, all the teachers' (100%) totally agree that humour is a useful tool to increase their students' attention to classroom material. Thus, the usefulness of humour on raising EFL learners' interest has been validated

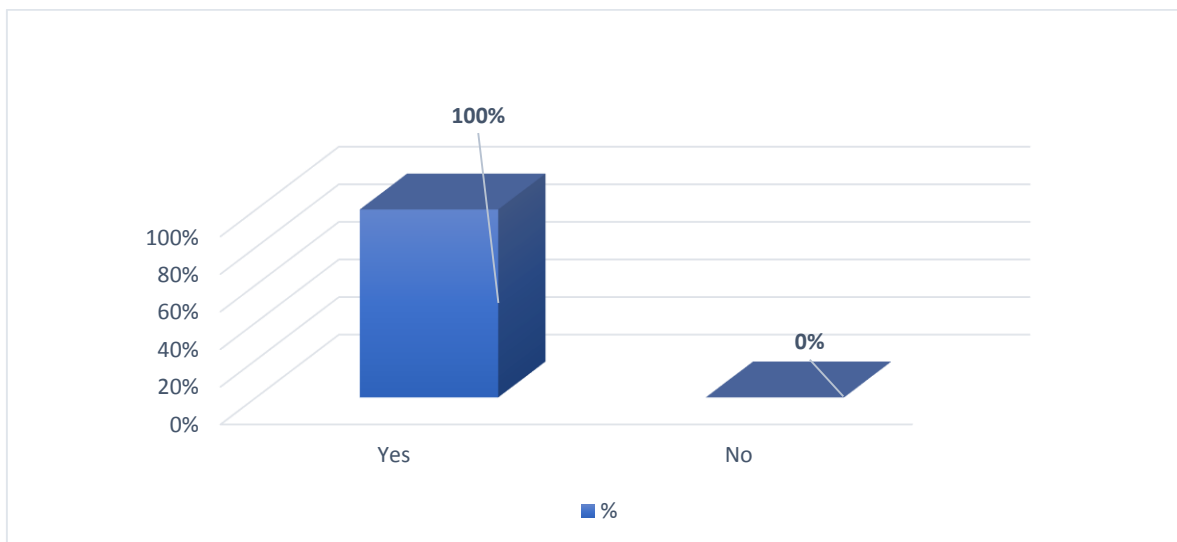


Figure 3.18 Humour Effect on Students' Attention

Item 7. The selection of using humour

This item designed for the sake to check EFL teachers' opinions about the selection of some humorous patterns to be integrated with the delivered content. Teachers were asked if each session has an appropriate use of humour (yes or no). As it is clearly shown in Figure 3.19 that all the teachers (100%) believe that, the selection of humour is important because each lesson requires particular forms to be used. Therefore, the use of humour has to support the lesson content so that teachers can successfully meet lesson goals.

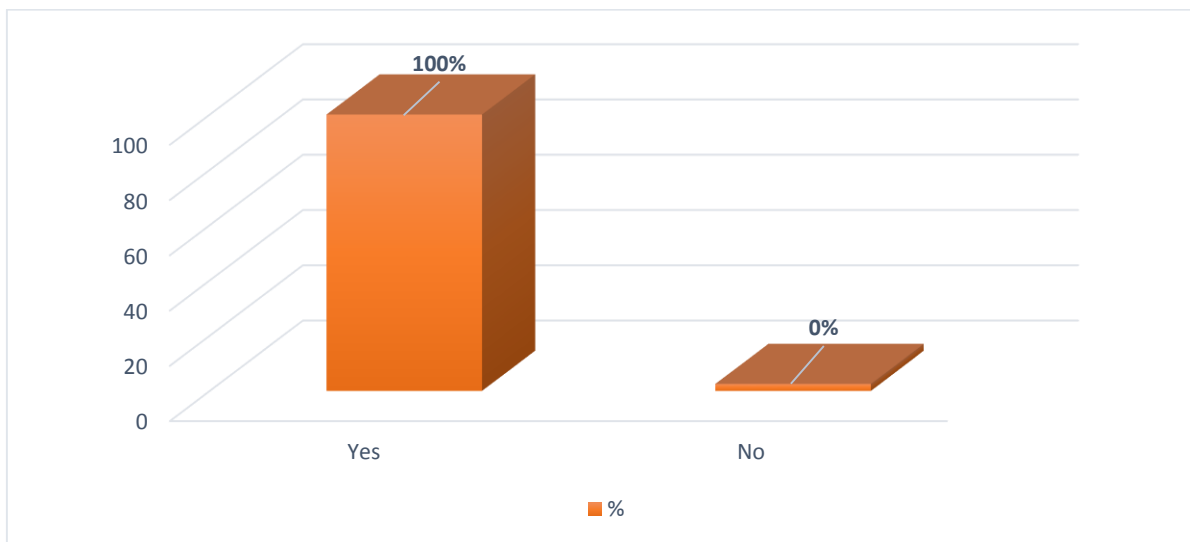


Figure 3.19 The selection of Humour to each Appropriate Session

Item 8: Teachers' Views about the Role of humour to Promote Class Attendance

This question was stated in the aim of discovering teachers' views concerning the impact of using humour on their class attendance willingness (yes or no). The results show that the thirteen teachers (100%) answered with 'yes'. From these results, it is clear that all teachers believe that the majority of their students prefer the lectures in which the teacher employs some

kinds of humour. As they have answered in the previous questions, their sense of humour enables their students to participate, improve their attitude toward the subject matter and even enhances their amount of interaction, as well as creating the appropriate learning environment.

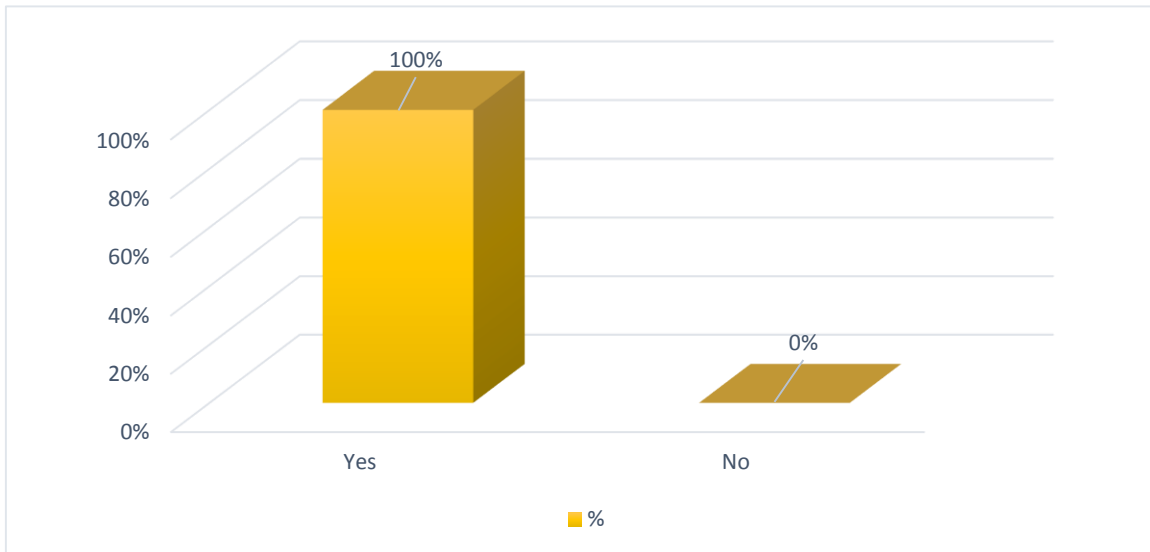


Figure 3.20 Humour Use for Class Attendance Willingness

Teachers' Justifications of their Answers

In this question, the teachers were asked to justify their answers. Their justifications were varied and convinced. On one hand, all the teachers answered with “yes” and they have provided interesting justification that proved the benefits of adopting humour in improving students ‘attitude toward the subject matter and promote class attendance. The majority of teachers’ justifications highlighted that usually students hate boring and humourless teachers, thus students would like having a funny teacher rather than a strict one. They added that students tend to follow humourous teacher and learners mostly like him; thus, learners become more motivated and wait the session to learn the subject matter with fun.

Furthermore, the justifications showed that many students need to have a relief between now and then. With technology, students use the mobile phone with network data; and this latter is a distraction for students' learning inside the classroom. Hence, the teacher is meant to keep his/her students' attention only by his/her sense of humour and thus they pay attention to his funny stories instead of wasting time; meaninglessly using their phones. Hence, teachers confirm that Humour provides students with the appropriate atmosphere needed for grasping the knowledge required and helps in remembering the information given later beside it encourage shy students to be more productive.

Moreover, a part of them believe that Students are usually bored from traditional methods of learning, bringing to them a new way that involves having fun and joy could make a very important shift towards learning. Therefore, students are more likely to participate and share their ideas in they have given funny examples. Eventually, some teachers pointed that humour provides students with the appropriate atmosphere needed for grasping the knowledge required and helps in remembering the information given later beside it encourage shy students to be more productive.

Item 9. Forms of Humour often Implemented by Teachers

In this question, the teachers were asked to tick the forms of humour they often use in the classroom. Figure 3.21 below indicates that most of the teachers (69.2%) have answered that they use jokes. The number of teachers who indicate that they employ humour in a form of funny games equals two teachers with a percentage of (15.4%); whereas, one teacher (7.7%) indicates that he uses Tongue twisters in teaching. Concerning those who indicate other forms of humour, they claim that they use many other forms involving a funny body language, acting,

or Arab jokes and funny examples. According to these results, it is clear that useful forms of humour are jokes and funny games. Since these forms of humour are just used sometimes, the students can observe them easily.

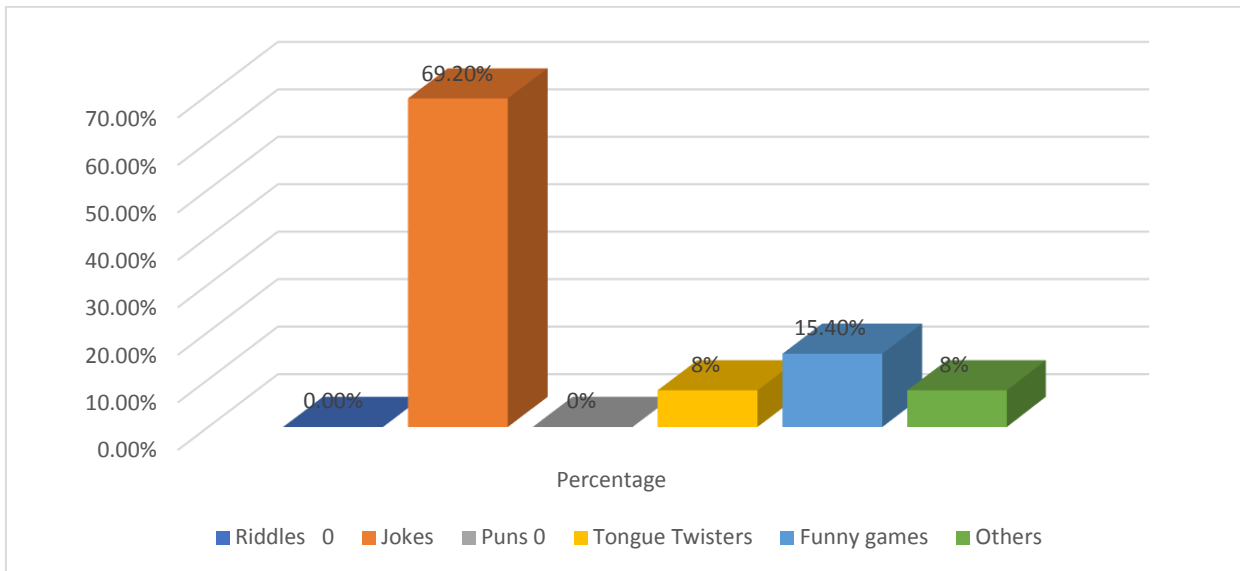


Figure 3.21 Forms of Humour Implemented by Teachers

Item10. The most form of Humour that Gains Students' Interest

In this item, teachers were recommended to evaluate the effectiveness of the suggested five different forms of humour and others in terms of enhancing EFL learners' interest, i-e which form of humour gains more students' interest according to them. It can be seen from the following result Figure 3.22 that the majority of teachers, which equals six teachers (69.20%), noticed that jokes are more liked by students because they attracts their attention and promote their involvement. While two other teachers (15.40%) have selected riddles as the best form of humour that helps them to keep their students' interest toward the lesson explanation. The last two teachers one of them indicated that tongue twisters works batter with him and the other one employ different funny games in his classes. According to these

results, we may notice that jokes are more liked by students' as a teaching helping tool to keep them more interested toward learning.

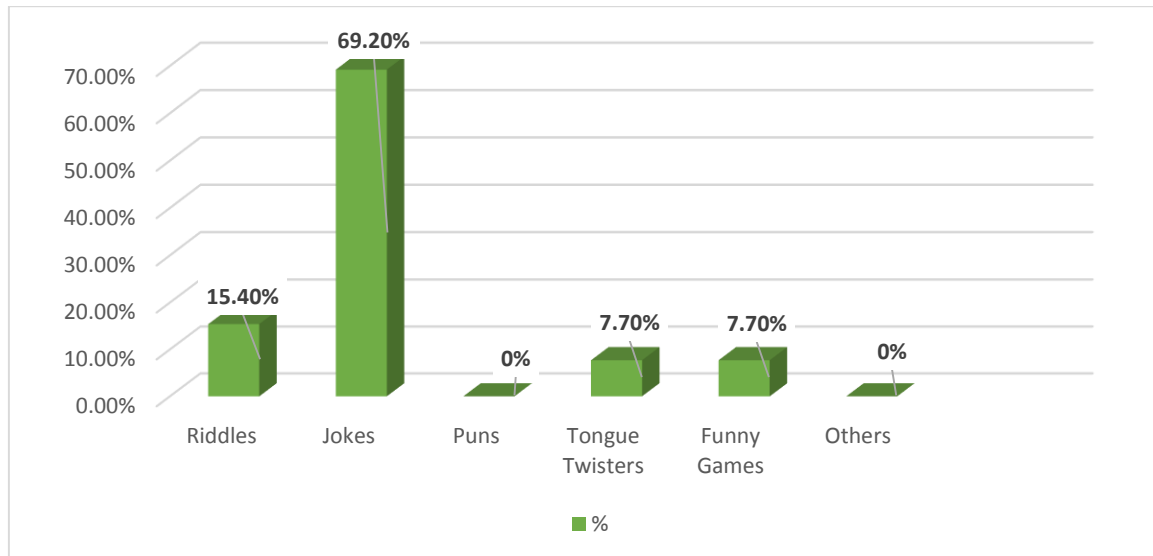


Figure 3.22 The Effective Humour Form that Gains Students' Interest

Teachers' Justifications of their Answers

To gather extra information about this question we requested them to justify their answers. Initially, nearly the overall answers detected that secondary school learners' Students of a foreign language are not of a good level to participate in tasks that are more difficult. Yet in jokes, they can be easily involved and be a part of the humorous tasks. However, the use of puns or riddles will make it difficult for them to participate, but jokes from common daily scenarios might be more helpful. The same idea suggested by another teacher who believes that the level of EFL learners in secondary school unable them to solve the riddles or to perform the tongue twisters nor understand the puns. He added the employment of funny games might be time consuming; yet making relevant jokes fits better.

Besides some teachers confirmed that telling funny jokes stuck in their memory for a long time, especially the once which have a direct link with the topic, make them laugh and establish a mental link with the topic in the same time. Some other teachers shed the light on the ethical benefits of the jokes which often carry some moral values and easy to be integrated in the lesson. The use of jokes get much support from teachers, one of them.

In the same path, some teachers suggested riddles as an effective form of humour that keeps students interested to learn more about the target language, and may enhance their critical thinking. Moreover, tongue twisters were also suggested by another teacher, as a way to get learners know how to articulate correct, and to practice sounds that may enhance their pronunciation skills. Eventually, some teachers proposed some language funny games to be used while teaching the target language because it promotes teamwork to make conducive classroom environment.

Consequently, teachers' justifications imply students' lack of knowledge as an obstacle to get the sense of some humourous forms such as riddles, puns. On the other hand, they proved the vital role of other patterns like jokes and funny language games in gaining students' interest and promoting their productivity because it gives them the chance to be a part from the teaching learning process. Finally, solving different patterns of puns and riddles may ameliorate students' level of critical thinking by giving them the opportunity to speak their minds. Therefore, applying different forms of humour in EFL classes is very important.

Item 11. Perceptions about using humour to make students interest toward the lesson

Teachers' were requested in this item to mention if they agree or disagree with the employment of humour in their EFL classes (yes or no), and to provide justifications of their

answers in case they use humour whether spontaneously or consciously. It is clearly observed in Figure 3.23 that the majority of teachers (92.30%) confirmed that humour is an important tool to be used in teaching foreign languages. However, only one teacher (7.70%) who indicated his disagreement toward the use of humour in his class. Thus, teachers are aware of the benefits of applying humour in teaching and they do not hesitate to use it to enhance their learners' attention

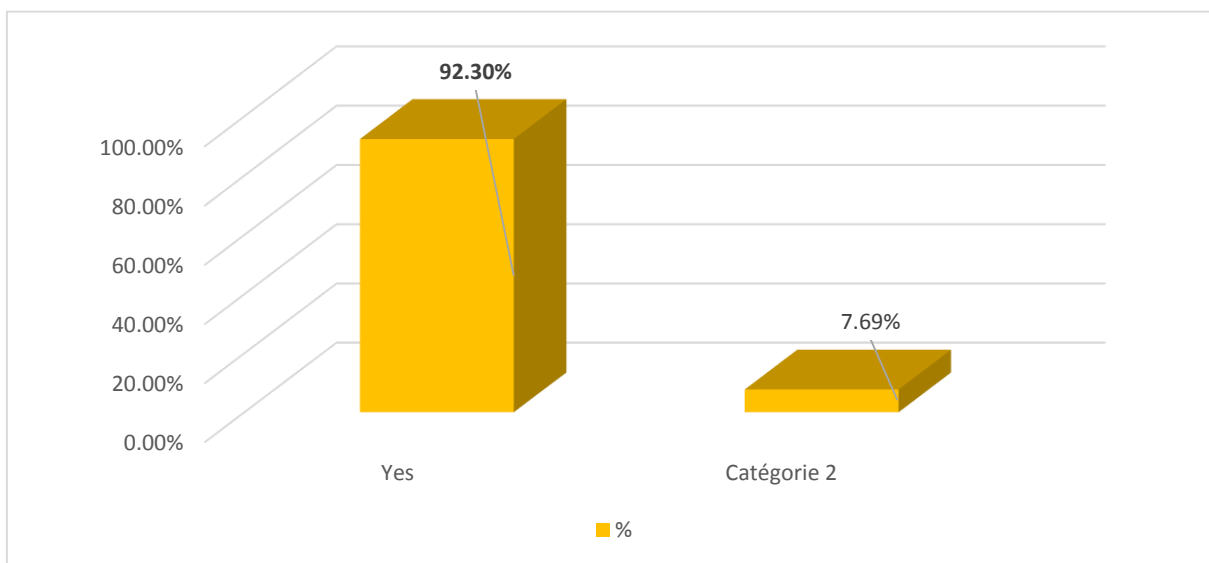


Figure 3.23 Perceptions about using Humour to Enhance EFL Learners' Attention

Teachers' Justifications of their Answers

Teachers' justifications proved that all the teachers' participants use humour in their classes either spontaneously or consciously. Besides, the first teacher indicates his usually use of jokes to grasp the students' attention, and he gave example when he saw a female's attention is out, he asked her how many children she has left at home. In addition, sometimes he asked them to come to the board and explain the point of dealing with in a funny way. Another teacher

claimed that he employs humour spontaneously while teaching, as cracking jokes which is effective in lightening up students' and even the teacher's mood. Other teachers use it consciously to make them closer to their students.

According to some teachers, humour seems a part of the lesson that makes the learners more attentive. Accordingly, other teachers use it on purpose when it is necessary and by chance when it meets with the objective of the lesson. In the same path, two other teachers indicate their conscious use of humour while teaching. They proved the same idea which is about the role of humour to keep the lesson in the frame. Therefore, they try to use it in order to serve the lesson content the other teacher,

Thus, one teacher states that he personally uses the humour spontaneously because it has inclined in the spirit of the teacher. In addition, he does not think that it could be used consciously because it is a part of the teacher's humorous sense.

To sum up all these explanations, all the teachers considered the humour as an effective tool to attract the EFL students' attention. Yet, the way of employ it in teaching EFL varies from one teacher to another, but the most important is that should reflect the subject matter content.

Item.12 Teachers' frequent use of humour

In this question, teachers were asked to state the frequency of using humour in their classes. The majority of the students (11 teachers) indicates that they often employ humour, but not all the time, while one teacher responds with "always". In addition to that, only one teacher who rarely uses humour. From these answers, it is clear that the majority of teachers (84.6%)

use humour most of the time. Such results help us to conclude it must be an effective coping mechanism.

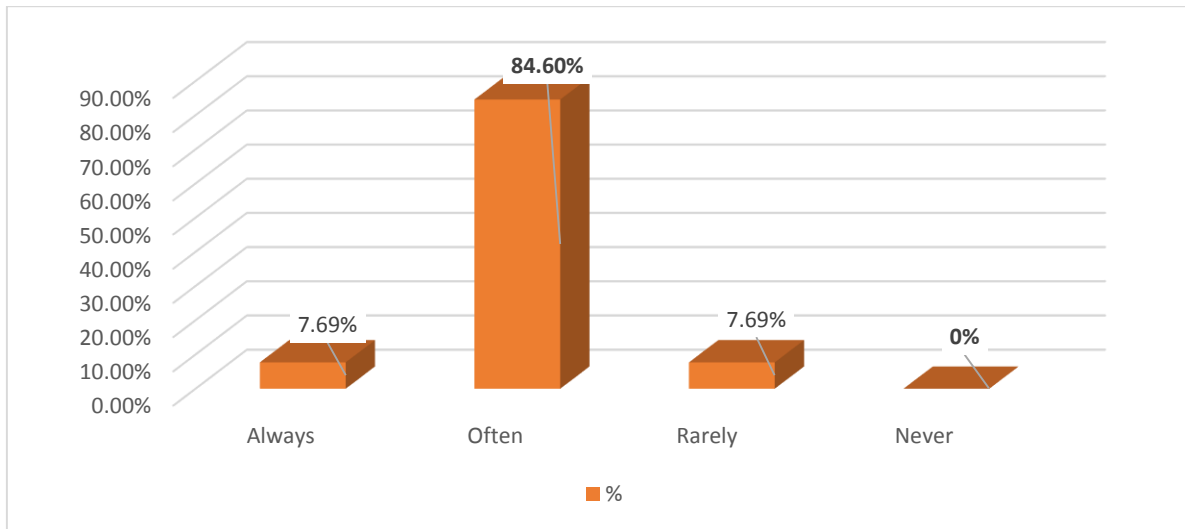


Figure 3.24 Teachers' Frequency use of Humour

II. Teachers' Perception about the Effect of humour on students' Retention

Item13. The impact of humour on increasing students' comprehension and retention

The following item was designed to examine the impact of using different humorous patterns on EFL learners' word comprehension and cognitive retention. Teachers were asked if they find humour helpful to promote students' comprehension and of the more difficult subject matter (yes or no). Statistically speaking, a great deal of teachers (76.30%) supported the fact that humour can be an effective tool to develop EFL students' comprehension and retention of classroom materials, which implies their importance in learning EFL. However, only (23.10%) who believe that research using humour is not enough beneficial as a tool to increase students' cognitive comprehension and retention of difficult patterns. Depending on these results, it is clear that the majority of teachers (n=10) prefer to integrate humour in their classes so that they

can be able to improve the students' amount of comprehension and cognitive retention as well. Consequently, humour as a teaching helping tool is of great importance for developing EFL students' comprehension and retention, so its application will have positive results.

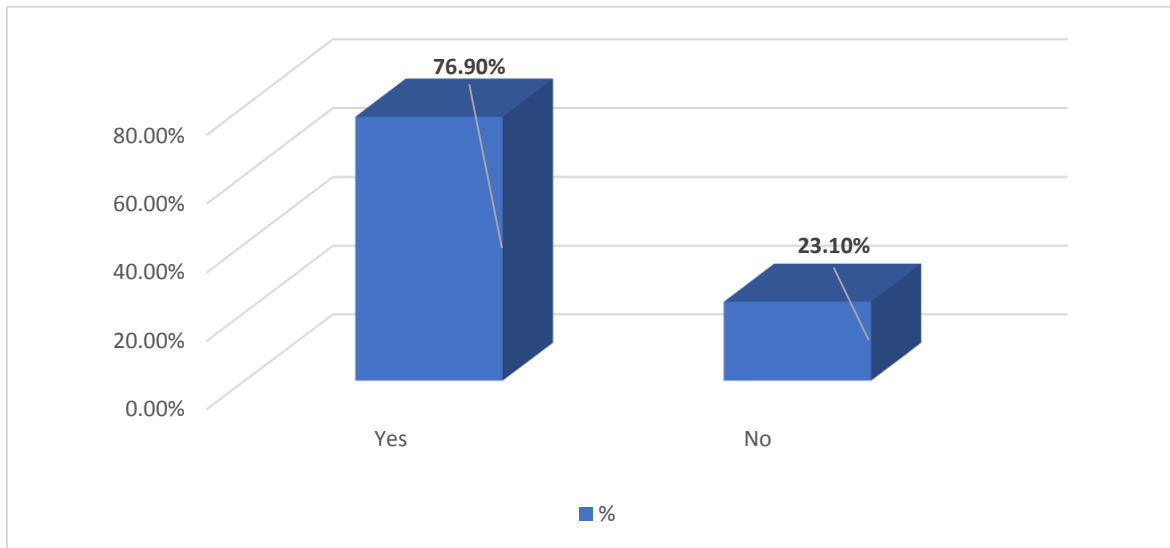


Figure 3.25 Views on the Impact of Humour on Students' Comprehension and Retention

Teachers' Justifications of their Answers

In the second part of this item, teachers were requested to give further explanations on whether the use of humour has an impact on the students' comprehension and retention of classroom materials. Initially, the teachers (n=3) who answered with "no" did not provide any reason. However, those who answered with "yes" have provided interesting justification that proved the benefits of adopting the humour in their classes.

To sum up teachers' justifications, nearly the overall responses detected that humour is crucial in EFL because students are able to remember some elements that were once explained humourously better than other ways. They emphasize learners easily retain and memorize parts

of the lesson which were enjoyable. Thus, we can understand that our teachers are aware that humour raises their students' chance to make better understanding, retention, reasoning as well as grasping the knowledge easily.

In the same path, one of the respondents claimed, "recent research has proved that students learn more in such environments, so humour promotes a good learning atmosphere which helps students to increase their comprehension abilities". Therefore, we can infer that humour is very helpful for EFL learning process because it enhances and comprises understanding, which is highly demanded for successful EFL learning.

Moreover, other teachers stressed that humour is not necessary it is rather a need because nowadays learners are absorbed with social and technology matters and they need a concrete means of relaxation. They added students are fed up with old fashion way of teaching; especially Algerian students suffer from stress and hardship of life outside school. Thus, teachers suggested the use of humour which can encourage an atmosphere of openness, develop students' divergent thinking, improve their retention of the presented materials, and garner respect for the teacher.

To conclude, we can deduce that the majority of EFL secondary school teachers are familiar with the use of humour. Besides, they believe in the positive effect of it to make the students stress free, so that they will be able to comprehend and retain better. Furthermore, they are aware that what an EFL student needs in learning EFL successfully are the mental capacities. Therefore, they consider humour as an instrumental in learning which promotes the core of EFL success.

Item.14: Attitudes' toward the Role of Humour to Promote Teacher and Student's Mental Well-Being

The use of humour in the EFL classroom has been researched extensively and has been shown to have many benefits for students and instructors as well. The aim behind this question is to determine whether the use of humour in the EFL class promote teachers and students' mental well-being (yes or no). As can be seen from the graph (3.22) above, twelve teachers (92.30%) revealed that possessing a good sense of humour could also lead to the establishment of student-teacher rapport, as a way to promote teachers and students' mental situation. The teachers report that their students' not only learn a great deal from humorous teachers, but they also enjoy the process of learning from them.

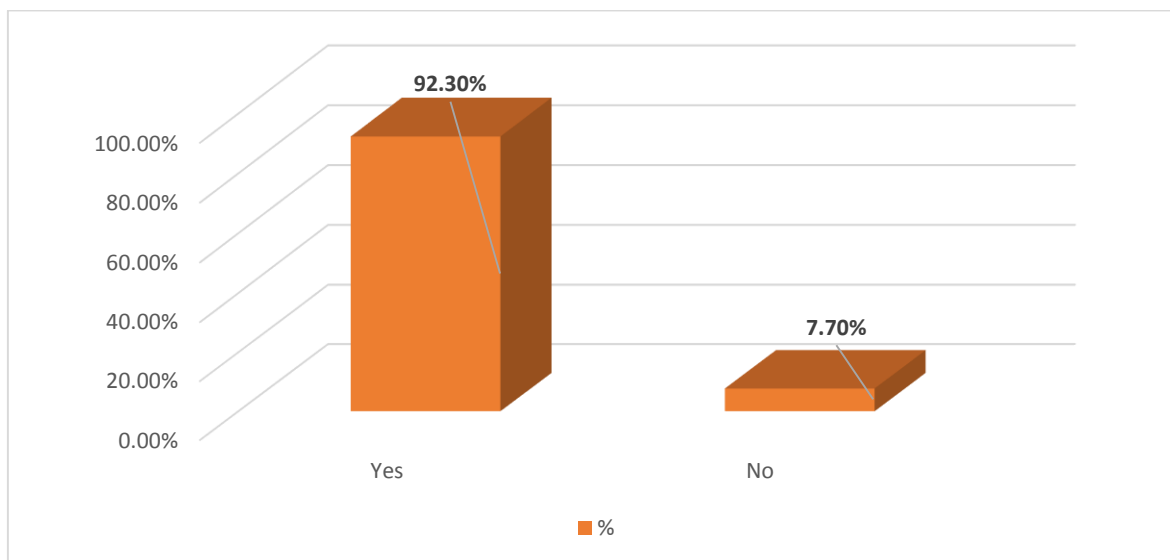


Figure 3.26 Attitudes' toward the Role of Humour to Promote Teacher and Student's Mental Well-Being

Teachers' Justifications of Their Answers

When we asked the teachers whether about humour has an effect on teachers and students mental well-being or not, all of them but one has insisted on their great importance for this process. Then, to gather extra information about this question we requested them to justify their answers. To sum up respondents' justifications, the only exception is the one who affirmed that humour is not of great importance and s/he did not provide any justification. However, those who answered with "yes" to the great effect of humour of in making EFL instructors and learners at good mental situation offered several justifications.

To start with, those who have noted that humour affects teachers and learners' mental well-being, they highlighted that humour is a natural means of relief; everybody could enjoy little moments and these moments are engraved deep in the memory of every individual. According to them, the physical shape may disappear but the mental one may not, this is why the wellbeing mental situation is crucial in teaching.

Additionally, they claimed that humour helps awakening the subconscious mind so that it saves more information and integrated healthy atmosphere, because it releases negativity and makes both students and the instructor feel positively. As a result, the teaching learning process becomes an enjoyable moment in a relaxed atmosphere.

Moreover, a great deal of teachers believe that the employment of humour makes the employment of humour in teaching makes the majority of students present mentally during the session. Thus, we can say that is an effective way to boost students' attention, comprehension, retention, motivation and even participation. Besides, one of them added no one wants to be in a closed off room with a bunch of frowned faces, smiling faces are better. Another teacher

suggested jokes which normally made to make someone laugh and happy; thus, it improves their well-being. As we may notice, teachers highly believe that humour make them in well mental situation and their students' as well.

Furthermore, some teachers believe that humour breaks the chains of fear and builds the bridges of self-confidence and trust. So that, it helps to establish a good report with students as well break down walls which may have made an obstacle in the learning process and creating a lighter atmosphere.

Consequently, one can deduce that learning through humour in secondary school level promotes students and teachers' mental wellbeing. Therefore, teachers' humourous behaviors promote student enjoyment of learning.

Section Four: Some benefits of using humour in EFL classes main challenges (Item 15)

Throughout this section, we aimed to collect the main benefits of applying humour on EFL classes and how the teachers perceive the role of humour in improving different students' abilities.

Item 15. The Benefits of Using Humour

In this item, teachers were asked to rank number of benefits in form of that may result from using humour in EFL classes according to the effect of humour on them, in forme of five statements where 1. drastic (very strong) effect, 2. strong effect, 3.slight effect. 1-Using humour especially verbal ones helps to raise students' cultural competence.

15.1 Using humour especially verbal ones helps to raise students' cultural competence

Our teachers were requested to indicate whether using verbal humour such telling jokes or funny stories may raise students' cultural competence. Statistically speaking, a considerable percentage (69.2%) refers to those who have selected "strong effect", which means the majority of teachers (n=) believe that the benefits of humour may not be limited to academic performance, rather than it helps the students to be knowledgeable about the different cultural and civilizations, such as jokes or funny stories. However, a percentage of (23.1%) refers to those who asserted that verbal humour has a slight effect on make the student moral cultural, and their negative answer may be due to their lack of using it. Nevertheless, (7.7%) consider the district effect of the different verbal humour on developing students' cultural competence. Consequently, the following results in Figure 3.27 reported that the majority of secondary school teachers (76.9%) assert the crucial role of humour to make the students laugh and learn more about other cultural at the same time.

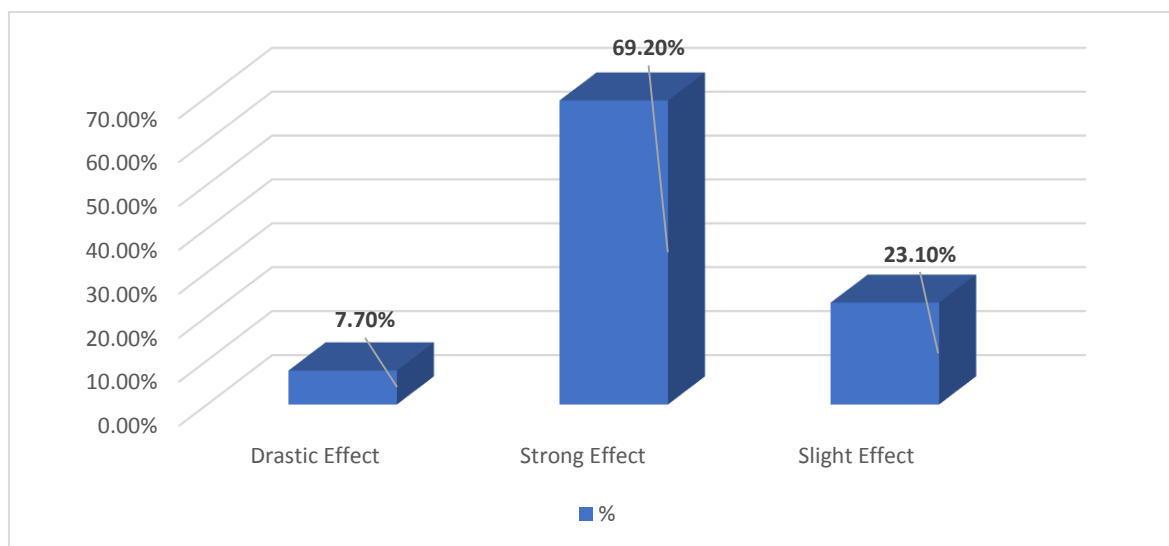


Figure 3.27 The Effect of Verbal Humour on Enhancing Students Cultural Competence

15.2 Humour such as puns or jokes may facilitate access to linguistic knowledge resources.

Instructor humour serves a wide range of functions in educational contexts. This statement was designed to investigate the function of instructors' humorous verbalizations in facilitate access to linguistic knowledge. The results reported in Figure 3.28 show that (53.80%) of teachers have proved jokes and puns' strong effect in terms of enriching EFL students' linguistic resources. In other words, teachers are aware of the vital role of some verbal humour to develop the student's knowledge of the language. Whereas, a rate of (23.1%) of teachers claim that humour has a slight effect on increasing students' linguistic background, and the other (23.1%) believe it has a very strong effect on developing that process. Based on these results we may deduce that the majority of teachers (76.9%) have proved this statement and only (23.1%) do not. Hence, jokes, puns and other forms of verbal humour are considered as successful tool understand the meaning of new vocabularies and enrich the linguistic background of the EFL students.

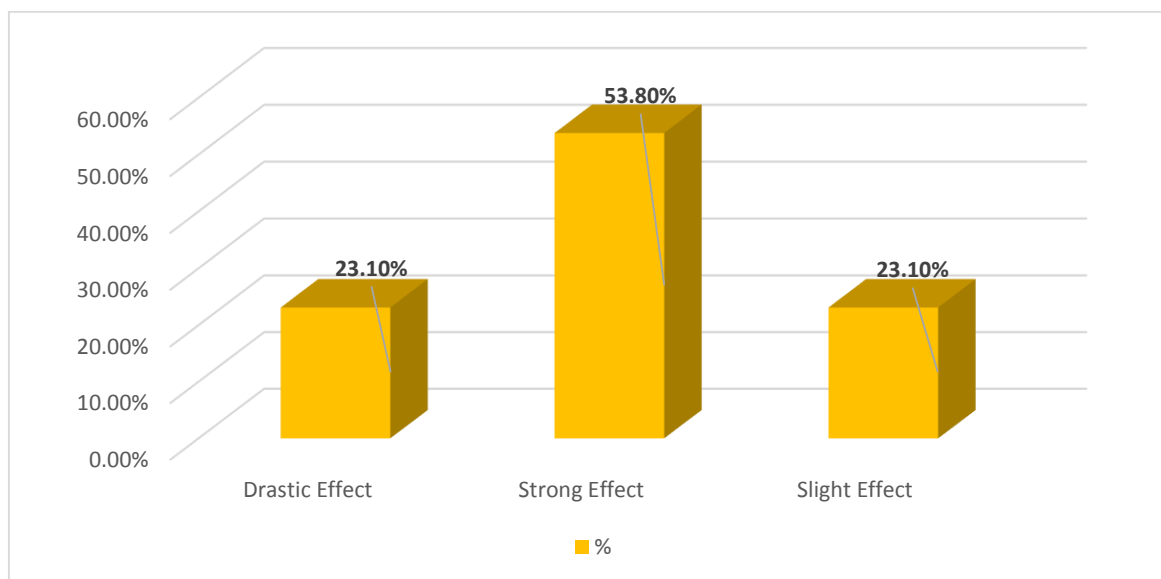


Figure 3.28 The Role of Humour to Facilitate Access to Linguistic Sources

15.3 Teaching using humour contributes to develop students' critical thinking especially the use of riddles and puns.

Cognitive skills have a vital role in successful EFL learning because it comprises skills such as critical thinking, which is highly required in EFL learning. Critical thinking is one of these important cognitive skills that an EFL learner should develop. Hence, teachers were asked to rank the contribution of humour such as riddles or puns on developing students' critical thinking ability, from the district contribution to the slight one. As Figure 3.29 reveals, the teachers' highest percentage of strong and district strong effect (77%). Whereas, (23%) of the teachers selected the slight effect position. From these results, it is clear that the majority of teacher (n=10) believe that some humourous forms like puns and riddles are a great brain-exercise, which have an effect on the power of brains that may solve them as helping the students to be critical thinkers. Puns and riddles take an intelligent person to create them, and brave person to use one. Therefore, humour production is hinged on the development of a students' mental imagery, thus the flexibility of mind make them creative. Consequently, it was suggested that creativity and humour are indeed related.

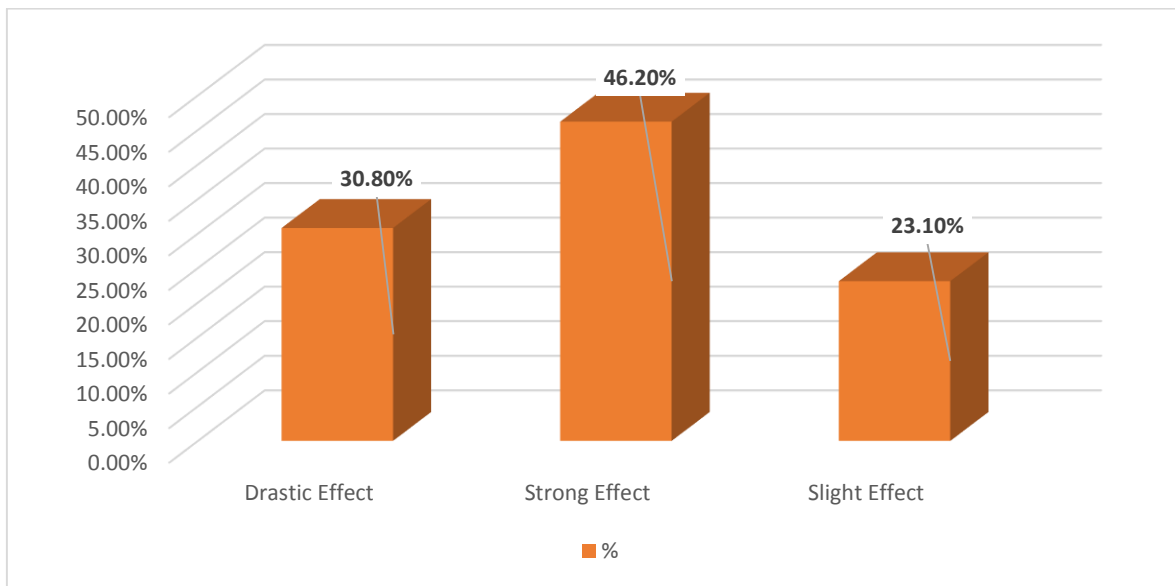


Figure 3.29 The impact of Humour on Developing Students' Critical Thinking

15.4 Integrating tongue twisters in teaching may improve students' pronunciation and accent

Repeated pronunciation is difficult even for natives. Thus, tongue twisters are considered as a good articulation exercise to improve English pronunciation. Teachers were requested to indicate the effect of integrating tongue twisters in teaching on students' pronunciation and accent (district effect, strong effect or slight effect). The results show that all the teachers (100%) have proved this statement. In that, (61.5%) of them selected district effect position, and the other (38.5%) indicated the strong effect. Overall, it can be said that all the participants' teachers are familiar with the vital role of tongue twisters at making the learning environment more amusing and improving EFL learners' pronunciation.

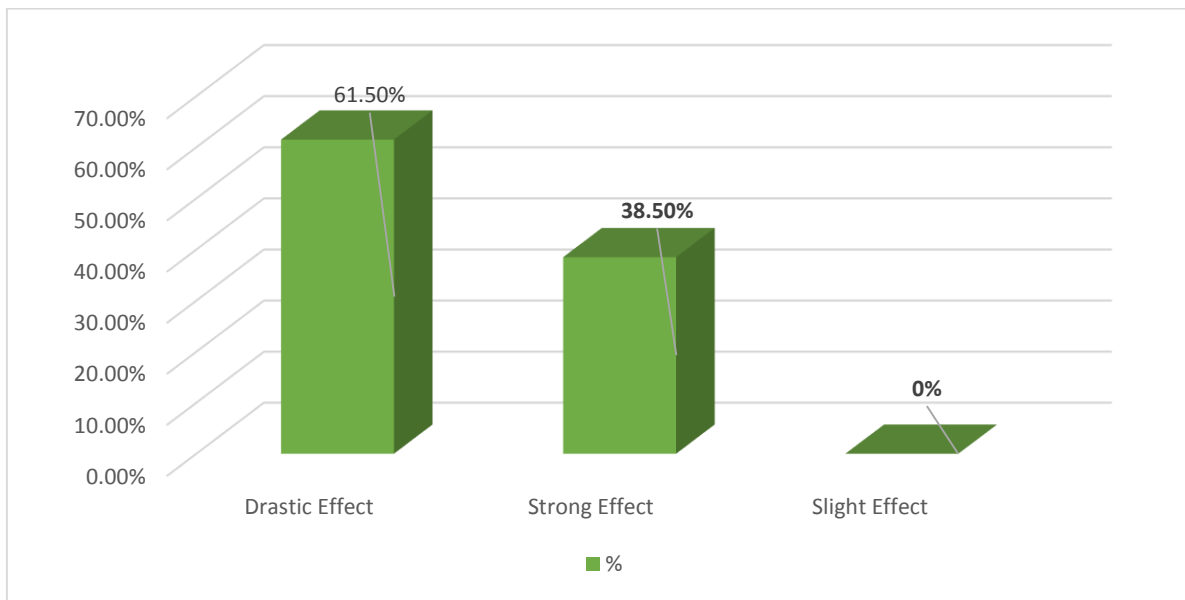


Figure 3.30 The Effect of Integrating Tongue Twisters on Enhancing Students' Speaking Skills

15.5 Using different forms of humour, for instance, funny games supports cooperative learning

The last statement aimed to collect teachers' perceptions about another form of humour which is funny games. The statement, which states that using funny games in teaching the target language may support cooperative learning, teachers' were requested to rank the effect of the mentioned form of humour from the drastic one to the slight one. Figure 3.31 below illustrates that (92.3%) of the teachers have experienced the use of some games in promoting pairs or group works in order to create collaboration between the students. Thus, most of the teachers (n=12) highly support creating cooperative learning by using funny games. Whereas, only one teacher (7.7%) believes that integrating such form of humour in learning may be a kind of wasting precious time of learning, or may be because of his lack of experience.

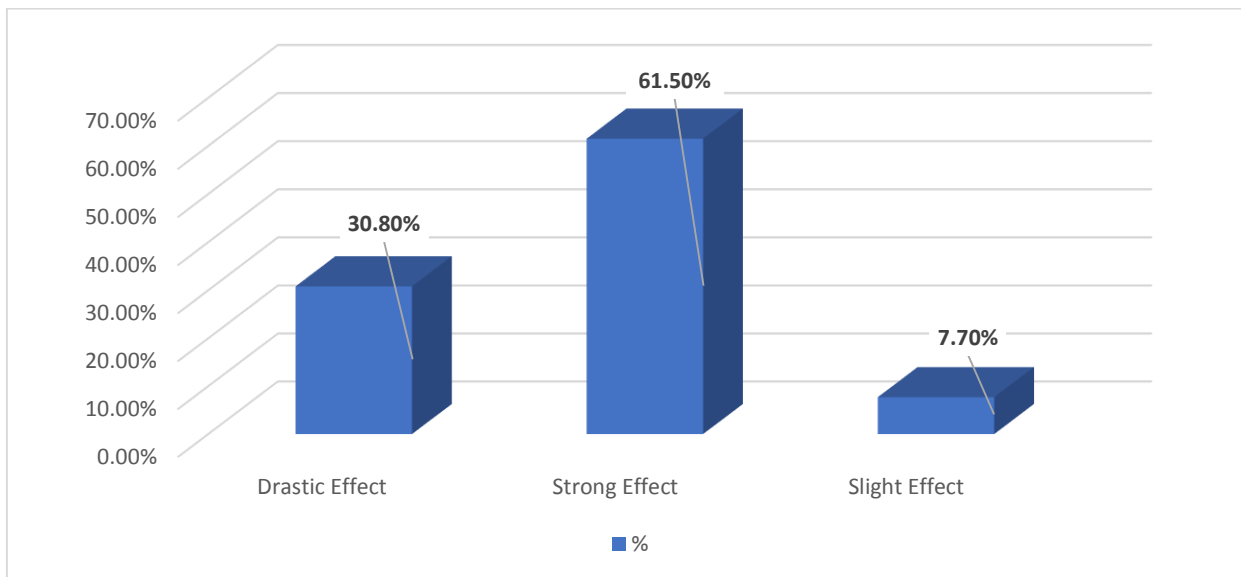


Figure 3.31 The Role of Funny Games in Supporting Cooperative Learning

Section Five: The challenges of teaching using Humour in EFL classes (Item 16)

To incorporate our tool in EFL classes, one should think about the possible factors that may impede it from being effective. Therefore, the last section of our questionnaire attempted to explore teachers' opinions concerning this issue. The second part of this section was devoted to provide teachers a chance to share their experience in teaching at secondary school and to propose different information resulted from the same local context to which the integration of humour is suggested to be integrated in.

Item16. The main challenges that may hinder the effectiveness of integrating humour in teaching English

Statistically speaking, results as seen in Figure 3.32, (61.5%) of the teachers considered that the lack of humorous teachers and materials provided by administrative services as challenging barriers. Then, the percentage of (46.2%) refers to those who have selected

students' lack of competence as another obstacle to the understanding of the humour. Furthermore, (38.5%) of the teachers believe that the main obstacle that hinders the effectiveness of the humour is teachers' obsession of losing the control of classroom management. And (30.8%) of them asserted that it can distract from the seriousness of the lesson. However, the percentage of all the mentioned challenges was lower than the previous one, only (15.4%) of teachers asserted that the proposed barriers may hinder the humour to be effective.

Consequently, the lack of teachers with a sense of humour and materials got the major number of selection. Thus, we can deduce that lack of humorous materials related to the lesson subject and humorous teachers were the main challenges that hindering the effectiveness of integrating humour appropriately in teaching English at the secondary school level.

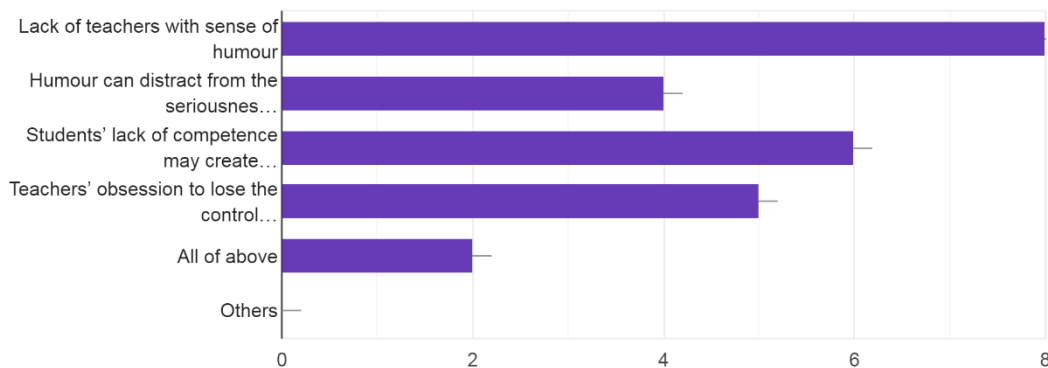


Figure 3.32 The challenges hindering the effectiveness of Integrating Humour

Further Suggestions

The purpose of this question was to provide teachers a chance to share their experience in teaching at Secondary School and propose different information resulted from the same local context to which the integration of humour is suggested. Eight teachers participated to answer this question. They reported that any further reforms should be take into consideration that new techniques must be integrated in modern teaching such as humour. Traditional way of teaching states clearly that it helps learners to enrich their background knowledge in the target language but it does not care about the others levels such as the learners' psychology. He added the upcoming textbooks of high school level must include rich and various techniques that help both teachers and learners to tech and learn the language with fun. Additionally, some teachers believed that humour is crucial in any foreign language classes, yet it should not be overused, otherwise it may affect the seriousness the learning process and its effectiveness. In the same vein, humour is important to the EFL classes if it is used perfectly; however, teachers must use it carefully as it may turn their lesson into a fiasco. Moreover, students must firmly know that their teacher is doing this for their sake of learning in a healthy atmosphere.

3.2.6 Discussion and Interpretation of the Findings

The analysis of students' findings provides different information and valuable responses that supported our hypothesis, which indicates if the EFL teachers use humour in class, they will enhance the EFL learners' attention and retention, and promote the learning process as well have, allow us to answer some of the vital research questions that were intended to be investigated. Initially, our questionnaire started with the general information of our sample, teachers' answers concerning their experience of teaching English at Secondary School were mainly between one and five years of teaching different levels, first, second and third year. The

results show that the majority of our instructors are fresh teachers (92.3%); evidence suggests that unlike the expert teachers, fresh instructors are more open to use humour in their teaching activities. One reason is that young teachers are more flexible to vary teaching methods. It is clear that most of the EFL teachers have noticed some students' inability to retain information, which is an obstacle that enables the students' to recall all that they have learned. The latter led the teachers to opt for some strategies to improve the students' retention. Thus, this can allow us to deduce that teachers are consciously aware of the seriousness of the problem that the sample of EFL learners' suffer from.

The second section of our questionnaire was about humour and learning. This section was about teachers' perception of employing humour in the EFL class. The data collected from this the second section provided to teachers' attitude toward the effects of humour on EFL students' learning, contributed answering the research first hypothesis. Accordingly, they have positive perceptions of incorporating humour in EFL classes.

The results show also that the use of humour has a positive impact on students' behaviours and attitudes towards the learning process. Therefore, the majority of them indicate their positive responses with the statements given in question 5. From the analysis of these statements, we find that almost the teachers asserted that their sense of humour increases students' interest in learning, helps them to concentrate in the classroom, and makes them feel more relaxed, as well as making them feel closer to their teachers. This indicates the importance of using humour in terms of its psychological aspects to students since it can enhance their relationships with their teachers, raise their interest and concentration in the classroom, and create the suitable learning environment in which EFL students feel comfortable to learn. Within

the same question, teachers confirmed their views by considering humour as a teaching tool that fosters a good learning environment.

However, humour has been criticized as being a distracting tool that may waste the precious time of learning, most of the teachers (53.85%) indicate their disagreement with this idea, and this can explain their views concerning the benefits of humour in learning English. For them, employing humour during the lesson plays a major role as a participation stimulus; in fact, humour is considered as an effective teaching tool that keeps students' interest to learn the target language and raises their retention.

The next section was related to the second variable of our research study. All teachers' responses (100%) highlighted that humour is highly required for successful EFL learning because of its effect on attracting the EFL learners' attention to learner the target language. Nevertheless, they emphasized each session has a specific appropriate use of humour that is related to the lesson objectives. In addition, all of the teachers (100%) believe that it promotes students' attitude toward the subject matter and class attendance, which means that their students' are likely to attend their classes where they employ some sorts of humour; this indicates that students' attendance and interest in learning are raised when humour is implemented as a teaching tool.

In addition, when teachers were asked about the forms of humour they often use while teaching, jokes got the highest percentage of selection (69.2%) and then funny games (15.4%). Answers indicate that jokes and funny games are more useful among teachers while comparing to the other forms of humour. Jokes are used in order to keep students' attention and interest, because they stuck in the memory for a long time especially when they are linked with the topic

of the lesson. Besides, funny games were suggested as stimulant that may promote cooperative learning and group works, and to increase students' communication either with each other or with the instructor.

The results show teachers' high appreciation of humour integration in learning, especially in question 11 when they were asked if they are with or against the use of it to raise students' interest, (92.3%) answered with yes. Yet, their justifications whether they used it spontaneously or consciously varied. Some teachers used it on purpose to grasp students' attention, whereas; others believed that it cannot be used consciously rather than it is a sense that they have to be used spontaneously.

The second part of this section allows the researcher to answer the research questions that are related to the third variable, retention. Besides, teachers' responses indicate that students' comprehension is also affected by the use of humour. And this what can be explained from the results of question 13 in which the majority of them (76.9%) consider that students' comprehension is greatly affected by teachers' 'sense of humour since they consider it as a motivational teaching tool which helps and encourage them to learn. Within the same question, teachers were asked to indicate their views concerning humour as a memory aid. Almost all of them said that the funny examples and jokes used during the lectures helped the students to remember the information forgotten, so. Hence, the amount of humour affects the students' memory and interest, and therefore, it is a positive factor for students' success.

Results of the last section revealed other benefits of employing humour in the EFL learning context. Most of the teachers (76.9%) believe that verbal humour helps students' to be cultural competence. Moreover, (76.9%) of them asserted that jokes and puns may facilitate

access to linguistic knowledge resources as a way to enrich students' vocabulary background. Whereas, humour was considered as an effective tool to improve some cognitive skills such as critical thinking. The results revealed that most of the teachers (77%) have proved this idea, because solving different riddles and puns make the students' think critically. Other benefits of humour were highly supported by the teachers in terms of improving students' speaking skills and supporting a conducive and a cooperative learning environment.

The second half of this section was devoted to exploring the main challenges of teaching using Humour in EFL classes. The majority of the teachers (61.5%) see that lack of teachers with humour sense and humorous materials administrative services related to the lecture subject. Overall, the results reported that most of the teachers support the use of humour in teaching English and its positive impact on the learning settings.

3.3 Classroom Observation

In order to enrich the thoroughness of the obtained data from the teachers' questionnaire, the researcher has undertaken a non-participant classroom observation. This data collection tool aims at investigating how humour is implemented into third-year Secondary School classes, determining teacher's role and students' perceptions via using humour, and exploring the extent to which third year secondary school students' attention is raised during lesson-based humour, and collecting teacher's views about the students' retention while teaching humorously. Consequently, we believe that nonparticipant classroom observation can guarantee the opportunity of being an eyewitness of how humour is implemented in Secondary School classes and highlighting its effectiveness in enhancing EFL learners' attention and retention.

3.3.1 Aim of the Classroom Observation

For the sake of supporting the results obtained from the teachers' questionnaire, we carried out a classroom observation. The classroom observation is considered as one of the main methods that is used by the researcher in order to collect qualitative data. We carried out our classroom observation to discover the impact of using humour on the students' attention and retention in the educational setting. We planned to conduct the classroom observation with two different teachers; the first teacher has a sense of humour, while the second one does not have. Because of certain circumstances, only one observation could be held with the humorous teacher. Our objectives behind this observation are to investigate to what extent the teacher's sense of humour can raise the students' level of attention and collect teacher views' about its effect in improving the EFL learners' retention.

3.3.2 Description of the Classroom Observation Checklist

The classroom observation checklist contains two sections: teacher's role and sense of humour and the implementation of using humour. The first section contains six items, a general description of classroom physical mood, smoothness of the atmosphere and mainly about the teacher's sense of humour. The second section is devoted to capturing the way humour is implemented throughout the sessions and the processes adopted by the teacher, in addition the various behaviours and emotions the students display along with the session(s), and it contains seven items.

Besides, we have included some comments and remarks to add especially when asking the teacher about several details that cannot be observed. The checklist is designed in a form of a table on which the observer ticks in the columns depending on the items which represent

different factors that may affect attention and retention. As far as its format is concerned, it contains items on which the observer ticks based on whether they are never been observed, rarely observed, sometimes observed, usually observed or always have been observed at. As far as the classroom observation checklist is concerned, it contains structured statements in addition to a part devoted for further remarks and comments.

3.3.3 Administration of the Classroom Observation

We have attended six sessions with the same group with the same teacher; in that, we have attended two sessions per week and sometimes three. The classroom observation had been taken place in February 2020, with a third-year class at Omar Idriss Secondary School in El Kantara. It lasted two weeks in which we attended six sessions with the same group, headed by an English teacher with a sense of humour. The duration of each of the six sessions was one hour. Additionally, the group consisted of around 34 students.

Moreover, we have attended with that teacher without telling them about the objectives of our research to make him spontaneous, and to avoid anything prepared to maintain the credibility of the information that will be obtained during the observation. In addition to that, the observer was sitting in the last corner of the classroom, which enabled him to observe all the movement of both the teacher and his/her students.

3.3.4 Results' Interpretations

Section One: Teacher's Role and Sense of Humour

- **Item 1.** The teacher is smiling when he enters the classroom and cheerfully greets his students

From this item, we aimed to observe the classroom entrance of the teacher, whether it is cheerful or not. In all the sessions, we have noticed that the teacher was always smiling when he entered the classroom and cheerfully greeted his students. In fact, the students were always reacting with the entrance of their teacher and his greetings. We can notice that this entrance and cheerful greeting played a major role in creating a strong relationship between the teacher and his students, in addition to its role in starting the lesson easily.

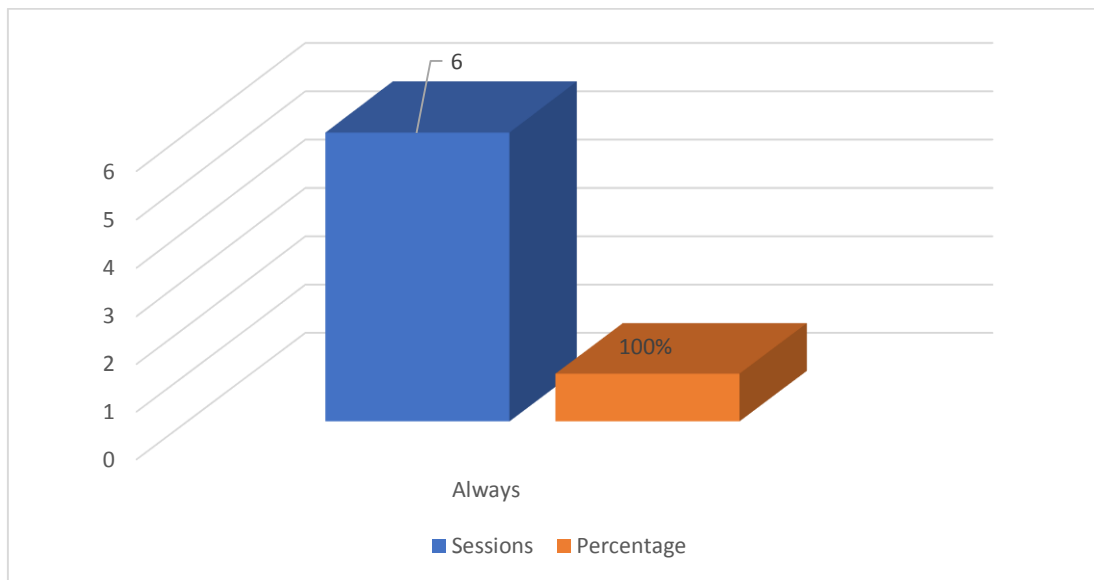


Figure 3.33 Cheerful Classroom-entrance Observing

Item2. The teacher starts his session using synaptic connections to create a web links between the previous lesson and the new one.

The next step in our observation is observing the way of how the teacher starting his lessons. During the six sessions that we have attended, we noticed that the teacher started his sessions by refreshing his students' memory about last session's materials. He tried to use

different techniques to maximize their retention, either asking direct questions or looking for answers about the given home works or assignments.

When he came to introduce the lesson, he usually opted for mental linkage between the previous lesson and the new one, to guide smoothly the student to a new topic without being lost. And he introduced the lesson by using some kinds of humour, but at least sometimes; in that, in the first and fourth session, he employed some kinds of humour to introduce the lesson, whereas, in the rest of sessions, he tended to employ his sense of humour always (such as jokes and funny examples). The teacher's sense of humour and his technique to introduce the lesson seems to be beneficial for students, since they interact with him, and they were always ready to start the lesson.

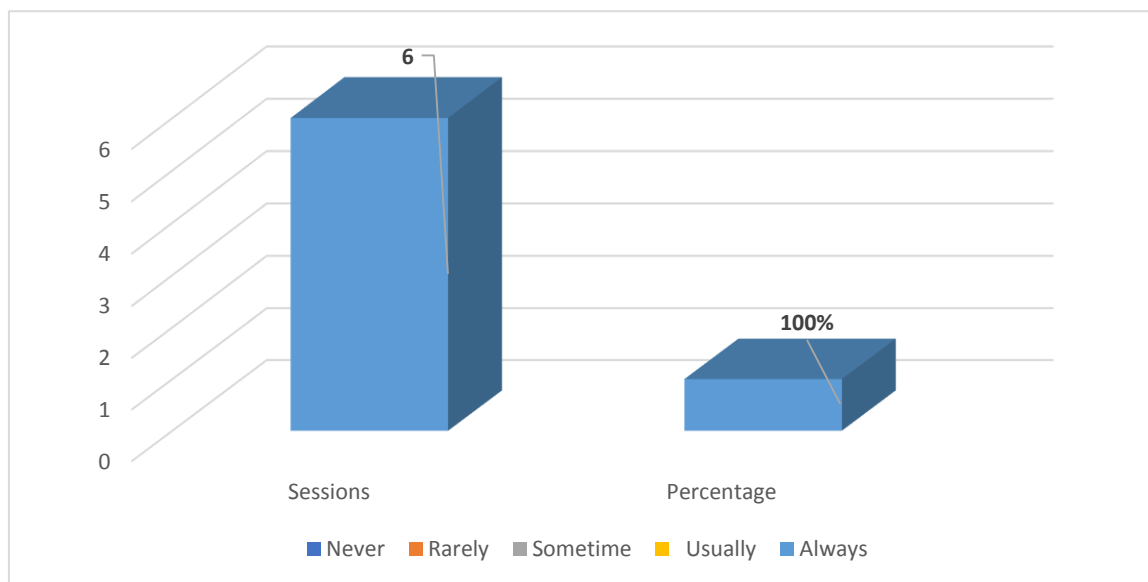


Figure 3.34 Way of Introducing the Lesson

Item 3. The teacher facilitates difficult material using different aspects of humour as catalyzer of learning, anecdotes/ jokes/ tongue twisters/ funny examples, and body language (gestures)

During the six sessions that we were observing, we have noticed that the instructor made a balance in employing some sorts of humour during every session. He used funny examples which are related to the content of the lesson, he was also moving in the classroom and using his body language in order to explain what seems ambiguous for his students. We have noticed also that he tended to be always a humourous teacher through using his smile, funny anecdotes, jokes, riddles and even telling some humourous stories. Through employing humour as a teaching tool, we have observed that the majority of students showed their interest in their teacher's explanations and instructions.

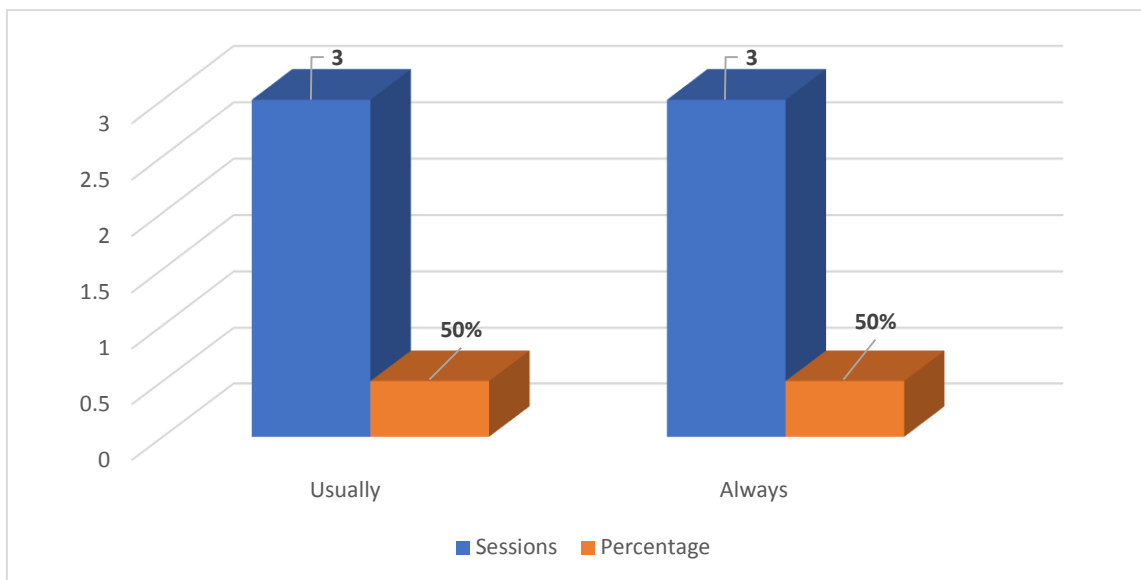


Figure 3.35 The Teacher's Use of Different Humour-sorts Occurrence

Item 4. The teacher promotes students' creative thinking using puns/riddle

Any teacher wants always to discover their students' ability to think critically, this is why he tends always to ask his students some questions about the topic of the lesson. This item aims to confirm the employment of humour by the teacher for the sake of testing his students' critical thinking to improve their creativity. We found that the teacher was sometimes using puns or riddles to make the students think critically to get the answer. The students of group two were always trying to solve them quickly with a high level of attention and interaction. According to Cornett (1998), several possible levels of thinking occur when the students were using their critical creative thinking skills in order to solve the riddle or the pun: problem solving, prediction, decision-making, and visual imagining when the students were using their critical creative thinking skills. Hence, he believed that the integration of jokes and riddles into education may promote different cognitive skills and promote language development.

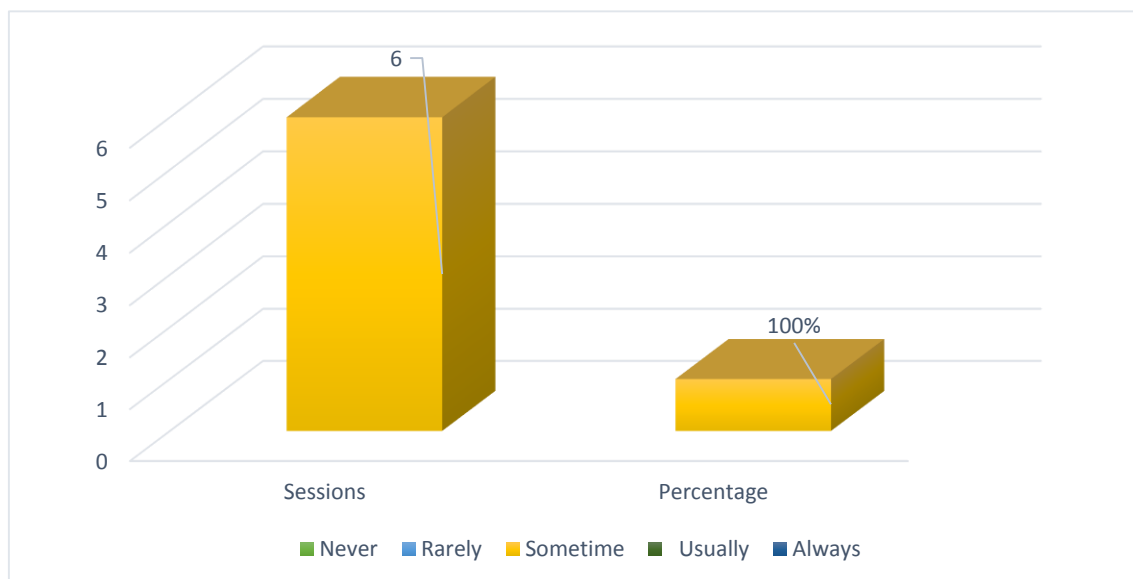


Figure 3.36 The Teacher's Portability of Students' Critical Thinking through the Humour

Item 5. The teacher uses humour at the expense of student's self-esteem

The objectives behind employing humour to the EFL class is to promote students' performance by creating an enjoyable environment of learning. However, some non-academic styles of humour could be used by a category of teachers to embarrass, ridicule or even sarcasm the students. This item aimed to determine whether the teacher observed used such styles of humour that affecting the injurious use of it such as aggressive and self-defeating humour. In all the sessions, we found that the teacher was always using polite and positive styles of humour such as self-enhancing and affiliative humour. The students of the group appreciated their teacher's use of positive styles of humour, because it enhanced their self-esteem and improved the students' teacher interaction and relieving tension as well.

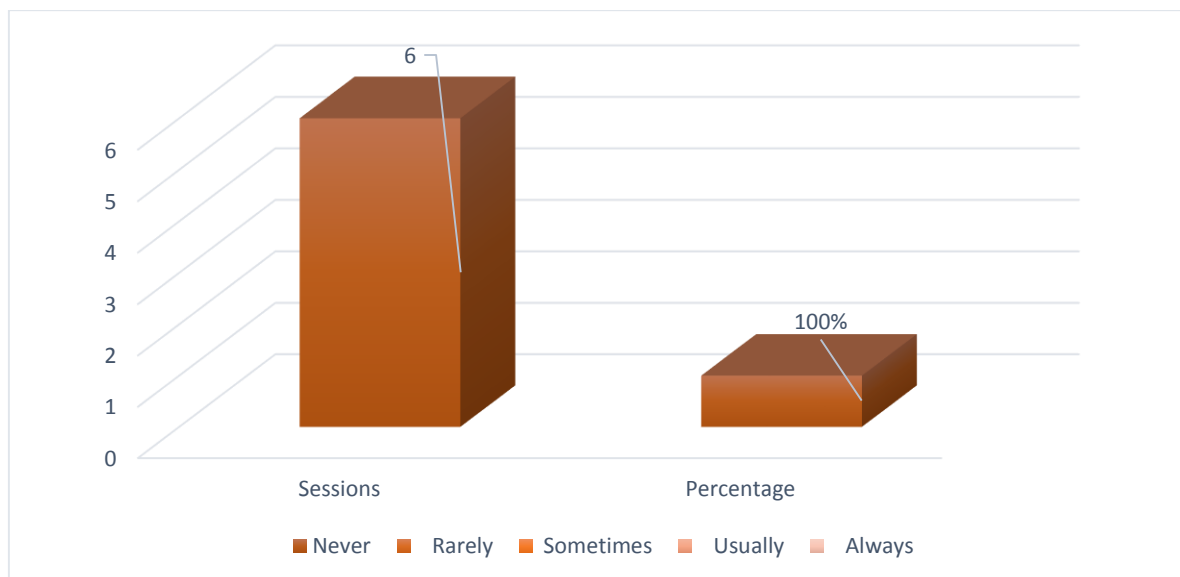


Figure 3.37 Teachers' use of Aggressive Forms of Humour

Item 6. The teacher provides a friendly and Comfortable atmosphere in the classroom for the students to participate naturally

Through this item, we aimed to observe teacher role at encouraging the students to participate at ease, by providing a friendly comfortable atmosphere. In the first session that we have attended, we noticed that the teacher was always asking the students to participate in a given task whatever their answers are, rang or right ones. When the student did not answer appropriately, we did not observe any kind of irritation from the teacher. It is clear that the mutual respect between the students and their teacher affects the frequency of teacher's anger. This respect made the teacher at ease to control his class and relief their students' stress and tension. It can be a result of his sense of humour, which reflects the strong relationship with his students. Consequently, the teacher's use of humour in his class made him closest to his students. As a result, most of the students did not hesitate to participate during the session and share their ideas.

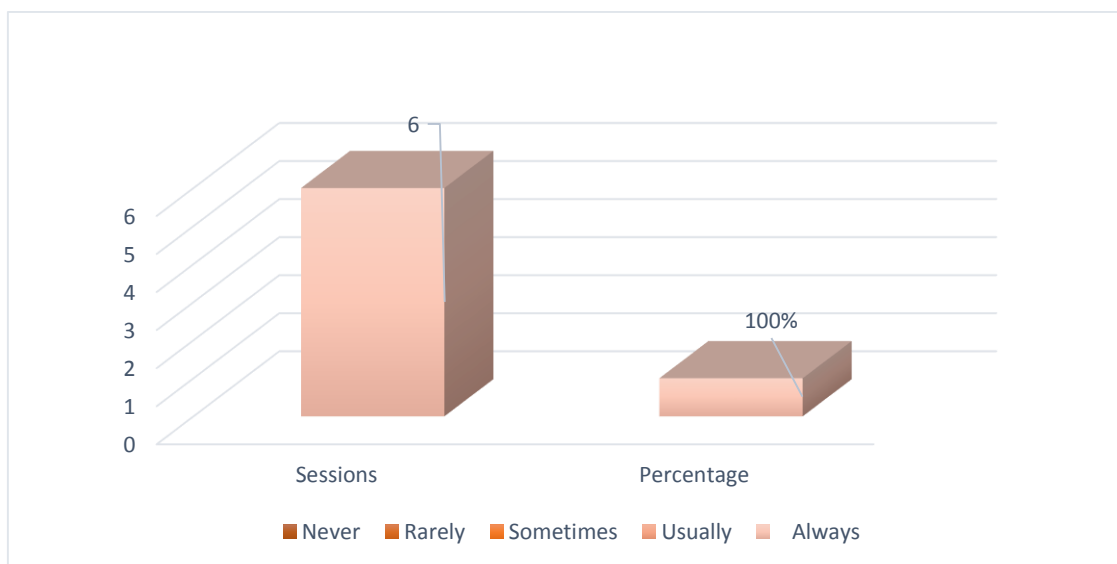


Figure 3 .38 Teacher's Role at Providing a Comfortable Atmosphere for Participation

Section Two: Implementation of using humor

Item 1. Students are listening, interested, and taking notes

We have proposed this item for the sake of observing student' attention. During the six sessions that we have attended, we noticed that almost all students were listening to their teacher, they were also interested and they took notes when their teacher was talking and explaining the lesson. In fact, students 'attention seemed to be regular during their sessions, it has been observed at least sometimes in some sessions, while it was usually in other sessions. Besides, we noticed that the students' attention was high when the teacher was using humour, especially the second session which was about the quantifiers. The teacher tried to attract his students' attention by demanding a recipe of making a cake while each student gave an ingredient using a form of quantifiers. Consequently, most of the students were interesting, participating and enjoying the task.

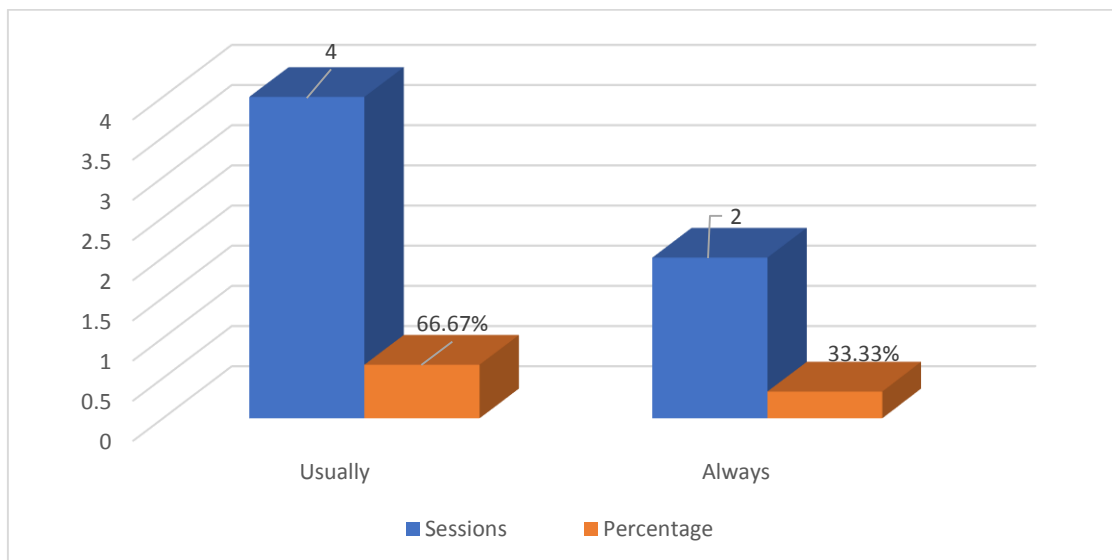


Figure 3.39 Students' Attention Observing

Item 2. The teacher encourages cooperative learning by providing interesting and challenging tasks (funny games) to raise the students' retention

During all the observed sessions, we noticed that the teacher gave more important to the collaboration between his students. From the first session we have attended, we remarked that the students' cooperation in either pair work or group work was at a great extent worthy to provide the teacher with right answers and positive performance. During the third session, the teacher asked the students to form three groups to participate in a game which is about the final 's' in nouns. He collected some riddles with the final "s" key answer. All the students were working to make their team win the game. This reveals that the majority of students prefer to learn with fun in-group works to exchange ideas and improve comprehension rather than working in isolation.

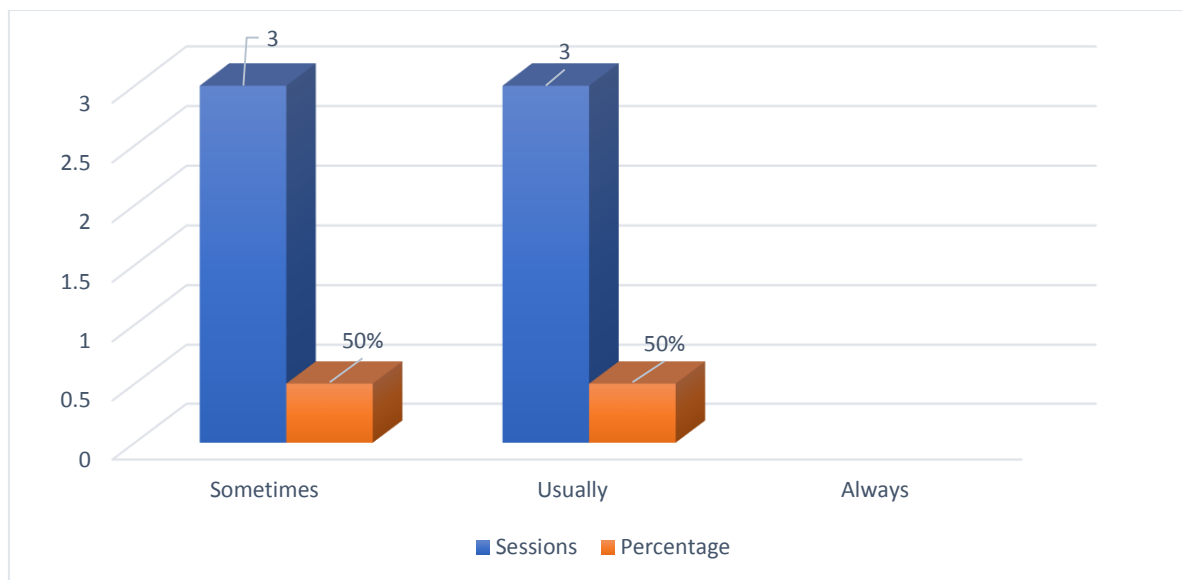


Figure 3.40 Students' Cooperation Observing

Item 3. The students seem to develop comprehension and retention of the learning materials based on their interaction with the teacher.

Students' comprehension can be shown through their readiness when they required to answer questions concerning the major information about the content. During the observation, we have noticed that the majority of students were able to understand the delivered materials since their teacher tried to explain the lesson using different techniques. Repeating for those who did not hear the explanation for the first time, giving humorous examples to make the content at ease to comprehend are among the main techniques used by the teacher to maximize comprehension. In addition, in all the six sessions, we have noticed that the teacher was always speaking loudly and using simple words. The loud voice of the teacher enabled students to hear his explanations and instructions. Even when he has used some difficult words, we have observed that he was always followed them with their meanings, synonyms or opposites, and sometimes he just asked the students to look for them in the dictionary to maximize their retention. In fact, the students will be at ease to gain information, to discuss their ideas, and to ask questions directly. Hence, we may deduce that the teaching strategies that the teacher follow affects the students' comprehension and reinforces the content at a great extent.

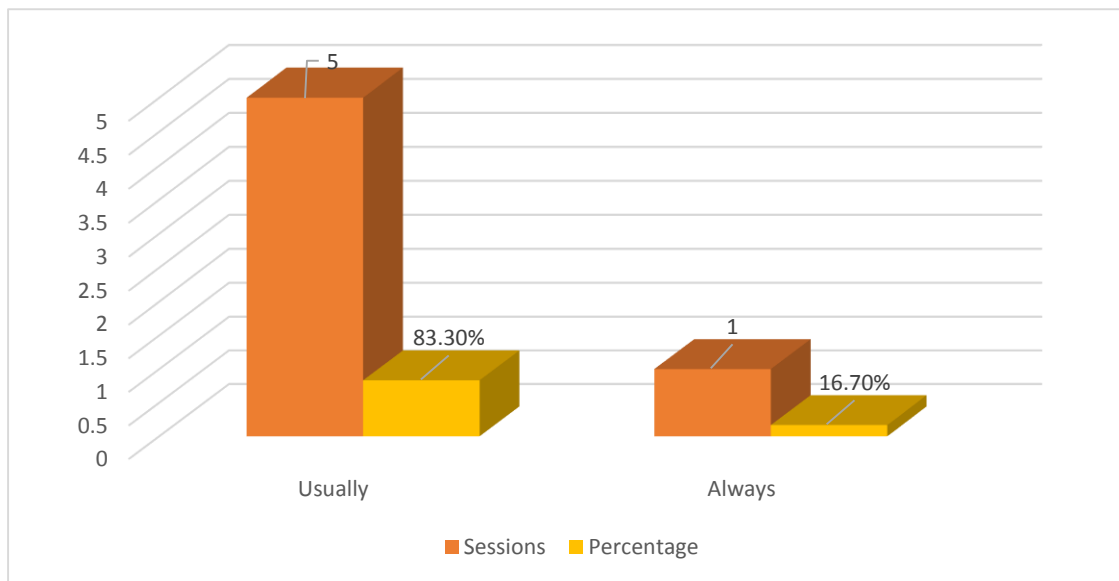


Figure 3.41 Students' Comprehension and Retention Developing

Item 4. The teacher uses rewards (additional marks) and praises (good, excellent) for correct answers

Almost all the students prefer the teacher who encourages them to participate, uses reward (additional marks), and praises (good, excellent...). This item aims to observe whether the teacher is following this strategy or not. We have noticed that he was always encouraging his students by using praises but he rarely gave rewards except if the task was a game. The teacher used certain words such as very good, excellent, yes; please go ahead; in addition, he was using the additional marks when a group won a game. In fact, the students seemed to be motivated, they were always trying to participate in order to be praised by their teacher.

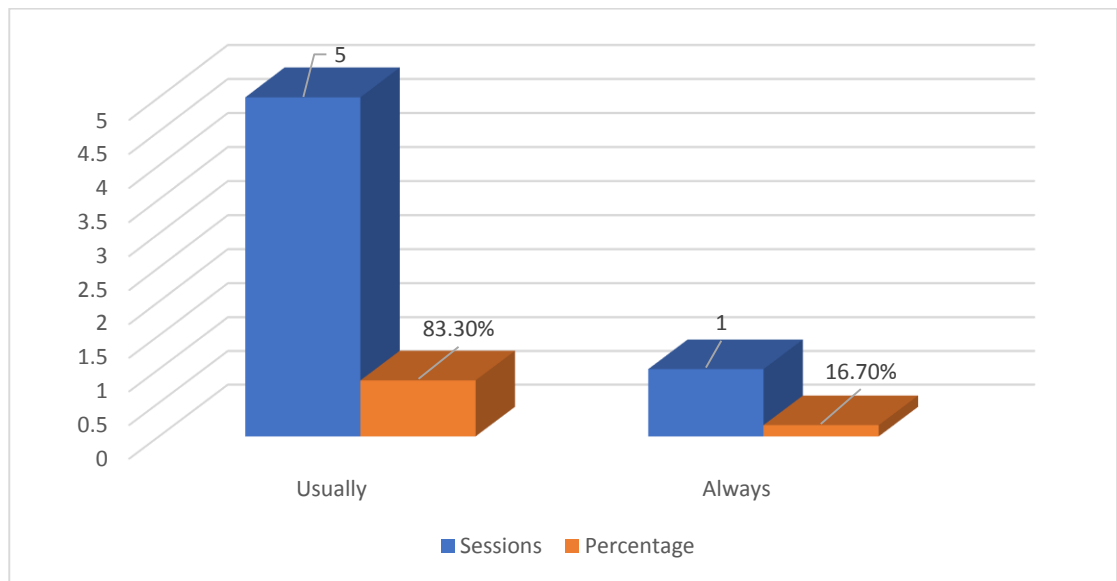


Figure 3.42 Encouraging Participation Occurrence

Item 5. The teacher gives the students an assignment or a homework at the end of each session to measure their comprehension and retention of the lesson

We have proposed this item to observe how the teacher measures and tests his students' retention. We have noticed that in all the six sessions he was starting the session by reviewing the previous session by asking the students direct questions to test retention or just gave them a brief summary to consume time in order refresh their memories about the previous content and reinforce it. Furthermore, he used another technique to measure the amount of his students' retention and improving their working memory is that he usually gave those assignments or home works at the end of each session to be prepared at home and discussed in the next sessions. Based on the feedback that the teacher usually received, he emphasized the importance of doing these exercises at home to protect the content from being forgotten.

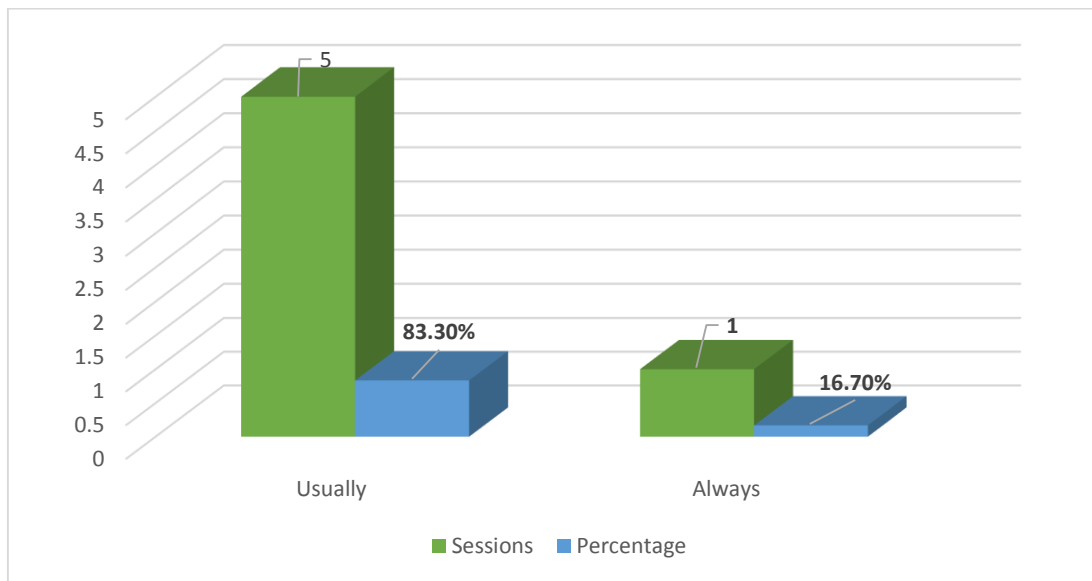


Figure 3.43 Teachers' Measurement of the Students' Retention

Item 6. Students' positive attitudes toward the teacher's sense of humour and its forms (jokes, riddles, puns...)

We have proposed this item in order to observe the students' interaction after the employment of humour of their teacher. During the first session that we have attended, we noticed the positive interaction of some students with their teacher's sense of humour and its forms indicated their interest. Whereas, in the rest three sessions that we spent in observing students' attitudes concerning their teacher's sense of humour, we have observed that almost all students indicated their positive reaction when their teacher was laughing, telling a joke or writing some funny examples on the board. Concerning their performance when they are required to summarize the previous lesson, almost all the students' were able to remember the materials that they tackled, which means that the use of humour improves their ability to recall as well. As results, the teacher could meet the lesson objectives with the students' needs by

using different forms of humour while teaching English. He also aides to meet the lesson's objectives and develops friendly teacher-student rapport.

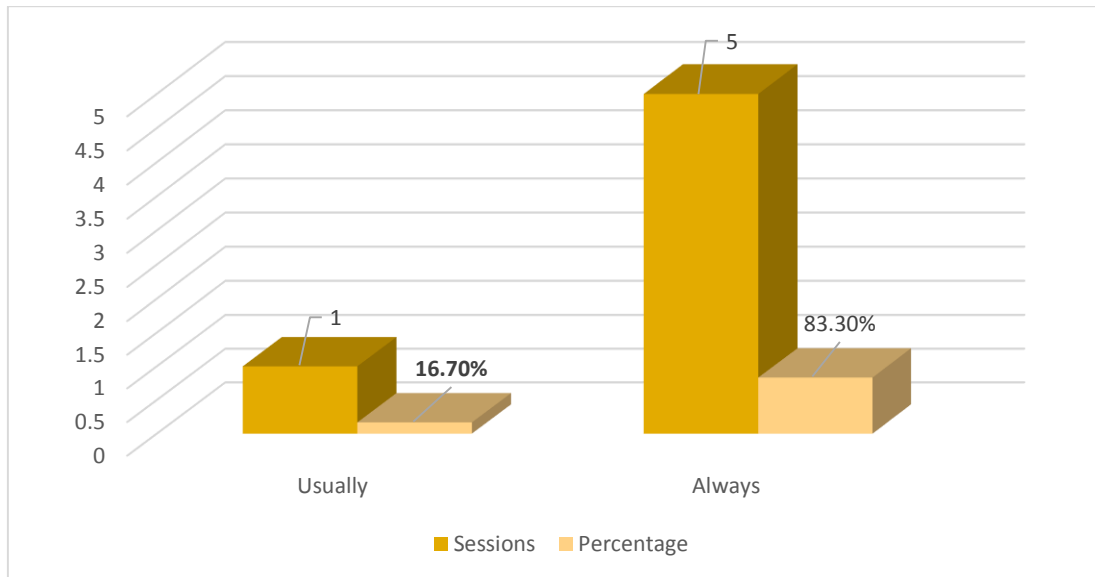


Figure 3.44 Students' Appreciation of the Teacher's Sense of Humour

3.3.5 Results' Discussion

After we carried out our classroom observation, we started directly to analyze its results. The results obtained helped us in deducing that the use of humour as a teaching tool in EFL classes plays a major role in raising the EFL learners' attention and retention. In addition, to reduce some of the students' negative attitudes towards learning, especially tension and stress.

The teacher's sense of humour plays an important role in the readiness of both the teachers and their students. As it was observed during the six sessions that we have attended with the teacher, who employed some kinds of humour in order to greet his students and introduce the lesson. In fact, the employment of humour helped both of them to be ready to learn and to get information.

Moreover, during the explanation of the lesson, using some jokes, tongue twisters or even riddles are an effective teaching tool that raises the students' attention to get the main ideas from their teachers' instructions and make them think critically. They helped them also to remember the information given in the next sessions, especially the funny examples which were used to explain some points in the lecture, this indicates the role of humour as a memory aid. This appeared when the teacher employed some funny examples or jokes that are related to the content of the lecture in order to explain some points which seemed to be not understood by the students. We have noticed that those jokes and funny examples gave a clear idea about what the teacher was saying or wanted to say, the teacher's explanation seemed to be understood by her students, since they answered some questions in the next session.

Furthermore, the employment of humour has a great influence on creating an enjoyable atmosphere that promotes the students' interaction. As it was observed during the six sessions that we attended, the students were more likely to participate with their teacher and even to collaborate especially in funny games, because the use of humour created a friendly teacher-student rapport and cooperative learning environment. In that, the majority of the students were discussing and sharing their ideas. As well asking some questions without the fear of making mistakes or being criticized by their teacher or their classmates. As results, the teacher's sense of humour plays also a major role in reducing such negative emotions or feelings of the students towards learning make them more interest to learn the target language. We noticed that shyness, anxiety, stress and tension were less, whereas attention, comprehension and interaction were high.

To sum up, the teacher's sense of humour is an effective strategy in EFL classes, since it is beneficial for both integral parts in the educational setting. For teachers, the use of humour

helps them in facilitating the explanation of the lecture, keeping the students' attention and interest, creating an appropriate and cooperative learning environment, as well as building a strong relationship with their students.

Concerning the benefits of employing humour for EFL learners, it was noticed that the teacher's sense of humour maximizes their ability to retain, because the material will be easy to recall when it is delivered in a humorous context. The fact that they retained after being exposed to a humorous content was confirmed after a long discussion with the teacher. He asserted that according to his experience with using humour, it could activate the brain long-term memory. His interpretation was based on the students' progress after testing their retention several times through assignments and memorization-based tests' questions. He added his students' remember the material that made them laugh. Thus, he emphasized only the content related appropriate humour that may increase retention. We may discover that humour can be perceived and appreciated without improving retention. Hence, the topic-related instructional humour is most effective at promoting retention of the material.

Humour is considered also as a motivational strategy that may help them to concentrate more in their classes, to enjoy learning, to raise their amount of participating, and discussing their ideas, to be involved more with their lectures. Besides, it enables them to be closer to their teachers, as well as to get rid of some negative attitudes such as the fear of making mistakes, or being criticized, anxious or stressed in a way that makes them feel more relaxed and self-confident.

3.4 Summary of the Results

Since the main aim of this study is to investigate the role of humour as a teaching helping tool to enhance EFL learners' attention and retention. Thus, to have credible research results the researcher dealt with a couple of tools to gather feedback that feed the study which are: a questionnaire administrated for EFL teachers and a classroom observation administrated to third year EFL students at secondary school.

In addition, through this study, we aimed to develop EFL students' attention and retention through suggesting the use of humour, and it aimed to prepare students as an effective part of the learning process in terms of enhancing their attention and retention. Besides, the study attempted to know the role of humour in teaching-learning EFL from EFL teachers and students perspectives. Moreover, it provided additional benefits of adopting this tool in teaching suggested by the teachers that can develop the student's attitude toward learning.

On one hand, the questionnaire findings showed that teachers insisted on the great impact of humour in teaching-learning EFL operation. In addition, they gave priority to humour and they described it as one of the pillars for successful EFL learning. Additionally, they proved that EFL students have a weak working memory because of their lack of interest toward learning; thus, they raised the awareness of humour role and they pointed that students need to develop the skills that helps them to achieve better results.

In the same vein, the conducted the questionnaire showed that humour is one of the most effective tools that should be adopted in teaching foreign languages; precisely, to enhance EFL learners' attention since it attracts their interest to be more involved in learning. Due to researchers' positive attitudes towards the role of humour as a teaching helping tool to develop

EFL learners' attention and retention, the questionnaire results proved that adopting this technique is deserved to be integrated in teaching English at the secondary school level.

Moreover, the obtained results from the questionnaire presented that attention and retention have an exchangeable relationship that makes the humour enhances them, in that whenever the attention is high the brain will be able to recall better and visa via . This letter can be considered as a positive point for the validity of our hypothesis. Besides, the results proved that the appropriate use of the humour that is relevant to content contributes in facilitating the students' comprehension and interaction. Therefore, the use of humour should be relevant to the subject matter to be more effective.

Furthermore, the obtained results from teachers' questionnaire emphasized the impact of some humour forms on developing some literacy skills of the EFL learners, especially the use of funny stories and jokes that encouraged the development of language vocabulary. Besides, the results indicated others benefits of integrating humour in EFL teaching such as promoting critical thinking skills and creativity because the riddle solving required using critical and creative thinking skills. Eventually, as we look for results retrieved we cannot ignore the power of some humour forms as the tongue twisters to boost the students' pronunciation and articulation of the target language.

On the other hand, the classroom observation results agreed with the teachers' questionnaire results in some points; however, students' classroom observation revealed their high interest toward the material that was presented within a humourous context. This latter, gave them the opportunity to express their ideas and thoughts as well as maximizes their chance to practice and trained their minds.

Likewise, the obtained results from this observation proved that the use of humour influenced the learning environment and made it more comfortable and enjoyable, so that the students were more motivated to learn English and more excited to be a part of learning especially when the teacher integrated some humourous games which promote collaboration.

Furthermore, a teacher with sense of humour was able to deliver the material in a simple way, so that the students' did not find many difficulties to comprehend the content. Besides, almost all the students held a positive attitude toward the integration of humour and it seemed as they agreed on humour usefulness in different domains as in daily life and education as whole. In addition, the results pointed highlighted that the effects of humour were not only restrict on developing the students' attention, comprehension or promoting teacher-students rapport, but it exceed to give students the chance to practice more, enhance their retention , raise their familiarity with other methods to memorize rather than traditional ways.

3.5 Limitation of the Study

In conducting any research, the researcher faced some obstacles that obstructed the research process progress. In our study, we have faced some difficulties. Initially, the lack of sources about retention, precisely, in finding books and articles, because they were rare on the net. Besides, this study collected data using only questionnaire and classroom observation due to a serious global outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel coronavirus. Otherwise, a classroom observation with a non-humorous teacher would retrieve other results to be compared with the one we did. Triangulation would be a better choice to improve validity, credibility, and applicability of data. A focus group discussion with Secondary School EFL learners with whom the teacher use humour would have collected interesting information as the supervisor suggested. The main reason behind his suggestion is students at this level may face

issues with understanding the written material at University level, yet the focus group would push them to explain and get involved in the process. Consequently, even the study has been affected by the aforementioned limitations; the researcher has collected the feedback which helped her to confirm the validity of the research hypotheses.

3.6 Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the conclusions derived from the research findings, some recommendations and conclusions can be drawn.

➤ EFL teachers should be aware of the role of using humour as a teaching tool that enables them to be closer to their students, so that they can understand their ideas or their problems to learn. Humour is also effective to create an enjoyable learning atmosphere for the students since most of them prefer to be amused to learn, and for teachers as well because it helps them to teach in a relax atmosphere; so employing some joke or funny example in order to make the lesson enjoyable without feeling bored, anxious or stressed.

➤ With regard the amount of humour and the forms that should be employed, it is favorable to vary the use of humour forms from a session to another based on the topic of the lesson in order not to make the students get bored from the over use of particular forms rather than the others. Moreover, it is better to increase the use of it since the role of humour is to keep students' interest and motivation to make them more involved in their classes, as well as to raising their amount of comprehension and their retention of the materials. However, the effective employment of humour in teaching the target language should support the lesson content in order to meet its objectives.

➤ Concerning the humour content-based, it is better to choose some jokes or funny examples that are related to the content of the lesson, so that the teachers can keep their students'

concentration and interest, as well as maintaining their motivation in order to participate, to share their ideas, and to discuss them easily through an enjoyable learning environment. The effective employment of humour in teaching English should support the lesson content in order to meet its objectives.

- Furthermore, using humour is also an effective teaching tool that reforms the learners' self-confidence and self-esteem; in fact, some of the learners' negative emotions or attitudes toward learning such as anxiety, tension and boredom can be at ease to be reduced. For that reason, the teacher should subscribe in the application of humour, as well as being aware of its importance.
- Concerning the lack of sense of humour in teacher's personality and humour materials provided by the administration, the teacher should not be afraid or hesitated to add some sorts of humour at least sometimes, even though they will not be spontaneous. Using humour does not necessitate being a comedian; the teacher may just express her sense of humanity through using her face, or even drawing or writing something funny on the board, in a way that students will feel more relaxed and ready to get knowledge. Following this technique may help teachers who do not have a sense of humour in order to raise their students' interaction.
- Because teachers and students in our study showed a positive perception towards humour and dissatisfaction about the local humourous poor materials, the staff should attempt to provide more humourous materials.
- Future research will be necessary and significant to analyze the teachers' teaching styles and preferences along with examining students' needs because such practice will help researchers to suggest the best teaching tools that can create successful learning atmosphere and efficient tools to develop learning outcomes.

Conclusion

This chapter represents the fieldwork of the current study that sought to investigate the role of using humour in the EFL classes to enhance attention and retention. To collect data, the researcher provided a questionnaire for teachers in which the former administered to the Secondary teachers of English, in addition to a classroom observation; however, the latter was addressed to the EFL language learners at Omar Idriss Secondary School at EL-Kantara. To analyze data, we adopted descriptive statistics. The findings revealed the strong effect of humour on raising the students' attention and maximizes their retention as well, so that they were able to recall the information presented in a humourous context. Teachers and students had positive perceptions of humour. The EFL teachers acknowledged its importance to make the learning process more enjoyable and comprehensible.

General Conclusion

Due to the importance of humour in our private lives, this study was conducted to examine its effects on educational settings. It is also aimed to shed light on its impact in enhancing EFL learners' attention and retention. Thus, this research attempted to answer all the research questions in addition to the hypothesis validity, which indicated that if the EFL teachers use humour in class, they will enhance the EFL learners' attention and retention and promote the learning process as well.

The present research investigation consisted of three chapters. The first two chapters are concerned with the theoretical part of the research study, mainly the necessary conceptual views about humour, attention and retention. Whereas the last chapter is devoted to the practical part of the study.

More specifically, the first chapter dealt with the integration of humour and its impact in the EFL settings. This chapter attempted to spotlight the definition of humour, and reviewed its main theories and forms. It also revealed the main educational benefits of integrating humour in the EFL class. In addition, the principles of its integration to teach English were also discussed. Regarding its significant role in language acquisition, humour and its importance to the EFL learners' cultural competence and language competence were elucidated.

Chapter two has consisted of two sections that dealt with attention and retention to explain the importance of the EFL students' attention and retention to learn any foreign language and the way they can be enhanced to promote the educational level and the language learning outcomes. The initial section covered some of the main characteristics of attention, its meaning, features, types, and the main factors influencing it. While, the second section focused on retention, it presented its definition, reasons behind forgetting words, and the main strategies to boost the students' retention.

As far as the third chapter is concerned, it was devoted to examining the results obtained from the teachers' questionnaire administered to secondary school teachers and a classroom observation held at EL Kantara Secondary School with third year class. Accordingly, we found that both teachers and students had a positive attitude and interest in incorporating humour to improve the EFL learners' attention and retention skills due to its impact on promoting students' learning of the target language as well.

Through the analysis and the discussion of the data obtained from the questionnaire and the classroom observation checklist, the results confirmed the validity of the research's main hypothesis. The latter assumes that if the EFL teachers use humour in EFL classes, they will enhance the learners' attention and retention and promote the learning process as well. The researcher also found that the use of humour may decrease the students' negative emotions toward learning such as anxiety and boredom.

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Appendices

Appendix One: Questionnaire for Secondary School Teachers of English

Dear teachers,

You are kindly requested to fill in the present questionnaire which serves as a data collection tool for a master degree in applied linguistics. Your answers will be very helpful for our research entitled “**The Use of Humour to enhance Foreign Language Learners’ Attention and Retention**”. Therefore, you are kindly requested to fill it in by ticking (✓) the appropriate answer(s) and write full statements whenever it is necessary.

We deeply appreciate your efforts, time and cooperation.

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Section of English

I. Section 1: General information

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Q1. How long have you been teaching English at Secondary School?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1-5 years</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 6-11 years</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 12_17 years</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> More than 17</p> | <p>Q2. Which grade are you teaching?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> First year</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Second year</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Third year</p> |
|--|---|

Q2. What do you think are the main reasons behind students' inability to retain information?

.....

Q3. What are the main strategies you usually follow to make students remember words?

.....

Q4: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Please put a tick "✓" in the appropriate column.

II. Section 2: Humour in EFL classes

| Statement | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Strongly disagree | Disagree |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| • Humour is important to foreign language classes. | | | | | |
| • Humour is an important characteristic of a foreign language teacher. | | | | | |
| • If my class is laughing and joking, the students are not leaning. | | | | | |
| • The use of humour makes me close to my students and can improve the communication with them. | | | | | |
| • Humour should never be used to embarrass or ridicule the student. | | | | | |
| • Learning requires a serious work environment with a little time for humour. | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humour is a waste of precious learning time in the classroom. | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using humour boosts students' participation and increases motivation. | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humour is beneficial to relieve students' stress, tension and classroom boredom. | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective use of humour in academic settings must be specific, appropriate to subject matter and ethically sounds. | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humour is beneficial to relieve students' stress, tension and classroom boredom | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of humour fosters a positive, comfortable, and conducive learning environment. | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students appreciate the integration of humour in learning and wan teachers to use it. | | | | | |

III. Section 3: Perceptions of Integrating Humour to Enhance students' Attention and Retention

III. 1 Teachers' attitudes towards the impact of humour on students' attention

Q5. Do you think that the use of Humour in classrooms assists you to attract your learners' attention?

Yes

No

Q.6 Do you think that each session has its appropriate use of humour?

Yes

No

Q.7 Do you believe that humour may improve students' attitude toward the subject matter and the teacher, and may promote class attendance? And why?

Yes

No

.....
.....
.....

Q.8 Which form of humour do you often use while teaching? And which form of the do you think gains more students interest? Justify please.

- Riddles
- Jokes
- Puns
- Tongue twisters
- Funny games
- Others

.....
.....
.....

Q.9 Are you with or against the use of humour to make students pay attention to the lesson? Justify please. If yes, do you often use it spontaneously or consciously?

With

Against

.....
.....
.....
.....

Q10. How often do you use humour in any of your classes?

Always

Often

Rarely

Never

III.2 Teachers' Perception about the Effect of humour on students' Retention

Q11. Do you find humour helpful for increasing comprehension and cognitive retention of high school students?

.....
.....
.....

Q12. To what extent do you think that humour reinforces content and helps the students retain subject matter?

.....
.....
.....

Q.13 Can the humour improves the mental wellbeing of the students and the instructor? If yes, how?

.....
.....
.....
.....

IV. Section 4: Some benefits of using humour in EFL classes

Q14. Here are a number of benefits that may result from using humour in EFL classes. For each statement (.),mark how much you agree in the 4 likert scales where: 1. Strongly agree 2. agree 3. neutral 4. Disagree 5. Strongly disagree

Do you agree that ...

1. Using humour especially verbal ones helps to raise students' cultural competence.

Strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly disagree

2. Humour such as puns or jokes may facilitate access to linguistic knowledge resources?

Strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly disagree

3. Teaching using humour contributes to develop students' critical thinking especially the use of riddles and puns?

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly agree strongly disagree

4. Integrating tongue twisters in teaching may improve students' pronunciation and accent

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly agree strongly disagree

5. Do you expect that using different forms of humour for instance funny games support cooperative learning?

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly agree strongly disagree

V. Section 5: The challenges of teaching using Humour in EFL classes

15. What are the main challenges you think may hinder the effectiveness of integrating humour in teaching English?

- Lack of teachers with sense of humour and humourous materials
- Humour can distract from the seriousness of the lesson
- Students' lack of competence may create an obstacle to understand the humour
- Teachers' obsession to lose the control of classroom management
- All of the above
- Others

.....
.....
.....

__Further Suggestions

16. Is there anything else you would like to add concerning the use of humour in EFL classes?

.....
.....
.....
.....

N.B Please note that your recommendations, suggestions, thoughts will be taken seriously and integrated in the interpretation of the results and the final recommendations.

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix Two: Classroom Observation Checklist

Name

Date

Class Observed

Time

Observer

Department

N: Never

R: Rarely

S: Sometimes

U: Usually

A: Always

| Observation | Items | N | R | S | U | A |
|--|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Teacher's Role and Sense of humor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher is smiling when he enters the classroom and cheerfully greets his students | | | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher starts his session using synaptic connections to create a web links between the previous lesson and the new one. | | | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher facilitates difficult material using different aspects of humor as catalyzer of learning, tongue twisters/ jokes/ tongue twisters/ funny examples, and body language (gestures). | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are listening, interested, and taking notes | | | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher uses humor at the expense of student's self-esteem. | | | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher provides a friendly and Comfortable atmosphere in the classroom for the students to participate naturally. | | | | | |
| Implementation of using humor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher encourages cooperative learning by providing interesting and challenging tasks (funny games) to raise the students' retention | | | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher promotes students' creative thinking using puns/riddles. | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students seem to develop comprehension and retention of the learning materials. | | | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher uses rewards (additional marks) and praises (good, excellent) for correct answers. | | | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students are able to review previous materials whenever they are required. | | | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher gives the students an assignment or homework at the end of each session to measure their retention and comprehension of the lesson. | | | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher aides to meet the lesson's objectives and develops friendly teacher-student rapport. | | | | | |

Other comments:

المخلص

الاهتمام والاحتفاظ هما مفهومان وثيقة الصلة اللذان يؤثران على تعلم لغة أجنبية على مختلف المستويات. ومع ذلك، لوحظ أن في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تظهر العديد من أوجه العجز في الاهتمام والاحتفاظ بالمواد الفصول الدراسية. إلى جانب ذلك، يجد بعض مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية صعوبة في إدارة فصولهم بطريقة تخلق بيئة مناسبة للحفاظ على اهتمام الطلاب وزيادة الاحتفاظ. قد يكون افتقار المعلمين إلى استخدام استراتيجيات أو تقنيات التدريس المختلفة من العوائق التي منعتهم من تحسين القدرات العقلية لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية هدفت الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على تأثير استخدام الفكاهاة على تعزيز اهتمام طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية وتعزيز استبقاءهم من خلال دراسة إلى أي مدى يمكن أن تثير الفكاهاة اهتمامهم بتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية وتعزيز استبقاءهم ولذلك، يفترض أن الفكاهاة يمكن أن تكون أداة فعالة من شأنها أن تسهم في تعزيز اهتمام واستبقاء المتعلمين. ومع ذلك، وبما أن هذا النوع من التعلم لم يتم تبنيه على نطاق واسع، فقد سعينا إلى استكشاف تصورات المعلمين نحو تنفيذ هذه الأداة للمعلمين العمليين في المستقبل ولاختبار صحة الفرضية الرئيسية للبحث، أستخدم نهج مختلط لجمع البيانات الكمية والنوعية من خلال استبيان شبه منظم يُعطى لثلاثة عشر معلماً من معلمي المدارس الثانوية وبالإضافة إلى ذلك، أجريت مراقبة في الفصول الدراسية مع طلاب السنة الثالثة في مدرسة عمر إدريس الثانوية في القنطرة لفحص تكيفهم مع استخدام الفكاهاة. وكشف تحليل وتفسير البيانات أن كلاهما لديه تصورات إيجابية لتأثير الفكاهاة وتحسين الاهتمام والاحتفاظ بالنسبة للطلاب. وبذلك، تأكدت الفرضية البديلة لأن النتائج كانت لصالح الافتراضات البحثية. وبالتالي، يوصى المعلمين في عمر إدريس لدمج وإدراج أدوات فكاهاة في المهام التربوية المستقبلية.

الكلمات الرئيسية (المفتاحية): الفكاهاة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، استراتيجيات التدريس، الاهتمام، والاحتفاظ