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*Using Humor as a Pedagogical Strategy
to Reduce Students' Boredom: The Case
of First Year Students of English at
Biskra University*

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in English

Option: Science of Language

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EPIGRAPH

When learners gather together in the spirit of play. The walls expand, the ceiling lifts, differences begin to dissolve, and tremendous sense of mental mobility abounds. Risks become adventure, and even the most timid students may answer questions or surprise everyone by revealing hidden talents. Outrageous streaks of genius emerge without self-consciousness. And both teacher and learners become receptive to exploring new possibilities. The process of learning is no longer perceived as "dead-ucation."

(Loomans & Kolberg & Weston & Allen, 2002, p. 32)

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work:

*To the memory of my precious aunt, **Dalila***

*To my mother, the light of my eyes, and my father, the dearest person to my heart, Thank
you for all your sacrifices, your encouragement, and all your love.*

*To my beloved sisters **Ilham, Hanane, Asma** and my benevolent brother **Ayoub***

*To my lovely friends **Saida Slimani, Hanane Mokrani, Halima Saouli, Meriem Saouli,**
and **Arbia Sabbahi.***

*To all my TEACHERS throughout my career of study especially MISS. **Samira Angar,**
MRS. Iman Guettal and **MRS. Hassina Nachoua***

*... And to all who love **Mebarka (Shahra. Z)***

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List of Abbreviations

TEFL Teaching English as a foreign language

EFL English as a foreign language

FL Foreign language

TL Target language

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Abstract

Many teachers fail to manage their classes because they are not knowledgeable about their students. As a result, this latter is unable to adapt to the classroom setting, and definitely feel bored. Then, the learning process will be handicapped. This descriptive study mainly aims at investigating the effects of Humor as a pedagogical strategy on teaching and learning. The study examines to what extent Humor can (1) reduce students' boredom and anxiety, (2) increase their motivation (3) create the appropriate atmosphere to enhance learning (4) it further attempts to determine the major traits of the effective teaching based on the use of Humor. So, in order to gain deeper understanding of the impact of Humor on EFL teaching and learning, the data is collected by the means of case study. The population selected for this study has been presented by the first- year LMD students at the Branch of English at Mohammed Kheider University, Biskra. A random sampling procedure has been used in the selection of the sample for this study. The researcher has observed students' attitudes during a period of time to examine their adaptation to humor. Moreover, a questionnaire has been designed to survey the notion of Humor as a pedagogical tool in the teachers' point of view. Through comparing, explaining and commenting on the participants' attitudes toward the suggested strategy, the data have been analyzed. At the end, conciliatorily, the results obtained have revealed that the research hypothesis is workable; humor can be applied as a pedagogical strategy so as to create successful EFL learners.

Key words:

Humor, learning process, effective teaching, students' boredom, students' motivation.

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1. Introduction

Good teacher tries to be his/ her students' ears and eyes, he thinks as if s/he is student in order to find out why student are very quiet; are they bored? Are they anxious? Besides to detect the factors which lead them to be in such mood. One joke or funny anecdote can save the classroom and shift students from passive learners to active learners.

1.1. Statement of the problem

Teachers come in two types: Boss teacher and lead teacher. Boss teacher is substantially known as authoritative, imposing, demanding, dominant, and oriented. Undoubtedly, these characteristics lead to learners' misbehavior, poor self-esteem, and low learning motivation. Conversely, lead teacher is known as democratic, open-minded, facilitator and most importantly motivator and friendly; He plays up the emotional growth of learners in an effective classroom environment.

Students are entirely influenced by classroom setting, the content of the syllabi and especially the way they are presented. This means that the more inappropriate learning conditions are; the more unenjoyable the learning will be; and the more bored the students will be. Hence, teachers should be aware of how to harmonize students with EFL learning, and hasten to look for the suitable strategy that allows them to enhance learning.

The study is a suggestion to use Humor as a pedagogical strategy in classroom. Because teaching is psychological rather than pedagogical, students' psychology should be positively influenced to trigger their desire for learning; students should be engaged and get involved into the lesson. The aforementioned strategy helps learners feel at ease,


secure, and increases their sense of belonging to the class. In addition, it decreases the formality of the academic situation, creates friend-ship between teacher and learners; as well as, facilitates communication between them. Students certainly will get rid of anxiety and boredom; they will get ready to receive information and enhance learning.

1.2. The aim of the study


The researcher paramountly aims in this study to intrigue EFL learners by increasing their level of motivation. Admitting the fact that students need to enjoy learning to progress, the study attempts to attest to the effectiveness of humor as a pedagogical strategy through investigating its effect on both teaching and learning.


1.3. Research questions


In order to check the validity of the hypothesis afoot, the following questions should be answered:

 To what extent can humor create successful learners?

This question involves the following sub-questions:

 Is teacher's sense of humor necessary to reduce students' boredom?

 What are the boundaries of using humor in classroom?

 When and how can teachers use humor in classroom?

1.4. The Hypothesis

This work attempts to test the following hypothesis:

- ❖ If teachers utilize humor in class, their teaching will be more conducive to optimal learning

2. Background

Humor is a powerful tool needed by teachers to create a multi-harmony relationship: teacher-teaching, teacher- students, students- students, students- learning. It represents the effectiveness of a communicative classroom since it helps avoid classroom monotony and anxiety as well as it allows students' self- esteem and self-confidence to arise. Humor not only establishes students' engagement and involvement in the lesson, but also develops students' productivity in EFL through providing a positive learning atmosphere.

Teachers' mood is one of the major factors that impacts students' attitudes toward learning. Harmer claims that teachers' characteristics like being fed up and in a bad-humor negatively influence their learners (1998), so they should look for enjoyable and invigorating strategies. Humor, for instance, is a pedagogically effective strategy that can be used to avoid the negative impact of the negative characteristics of teachers since "students enjoy being entertained and amused" (Harmer, 1998, p. 1). In other words, the happier about learning students feel; the more successful they will be.

Humor is defined by saying what makes the others amused. (Vossler, Sheidlower, 2011) say that in a classroom, humor is not only being funny or saying what is laughable, but also is giving the impression of being friendly and having affinity with learners. Gatt (2000) defines Humor as follows:

It is the 'breathing-out of the soul'. When during the lesson the pupils only listen to the teacher, who may be teaching in the same tone, then it is as if they only breathe in and have no opportunity to breathe out. They need humor, which the teacher can find in very different places. Therefore the teacher must bring in humor during his lessons and this humor should result from the vitality and momentum of the lesson. (as cited in Chee, 2003).

Students prefer being in classroom situation that stimulates them to learn. Leonard (1968) asserts that the best environment for learning is the interactive (as cited in Wrench, 2008, p. 46) where students participate rather than being merely receptive (Jones & Jones, 1981, as cited in Wrench, 2008, p. 46). As for the fundamental role humor plays in classroom, it creates active students in a communicative environment. Then the smooth running of lessons ensues. Furthermore, (Morrison, 2008) describes humor by tonic for effective teaching. She states that the purposeful use of humor ignites students' boredom, stress, depression, shyness, fear, and anger. Humor is the best "brain food". It is the link between brain and learning; it rings the brain's bell to activate "memory" to start storage. So, information presented humorously is extremely memorable. Berk, also, notes that Humor can create an unforgettable image if it is accompanied by the use of "your words plus your physical expressiveness in your eyes, face, hands and arms, and the rest of your body" (2003, p. 64). Sylwester assumes that emotions are considered as the stimulus of learning; they attract the attention which is required to learn (as cited in Morrison, 2008, p. 2). Emotions can be presented by humor. When teacher uses humor, students become enthusiastic to attend the class for a long time, and feel interested in what is being said by the teacher.

Humor does not only prepare successful learners but also successful workers. (Kerr, 2001) contends that in workplace, "you can't be serious". As for teaching, it is necessary to use humor since it retains students' attendance, improves trust between

teacher and learners, and provides positive energy. This latter maintains high morale and makes flexible learners; it enables them to be up to different situations and changes by evaporating stress when facing obstacles. Humor is a "catalyst for creativity". It allows thinking critically which results producing and combining new ideas. Those ideas are necessarily demanded for managing problems- solving. Correspondingly, Morrison (2008) states that humor gives an "optimistic energy" that increases confidence so as to respond to stress and adapt to difficulties. She distinctly mentions that humor is the paramount source of creativity and imagination. Humor positively affects the brain. It enables learners create various ideas. Humor is the fresh impetus for "*voila (sic): creativity flourishes*"

Humor is a matter of subjectivity. Loomans & Kolberg & Weston & Allen go further, arguing that what makes somebody laugh may be unlaughable for another since humor differs according to gender, generation and culture. However, some forms of humor are universal. Therefore, teachers should apply that latter to suit all learners (2002). Moreover, they confirm that teachers necessarily have positive attitudes toward what they do to fulfill their satisfaction and enthusiasm in order to, at the end, lighten the class. Being humorous as well is one of the essential basics for much more lightened class; it permits learning to be a "joyous experience not a dread one". Loomans et al list categorized humor benefits. *Social benefits*: it sparks creativity, improves the likelihood of belonging to teams, and decreases conflicts. *Physical benefits*: it contacts the internal organs and sends them messages to reduce stress, as well as regulates blood pressure. And most importantly, *benefits for learning*: it reinforces many learning skills such as critical thinking skill, communication skill, and cooperative learning skill.

Broadly speaking, humor should be characterized by certain features; otherwise it cannot be effective. (Berk, 2003) affirms that to guarantee delivering Humor effectively, it should be "natural", "spontaneous" and "expressive" ; so that it captures the audience' "interest", "attention" and "involvement".

To conclude, humor is used as a medical therapy to enhance the function of the immune system, and as a psycho-therapy to reduce gloom and increase self- esteem and self- confidence. Why is not it used as a pedagogical therapy to improve learning? Humor is a supportive teaching tool; it elevates communicative classroom where students freely express themselves and easily cooperate to learn. Humor certainly can oust all teaching strategies from effectiveness.

3. Preliminary Studies

To conduct this research work, an explanatory case study is planned. Two types of data collection techniques have been sorted out. A direct observation on students' attitudes toward the use of humor during presenting EFL lessons, and a questionnaire prepared to decide whether humor is an effective teaching strategy or not in accordance to teachers' view.

4. Research Method

In this study, the researcher has been looking for a correlation between two variables humor and students' boredom. In other words, this study examines whether humor is an effective pedagogical strategy or not; it can reduce students' boredom or not. The method adopted has been the explanatory study. Observation is used as a tool by which we gather the data necessary for this study. The population selected for this

study embodied by the first year LMD students at branch of English at Biskra University. For, approximately, six weeks the researcher is going to observe the sample selected randomly from the population to delve into the impact of humor on teaching and learning; whether learners adapt to this strategy or not; whether the students' boredom is reduced or not; whether an effective communication between the teacher and the students ensues or not; consequently, the learning is enhanced or not. After that, results illustrated and discussed divulge details about the effects of humor on learning process.

For the needs of this study, the researcher prepares a questionnaire delivered to first year teachers at the same Branch to gain compelling details of using humor as a pedagogical strategy. The questionnaire results reveal what attitudes teachers have toward using humor in EFL teaching. The analysis and the discussion of the results of both techniques permit to decide whether humor is an effective teaching tool or not.

5. Research Design

The dissertation is composed of three chapters. The first chapter is the theoretical part. It proposes the review of literature. The first chapter introduces the term 'humor', explains its origins, definition, and its significance in EFL teaching, and what support it may provide the teacher in order to create a positive atmosphere for better learning.

The second chapter is concerned with the methodology design selected for the study. It presents the procedures chosen to conduct the research, their description, administration and the aim of using them.

The third chapter devoted to the field work. The researcher starts by analyzing the results of the observation conducted on first- year LMD students. After that, the

researcher analyzes questionnaire prepared for teachers and discusses the results gathered. Ultimately, a comparison is done between both results so as to provide some recommendations.

6. Note on the Language

In this research paper, the American English is preferably used, so that certain terminology will be mentioned. Such as “student” instead of “learner”, “behavior” instead of “behaviour”, “insure” instead of “ensure”. Furthermore, terms like (teacher, instructor, educator), (humor, laugh, fun) are used interchangeably. Concerning the tense used when taping the research paper is the present tense (present perfect, present perfect continuous). Finally, in order to refer to the conductor of the research, the subjective pronouns are avoided; instead the term “researcher” is used.

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Introduction

Humor is the link between effective teaching and successful learning. Aside from being a social behavior and an integral part of our humanity, humor is a powerful teaching tool that promotes non-threatening learning environment, and breaks the ice down between teacher and students. Then rapport and trust relationships between them are evolved. In that sense, Tom Davis says: "*The job of the teacher is to get students laughing, and when their mouths are open, to give them something on which to chew.*"

Why humor is solidly related to teaching? "Attitude and behavior are a key part of your role as a tutor, since they can be so influential" (Morss & Murray, 2005, p. 141). Being boring is one of the major sins in teaching (powers, 2005) as boredom and dullness can kill students motivation and negate their desire to learn (Deiter, 2000). In addition, content is firmly connected to pedagogy; what is taught is as important as how it is taught (Chickering & Gamson, 1987); the teacher should be able to present the lesson in engaging way (Flanagan, 2007). Humor is the demanded strategy. It helps "to balance your subject knowledge with influencing social interactions and shaping the climate and motivations of students" (Morss & Murray, 2005, p. 141). Appropriate and timely humor in the classroom can foster cognitive processes, affective and emotional processes (Berk, 1996), as well as contribute to overall teaching effectiveness (Kher & Molstad & Donahue, 1999).

Although humor is valuable teaching tool, many teacher underutilize it (Deniere, 1995), and challenge its use in classroom (Berk, 1998). Gravely said, "This is a time in school history when humor is vanishing and in some instances has disappeared

altogether" (Morisson, 2008, p. 71). Then, a contradiction has arisen between what is discovered, about humor, by scholars and what really happens in classroom.

1.1. Definition of Humor

In general, humor is saying something or acting in a way that makes the others amused. According to Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, since the late 16th century, humor takes the following definition: 'the quality in something that makes it funny or amusing; the ability to laugh at things that are amusing'. In Latin, the term derived from '*umor*' which refers to '*bodily fluid*' (control human health and emotion). Similarly, in ancient Greek, humor derived from '*humors*' that means 'the balance of fluids in the human body'. Webster's Dictionary defines humor as "quality of imagination quick to perceive the ludicrous or to express itself in an amusing way; fun; caprice; disposition; mood; state of mind."(as cited in Shade, 1996, p. 9)

Apart from tending to provoke laughter and provide amusement, humor has been differently defined by many authors. According to Levine (1969), 'humor is regarded as trifling, destructive and degrading force to morality, religion, and art. Seen differently, it is liberating, socially constructive, and even ennobling art' (p.1). Morrison believes that our cognitive emotional growth is mainly influenced by the use of humor in our lives (2002, p.23). Humor is "an amusing communication that produces positive emotions and cognitions in the individual or in the group" (Romero & Cruthirds, 2006, p. 59). However, Hurren thinks that humor is any message, verbal or non verbal, communicated by the teacher and makes the students feel amused (2006). 'At its basic level, humor is an intended or unintended message interpreted as funny' (lynch, 2002, p.423)

Vossler & Sheidlower go deeper , claiming that humor, at its heart, it is not the behavior of telling jokes, but it is that strategy used to create rapport between teacher and students in a way makes them feel closer to their instructor (2011) since ‘laughter is the shorter distance between two people’ (McGhee, 2002 as cited in Role, 2011, p. 4)

May, Humanistic Psychologist states that Humor is the capacity to perceive, appreciate, or express what is funny, amusing, incongruous, ludicrous, etc. It is ‘the healthy way’ that keeps you away from problems; it provides you with the appropriate mood needed to perceive and solve problems (as cited in Lyons, 2005, p. 3). Humor is a basic part of ‘humanity’s unique capacity for language’. It is considered as a universal human experience (Kruger, 1996).

1.2. Theories of Humor

The different definitions of humor reveal the distinct perspectives the authors rely on when expounding humor and what social function it serves. Those perspectives respond to diverse theories that help easify the process of explaining humor in more organized way (Martin, 2007) because it is crucial to understand theories of humor rather than erect its definition (Brooks, 1992). Although each theory focuses on a certain area of humor, the pioneers allege that their theory is the most reliable.

1.2.1. Superiority Theory

"Everything is funny as long as it's happening to someone else!"

Mark Twain

The superiority theory of humor traces back to Plato and Aristotle. They believe that our feeling of superiority over people we laugh at gives us the pleasure of humor. Cornett (1986) cites that humans feel joy at being superior to others. They laugh at inferior people mistakes which they never do and at their own past follies since they feel

superior to who they were in the past. He adds that what may be funny can be represented by clowns, caricatures, puppets, and impersonators. Also, 'Defects in others are humorous as long as they are not harmful to the victims' (p. 26).

Monro (1988) asserts that 'humor is derisive'. Pleasure derives from feeling superior at those who have 'failing' or 'defect'; 'laughter always looks down at whatever he laughs at'. He claims that the originator of this theory named 'Thomas Hobbes' (1588- 1679) who states that laughter results from 'vainglory', i.e. we laugh at others 'misfortunes' or 'infirmities', at our past mistakes. Monro cites laughter definition according to Bregson (1859-1941), supporter of superiority theory of humor: 'laughter is society' defense against the eccentric who refuses to adjust himself to its requirements'. In other words, humor is a reaction to what considered inexplicable.

Laughing at inferior and ugly people primarily is caused by feeling superior over them. Hill (1988) indicates 'We laugh maliciously when we possess superior knowledge over the people we ridicule. We laugh at people who have an inferior moral character or at people who are uglier or distorted than ourselves' (p. 40).

This type of humor elevates inequality in society. Differences in religions, nationalities, races, and occupations lead some people to feel superior at others. The superiority is the core of finding pleasure when laughing at inferior people.

1.2.2. Incongruity Theory

According to this theory, humor is perceived at the moment of realization of incongruity between what really happen and what is expected to happen. Berk (2005) voices that incongruity can be called 'contrast resolution'. It is "the juxtaposition of the 'expected' with the 'unexpected'". Deckers & Kizers (1975) maintain that the condition

for humor takes place is the divergence between what is expected to happen and what really happens. Kerr (2001, p. 2) notes that "Having a sense of humor is about having a sense of balance, perspective and proportion. A sense of humor is the ability to recognize the incongruities and absurdities that confront us on a daily basis. In other words, it is the ability to look at the same thing as everyone else and see something just a little different". Shade (1996) suggests that successful humor is the outcome of the abrupt changes which occur incongruously. It mainly derives from 'jokes' and 'riddles' in which incongruity may be presented by 'contradiction', 'understatement', 'exaggeration', 'surprise', 'reversal', 'ludicrous'. He adds: "The incongruity in humor results when there is: 1- a discrepancy between the punch line and the body of a joke, and 2- a violation of expectancies. These may involve a) two conflicting sets of rules, b) two different frames of reference, or c) the reversal of figure and ground".(p.11)

Degrading a value is an essential feature of incongruity theory. Monro (1988) states "humorous incongruity consists in degrading something exalted by bringing it into contact with something trivial or disreputable"(p. 351). This idea is supported by Spencer (1820-1903) (as cited in Monro, 1988, pp. 352, 353). Spencer defines humor as "descending incongruity". Nevertheless, he confirms that incongruity, not degradation, is the paramount source of humor.

German philosophers Kant (in 1790) and Schopenhauer (in 1819), the developers of this theory, proclaim "The basis of this theory is that humor is created when we expect one thing and is (sic) suddenly presented with another. Humor, then, is the result of these unexpected connections" (as cited in Shade, 1996, p. 11). For Schopenhauer (1788-1860) (as cited in Monro, 1988, p.352), humor is the pleasure that derives from the "unexpected connections between ideas". Kant (1724-1804) (as cited in Monro, 1988, p.351) identifies incongruity by »frustrated expectation". He believes that

humor comes up when the concept you expect would happen ends into nothing i.e. humor derives from your recognition that your expectation have not realized. In his point of view, humor is 'penetrating' as long as it connects two completely different attitudes, or it makes a reversal of values.

Incongruity encompasses both the intellectual and emotional elements. Kant & Schopenhauer phrase that the mental component of humor realized when the unexpected connections between two things come about. Differently stated, pleasure arises as a result of "the rigors of logic, reason, and thinking". Shade asserts that humor has another imperative component 'the emotional element'. 'Attention', 'anticipation', 'tension', 'surprise' help humor crop up (1996, p. 11). Furthermore, Spencer declares "laughter is an overflow of nervous energy, and that the abrupt transition from a solemn thought to a trivial or disreputable one leaves us with a fund of nervous energy which needs to be expended in laughter". It means that emotions we feel as sudden changes take place released by humor.

1.2.3. Relief Theory

In this theory, humor is seen as catharsis. It is the preferable strategy used to challenge pent- up emotions. Seaward (2006) regards humor as a response to stressful situations. Monro (1988) highlights that relief is the core of humor. People laugh as strain removed. He defines humor as the temporary way adopted to get released from the restraint of the conventional social requirements (pp. 353, 354). Freud (1856-1939), the originator of release theory, mentions that through humor, we can trick the 'censor', the internal inhibitions, that handicap the achievement of our 'natural impulses'. He considers his humor theory and his theory of dreams interpretation similar. Humor, exactly like dreams, can beguile censor. Suppressed wishes then may come true.

Through humor, we give 'vent' to our 'repressed desires' (as cited in Monro, 1988, pp. 354, 355).

For Shade, laughter gives us some temporary freedom from the numerous restrictions, such as constraints of conventionality and the rigidity of logic, under which we live our daily lives. This theory focuses on the social and behavioral elements of humor. Laughter helps elude the dictatorial social conventions. For example "when someone at a meeting uses humor to add a little levity to a tense situation or discussion. This allows everyone to laugh for a moment, break away from the topic at hand for a minute or two, regroup their thoughts, and begin addressing the issue, perhaps with a new perspective"

The most noticeable thing about these theories is that each theory has its own perspective and area of focus which means that no theory can fully explain the nature of humor and its social functions.

1.3. Forms of Humor in Classroom

Humor in the classroom can take many forms. A study of humor in the college classroom, done by Bryant, Comisky, and Zillmann (1979), leaks that humor in lectures can be classified as jokes, riddles, puns, funny stories, humorous comments. Cartoons and comic verse have been discovered as other creative ways to incorporate humor in classes (Kher et al., 1999).

1.3.1. Riddles

Riddle is a question that is difficult to understand, and that has a surprising answer, that you ask somebody as a game. The term riddle derives from the old English

word "radels" or "radelse"; it is related to Dutch "raadsel" and German "ratsel" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2008). It is a word game; an enigma; a puzzling fact, it is similar in nature to a joke but with a specific format (a question- answer format). For instance, "Matt: How do you keep fish from smelling? Jenny: Cut off their noses". Riddles are preferably related to subject matter. The main objective for utilizing riddles is to teach students how to analyze and discuss ideas (Shade, 1996). For example, *Imagine that you are in a boat, in the middle of the sea. Suddenly you are surrounded by hungry sharks, just waiting to feed on you. How can you put an end to this?* (The answer is: *stop imagining*). Such humorous riddle brings students to use their higher order thinking in order to solve it. Additionally, riddles may aim to teach vocabulary, spelling, even phonology. Shade suggests the use of *letter puzzlers*:
Build on a letter to make a word:

What comes after L? Bow (elbow)

What comes after E? Z (eazy)

What comes after B? 4 (before)

1.3.2. Puns

Pun is the clever or humorous use of a word that has more than one meaning, or words that have different meaning but sound the same (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary). Partington describes pun by the "creative use of language" (2006, p. 110). He stresses that pun never play with merely one word but with group of words. In the same line of thoughts, Koestler explains "The pun is the bisociation of a single phonetic form with two meanings – two strings of thought tied together by an acoustic knot"(1964, p. 65). Pun should occur intentionally, Ritchie (2004) holds that

spontaneous puns are not very funny and are rarely kept to be used later. According to Partington, puns can take the form of:

- Reversals, such as spoonerism, for example, *a half-warmed fish* (i.e. half formed wish)
- Blendings (or *porte-manteau* words) for example; *anecdorage* (*anecdote _dorage*, that is, how the aged ramble on)
- Anagrams, for example, *Mother-in-law – Woman Hitler; Election results –Lies, let’s recount.*
- Resegmentation or metanalysis, for example, *four candles – fork handles.*
- Reverse Coinages, for example, *speakable* (from *unspeakable*), *underwhelmed* (from *overwhelmed*)
- ‘Not-as-They-Seems’, for example, *a cat burglar* (*stole our best mouser*).

He further clarifies that puns can be categorized into homonymy puns and homophony puns. Homonymy puns means words alike in sound and spelling. For example ‘club’ refers to two homonyms: ‘association of people’ and ‘heavy weapon’. Whereas, homophony puns are words alike in sound only. For instance, ‘leek’ and ‘leak’. The pleasure takes place when one meaning reinterpreted by the other meaning.

1.3.3. Jokes

Joke is something to say or to do to make people laugh. The term ‘joke’ emerged in late seventeenth century. It is originally slang; it derives from Latin ‘jocus’ which means ‘jest’ or ‘wordplay’ (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 2008). It is seen by (Morrison, 2001, p. 160) as "a short story or short series of words spoken or

communicated with the intent of being laughed at or found humorous by the listener or reader". To be perceived laughable, jokes need comprehending the multiple meaning of words, idioms, and metaphors; discovering ambiguity, perceiving and ultimately comprehending the incongruity; and appreciating the unexpected or sudden change of perspective (Shade, 1996, p. 3).

According to (Schmitz, 2002, p.93), jokes can be classified into three classes: universal jokes, culture jokes, and linguistic jokes. Universal jokes refer to "humor that is obtained mainly from the context and the general functioning of the world;" in other words, they are jokes which any one can laugh at. For example, *Teacher: Gwen, come here and point out Africa from this globe. Gwen: here. Teacher: Correct! John, who discovered Africa? Class: Gwen!!*. Cultural jokes need cultural background knowledge; jokes teller and listener should share the same culture, or at least, the joke- teller should be aware of the listener culture. For instance, "*What do you call a dog at the beach?*" "*A hot dog*". Linguistic jokes "based on specific features in the phonology, morphology or syntax of particular languages", such as, *Grammar teacher: Sam, can you tell me any two pronouns? Sam: Who, me? Teacher: Good answer, Sam!* Shade illustrates this class through the following examples:

- Lexical based on multiple- meanings of words; Dave: *What has 18 legs and catches flies. Lynn: A baseball team.*
- Deep structure involves alternative interpretation for a word or phrase; Sam: *What animal can jump higher than a house. Chris: Any animal. Houses can't jump.*
- Metalinguistic focuses on the language form instead of the language meaning; Kathy: *What's at the end of everything? Tim: the letter g.*

- The phonologicalbased on the phonological structure of words;
Rebecca: What is this? Waiter: it's bean soup. Rebecca: I don't care what it's been. What is it now? (1996, p. 3,4)

There are some types of jokes which should remain out of the classroom. Shade confirms that the following categories are necessarily avoided in classroom:

- Sexual jokes: celebrating the fun of sex, mildly flirtatious to outright obscenity and lewdness
- Ethnic/Racial-Jokes: in which a particular ethnic group is demeaned, ridiculed, or made fun of.
- Religious-Jokes: making fun of particular religions or religion in general.
- Hostile-Jokes: in which an attack on someone's dignity is the primary focus. These may be insulting, invective, or involve a put-down of someone.
- Demeaning to Men/ Women- Jokes: in which males/ females are discredited or put-down, often by the opposite gender.
- Sick-Jokes: making fun of death, deformity, disease, or handicapping conditions. (1996, p. 87)

Berk (1996; 2002) mentions that teachers may present humor in form of funny quotations, questions, examples, exercises and problems, skits/dramatizations.

- ✓ Humorous questions: they are often used in all courses. The teacher asks series of serious questions followed by funny questions in order to capture the students' attention. For exapmle,
 - a. How many of you think this one is the correct answer?*
 - b. How many of you think this one is the correct answer?*
 - c. How many of you don't care?*

d. How many of you want to go back to bed?

- ✓ Humorous examples: they are the easiest way the teacher uses to illustrate concrete or abstract content in the subject area.
- ✓ Humorous problem sets: they may replace the serious textbook problems and practiced as problem- solving exercises or homework.
- ✓ Skits/ dramatization: they are the best warm- up practice. They can be presented by music, masterpiece theater.

Humor forms are sorted into larger groups. (Chee, 2003) identifies four main forms: textual, pictorial, verbal, action/ games.

- *Textual* Examples: stories, jokes.
- *Pictorial* Examples: cartoons, comics.
- *Verbal* Examples: puns, word games, acronyms.
- *Action/ games* Examples: theater, video, role play, contests.

Disparately, (Shade, 1996, p.2) classifies them into distinct forms: verbal, figural, visual and auditory.

- *Verbal humor* includes jokes, puns, riddles, anecdotes, wit.
- *Figural humor* includes comic, cartoons and caricature.
- *Visual humor* includes impersonation, impression.
- *Auditory humor* includes mime, impersonation, practical jokes, sight gags.

1.4. Principles of Using Humor in Classroom

Teaching, like a recipe, needs certain ingredients with certain doses. Effective humor is one of the most essential ingredients for more effective teaching. Effective humor means using humor appropriately. As stated by Shade (1996) "schools acts like social institutions"where there is place for humor (p.89). However, some educators are

apprehensive about using humor in their classes simply because they believe that humor breaks seriousness of intention, diminishes respect for the teacher, and reduces task orientation and time-on-task behaviors (p. 85). In fact, those instructors are not aware of how to join humor to teaching and what bonuses it supplies the teaching- learning process. "Using appropriate humor in a purposeful way in the classroom may yield numerous benefits. However, as with most things in life, the benefits are accompanied by potential costs" (Shade, 1996, p. 85); in addition, "The key to humor is to know when it works and how it can enhance the learning environment" (Jonas, 2010, p.2). Therefore, it is necessary to answer these questions: how and when may teachers use humor in classroom? What are the boundaries of using humor in classroom?

1.4.1. Humor and Naturalness

Humor should be natural. Berk (2003) cites that humor needs to be natural to guarantee its effective delivery. "Don't try too hard, let humor arises naturally, don't force it" (chiasson, 2002) since being authentic takes less energy than forcing humor which is considered like fitting a peg into a penguin. Therefore, "be yourself and be sincere, do what comes naturally and *only* what is comfortable for you" (Kerr, 2001, p.194). Likewise, Provine (2000) explains that teacher's reaction to his/her students non-reaction may be the most amusing part so that they should not ignore humor but instead make it part of their everyday classroom learning. The naturalness of humor based on being an integral part of the lesson since it "works best as a natural on- going part of classroom learning" (Chiasson, 2002); it can be nurtured and integrated into the classroom such that it fosters a sense of openness and respect between students and teachers (Kher et al., 1999). Differently stated, humor, like lesson, should run smoothly.

1.4.2. Humor and Spontaneity

Humor should be delivered spontaneously. Steve Smith, Director of Ringling Brothers & Barnum & Bailey Clown College says "There is a difference between acting funny and being funny. Don't act funny. Be human" (as cited in Kerr, 2001, p. 194). The humorous act cannot be a pre-mediated act (Bonjour, 2011); it should be spontaneous (Berk, 2003; Bonjour, 2011). Moreover, Humor is most effective when it reflects the personality of the instructor (Edwards & Gibboney, 1992). The personality of the teacher plays a major role in the level of learning a student can achieve. Spontaneous humor affects the teacher's personality; it indicates that the teacher uses humor which fits his/ her personality. Consequently, students can recognize what type of their teacher is what helps them to be closer to him/her, and to figure out the type of humor themselves may use in classroom, especially with the instructor. Chiasson (2002) argues that using spontaneous humor enlarges the instructors' comfort zone, and makes teachers feel at ease. Further, Kerr (2001) consolidates this idea by saying: "Everyone is allowed to be themselves. There is no line drawn between our work and personal lives. People are happier, more fun and more creative when they are free to be who they really are.", and humor produced spontaneously is funnier than prepared humor; "it is the simplest way to add more fun into your work day" (pp. 193, 195).

1.4.3. Humor and Content

Effective humor is content- related. Chiasson (2002) asserts "The use of humor will depend on the content you are teaching and the availability of appropriate humorous material ... it must be comprehensible, with themes that students can relate to". Humor is basically a communicative attitude, so it is mandatory to set a specific objective for using it, and prepare it adequately so as to effectively help bring life to lesson (Bonjour, 2011), though, with time teacher will be experienced with humor; s/he

will be able to blend appropriate humor to teaching without preparation (Chiasson, 2002). What if humor is not directly connected to the content? Shade describes non content- related humor by "distraction" which is detrimental to the learning process. For example, using cartoons in a test, if not content specific, may increase test anxiety instead of reducing it (1996). Therefore, Kerr notes "Just as every profession has its own unique jargon; it also has its own brand of humor. Humor is most effective when it speaks to something everyone can relate to"(2001, p. 201).

1.4.4. Humor and Offensiveness

Private humor is non- effective humor. Using demeaning or sarcastic humor leaves people out (Chiasson, 2002). Powerful humor is that never be directed at individual, a group, or racial slurs (Snetsinger & Grabowski, 1993) since, for instance, a joke that is at the expense of a group or individual may result in a variety of negative consequences in the classroom and can even turn students away from an entire field of study (Kher et al, 1999). Such humor is best avoided unless it is used for affective, educational, reasons, or with great care to be exercised in the way it is presented to the class in order to foster an enthusiastic and positive environment. (Kher et al, 1999; Chiasson, 2002). Humor that can potentially offend any student such as ethnical, sick, demeaning, hostile, religious, and sexual jokes, is inappropriate in the classroom whether it is produced by teachers or students; it reflects bad taste or poor judgment (Shade, 1996; Berk, 2002). It can be denoted by put-downs, sarcasm, ridicule, profanity, vulgarity, innuendo, and sensitive personal experiences (sick jokes). Offensive humor may cause tightening up, withdrawal, resentment, anger, tension, anxiety, turning off/ tuning out. The student feels risk of a recurrence, or a confrontation with the perpetrator (THE TEACHER!), and then he stops attending the class so as to avoid those feelings (Berk, 2002, pp. 13, 14). Offensive humor can be punishing and non-productive and can

create a hostile learning environment that quickly stifles communication and self-esteem (Kearney & Plax & Allen, 2002; Korobkin, 1988; Loomans et al., 2002; Bruner, 2002). Kerr (2001, p. 177) suggests to use safe humor through laughing at oneself, laughing **with**, never at others, and finding the humor in the **situation**, not the people. He protests that the use of those strategies indicates high self- confidence.

1.4.5. Humor and Subjectivity

Humor is subjective. Garner (2003) demonstrates "sense of humor like other senses such the sense of taste, people have many different preferences" (p.3). "Our sense of humor is as unique as our finger prints. One person's funny bone is another person's Achilles heel" (Kerr, 2001, p. 194). Humor is a double-edged sword (Meyer, 2002; Romero & Cruthirds, 2006) "because it can be perceived as humorous by one person yet quite offensive to another person" (Romero & Cruthirds, 2006, p.65) ; hence "don't assume that just because you think something is hysterical, everyone else will too" (kerr, 2001, p. 194). On that base, differences in culture, gender, ethnicity, religious beliefs, and age should be considered (Garner, 2003; Garner, 2005; Garner 2006).

As regards the gender, "there are some general gender differences in our sense of humor" (Kerr, 2001, p. 194). Women respond to humor more than men (Provine, 2000). Viewing that laughter is an emotional response to a stimulus, males are more reserved in their emotional reactions, and sometimes intentionally internalize them; whereas, females display their emotional responses easily (Berk, 2002, p. 24). However, men are the best jokes- tellers in any culture (Provine, 2000; Berk, 2002). They prefer to tell formal jokes, and laugh at ridicule, innuendo jokes, slapstick, and stupidity; to the contrary, women like to describe funny situations and stories (Berk, 2002), but never laugh at what may humiliates and embarrasses the others (Barreca, 1991).

Considering the age, the generation gap between the teacher and the students should be counted (Berk, 2002) since "what adults deem as humorous may not have the same effect for children"(Chee, 2003). For example, children like cartoons (*Tom and Jerry*). Barry views that "females tend to reach emotional maturity very quickly, so that by age seven they are no longer capable of seeing the humor in loud inadvertent public blasts of flatulence, whereas males can continue to derive vast enjoyment from this well into their 80s" (2000, p. 211). Thus, gender and age are closely related.

Humor is also culture- based. Although humor is a universal phenomenon that is practiced across different countries, religions, ethnic groups, nationalities, and tribes across the world (Apte, 1985), teachers must consider the "varied kaleidoscope of cultural differences when producing and appreciating humor (Kruger, 1996, p.12) because "expressions of humor take different forms in different cultures" (Kazarian & Martin, 2006, p. 216). Certain cultures perceive humor as an inappropriate social behavior (White, 2001), and other cultures regard an individual as weak when he uses self-defeating humor (Romero & Cruthirds, 2006, p. 65). Keeping in mind that "schools are complex entities and classrooms are public spaces populated by different students with different values, attitudes and views of the world" (p. 91), humor «must be used sensitively and with regard to cultural and language barriers to its understanding and appreciation" (Ziegler, 1998, p. 347). Berk (2002) suggests "The greater the match and the consistency of your choice of humor with their values, the greater your chances of success". He explains "To minimize violation that can offend your students... you must either share or at least understand the values and principles of your students. Arriving at that common denominator provides the path of least offensiveness (p.12). Then to engage students and create an enthusiastic and positive environment, and not to alienate them (Beebe, 2007, p. 35).

1.5. Styles of Humor

Longan-Fox and Cooper (2007) see that humor is two-dimensional. The first dimension is indicated by its influence, and the second dimension is presented by its focus. Based on its influence, affiliative humor and self-enhancing are *positive* styles of humor, i.e. they are healthy and adaptive (Martin, 2007). Whereas, aggressive humor and self-defeating humor are *negative* styles of humor, i.e. they are unhealthy and detrimental (Martin, 2007). Based on its focus, affiliative humor and aggressive humor are *others-focused*, and self-enhancing and self-defeating are *self-focused* (p. 221).

1.5.1. Affiliative Humor

Affiliative humor aims at entertaining others by playing jokes with friends, telling humorous stories about oneself, or by telling various odd and funny things. Affiliative humor is defined by (Martin, 2007) as follows:

Affiliative humor refers to the tendency to say funny things, to tell jokes, and to engage in spontaneous witty banter, in order to amuse others, to facilitate relationships, and to reduce interpersonal tensions (e.g., "I enjoy making people laugh"). This is hypothesized to be an essentially nonhostile, tolerant use of humor that is affirming of self and others and presumably enhances interpersonal cohesiveness" (p.211).

Martin adds that this style of humor is healthy and adaptive. It can be used as a strategy to resolve conflicts, and allow partners to feel much closer to each other (Compel et al, 2008, as cited in Gournelos & Greene, 2011). Role (2011) conducted a study to survey which style of humor is used the most in classroom, and to what extent it helps teachers to be effective. The results reveal that most teachers who use affiliative humor are often able to make most people laugh with the jokes that they crack. Most importantly,

students appreciate affiliative humor since it builds up rapport between teacher and students.

1.5.2. Self- enhancing Humor

Self- enhancing humor is, just like affiliative humor, positive, healthy, and adaptive. It maintains high morale, strengthens optimistic mood, reduces negative emotions (depression, tension, stress... etc). Also, it leads to obtain self- efficacy and self- control over internal states (McGhee, 2010). Therefore, “People who use self- enhancing humor are less depressed, less anxious, and higher in self-esteem. Their friends and families are likely to note to tell jokes and have an amused attitude” (Earleywine 2010, p.43)

Martin (2007) stresses that coping with problems is the core of self- enhancing humor. In other words, individuals tend to be humorous to keep themselves from getting overly upset and depressed about certain situations. For instance, you are by yourself, and you feel bored or unhappy, you try to think about funny things in the past in order to entertain yourself. In order to relax and enhance yourself, Kerr (2001, p. 210) suggests:

- ✓ Start smiling. Even fake smiling produces some of the same benefits as a real smile.
- ✓ Start to laugh. Even fake laughing can produce some of the same positive physiological benefits as real laughing.
- ✓ Create a humor first aid kit full of cartoon books, funny videos, pictures or zany props—anything that allows you to access your sense of humor as quickly as possible

1.5.3. Aggressive Humor

If you play jokes on others to make fun; if you tease someone about a shortcoming s\he has; if you ridicule somebody you don't like; if you put down those who are inferior to you, you absolutely utilize aggressive humor.

Going back to Plato, Aristotle, and Hobbes, aggressive humor crucially relates to the feeling of superiority (Morreal, 1987). It is, also, related to two phenomena: "*gelotophobia* is the fear of being laughed at, ... and *katagelasticism* is the joy of laughing at others" (Ruch & Proyer, 2009, as cited in Samson& Meyer, 2010, p.218).

Jokes usually do provoke positive emotions. However, they may goad negative fervors (Rush, 2007) if they are of aggressive content. Aggressive jokes potentially take the form of ridicule, mocking, teasing (Samson & Meyer, 2010, p. 219), derision, or disparagement humor (Martin, 2007). In this way, aggressive humor is seen as "the tendency to use humor for the purpose of criticizing or manipulating others" (Beebe, 2007, p. 34). "It also includes the compulsive expression of humor even when it is socially inappropriate. This type of humor is viewed as a means of enhancing the self at the expense of one's relationships with others" (Martin, 2007, p. 278). As a result, aggressive humor is a negative style of humor; it is unhealthy. It should be avoided in classroom since it dehumanizes students.

1.5.4. Self- defeating Humor

Self- defeating humor is a negative style of humor; it is the tendency to use humor exaggeratedly at one's own expense.(Erickson & Feldstein, 2007, p. 286) affirms that this style of humor is deterrminal; it is primely utilized for the purpose of making

relationships with others at one's account. Self-defeating humor is commonly adapted by teenagers to be tied to their peers. Martin (2007) illustrates the nature and the predominant features of self-defeating humor in the following paragraph:

Self-defeating humor involves the use of excessively self-disparaging humor, attempts to amuse others by doing or saying funny things at one's own expense, and laughing along with others when being ridiculed or disparaged (e.g., "I often try to make people like or accept me more by saying something funny about my own weaknesses, blunders, or faults"). It also involves the use of humor as a form of defensive denial, to hide one's underlying negative feelings or avoid dealing constructively with problems. This style of humor is seen as an attempt to gain the attention and approval of others at one's own expense. (p.122)

In contrast, Kerr (2001) insists that this style of humor is positive, supportive, and safe. He states "Learning to love your bloopers is one of the easiest ways to start laughing more often. It fosters a climate of creativity by encouraging people to take risks without fear of embarrassment. So forgive yourself, forgive others and laugh more often" (p. 199). He contends that laughing at yourself and at your own blunders gives the impression that you are humble, and encourages people to own up to their faults safely (p.204). Similarly, Berk (2002, p. 12) notes that:

Self-effacing or self-deprecating humor in the form of self-downs is not only an acceptable form, but a highly desirable one to break down barriers in the classroom. The self-down can even puncture professorial pomposity. Despite the fact that the self-down represents a "violation of self," it also provides an infinite source of humor material that can be extremely effective. It also means more than put-downs because it makes a powerful statement about the self-esteem of the person doing it.

1.6. Bonuses of Humor in Classroom

Humor importance reflected by its benefits which obtained by teachers and students. "Humor in the classroom is like spice in the food - very necessary and

important to add flavor and create interest." (Bonjour, 2011). "Humor is the characteristic that makes something laughable or amusing but humor in the English classroom has more than just the 'effect to induce laughter'; it brings together a chain-reaction by increasing the learner's motivation and self-confidence which creates a positive classroom atmosphere for the smooth acquisition of the language." (Chee, 2003).). According to Bergen (1992), "teachers who use strategies that promote the connection between humor and learning usually provide students with their best school experiences" (p.106). As presented by the diagram below, humor, in classroom, is extremely multifaceted.

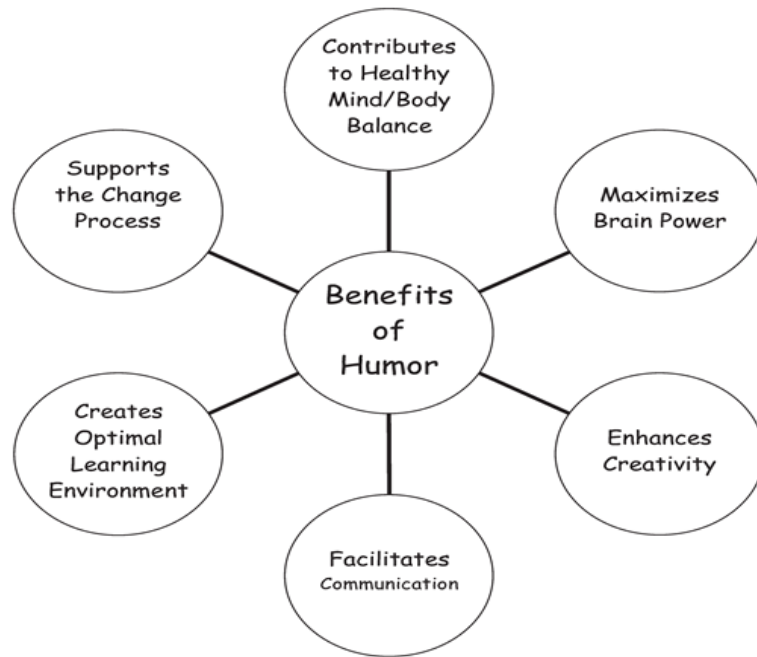


Figure 1.1 Benefits of Humor in Classroom (Morrison, 2008, p. 10)

1.6.1. Humor and Students' Humanization

Unlike the other approaches, humanistic education lays special stress on the students' emotions. Humanistic teachers believe that students' cognitive and emotional

aspects are firmly tight with the learning process; the compromise of feeling and knowledge is the cue for successful learning. The satisfaction of students' personal and interpersonal needs stands beyond the achievement of the academic needs (Wrench, 2009). In other words, learning becomes easier within a non-threatening environment where students feel safe. Maslow's hierarchy clarifies the students' needs that are crucial for the fulfillment of the learning task.

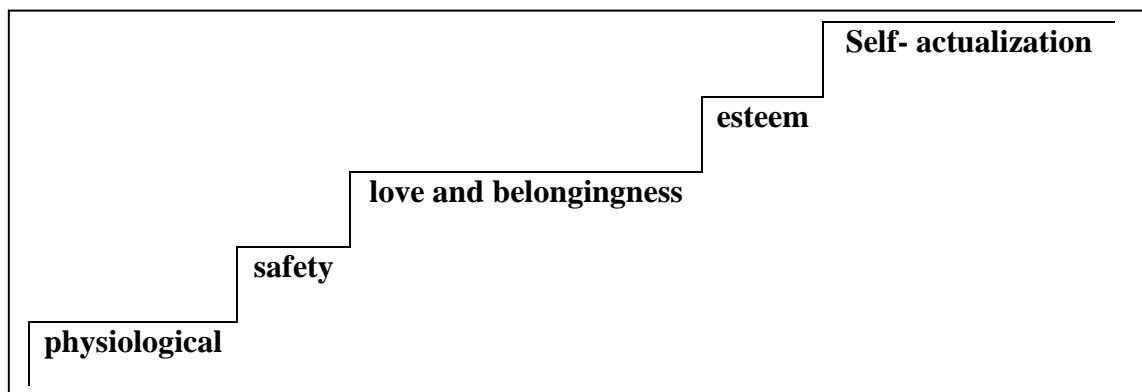


Figure 1.2 Maslow's Hierarchy needs 1970 (as cited in Wrench, 2009, p. 53)

Wrench (2002, p. 53, 54) explains these needs as follows:

1. Physiological need is the basic need. Without fulfilling this need, students cannot function well, and cannot move to the higher need. Physiological need encompasses the need for water, food, air, sleep, rest.
2. Safety need is the need for being secure, organized, stable, protected from threats, and free from fear.
3. Love and Belongingness needs "include good, strong, affectionate family relationships, peer relationships, and academic relationships"

4. “The *esteem needs* are affiliated with the desire to have status, dignity, respect, recognition, attention, and to be appreciated by others. In addition, people have the need to have a high, stable opinion of one's own self”
5. “The *self-actualization need* is the desire to do or be what one is uniquely suited for”. "A musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately at peace with himself" (Maslow, 1970, p. 46).

Teaching effectively requires a strategy that takes into account the aforementioned needs and principles. Using humor can be a successful teaching tool for “its humanizing effect on teacher image” (Askildson, p .48). Being human is mainly featured by having sense of humor (Lynch, p. 423). It helps found and develop human relationships, so students never “tune out” or “turn off” when they learn in a humorous environment (Shade, 1996).

Humor and humanism share many features. Mainly, the focus on teacher’s characteristics. Grandcolas and Soulé-Susbielles (1986) report that students influenced by their teachers’ personality and attitude. Students perform well in an environment where their wishes take place. Glasser (2001) demonstrates that teachers’ healthy oral, facial and body expressions fosters the creation of stable and eager students. “The teacher must show their joy of teaching, for it is the teacher who is a model of a happy; caring person in the student’s eyes” (Shade, 1996, p. 106). Humorous and humanistic teachers are friendly teachers, they promote the environment where positive communication arises, and students feel valued and motivated.

1.6.1.1. Humor and Emotional Growth

Students prefer to learn in an environment where positive emotions are elevated. Humorous teachers often take into consideration students’ emotions. They try to found

the atmosphere which energizes them. Morrison believes that “Almost everything we do begins with the complex system of emotion” (2008, p. 45). In this case, the term “positive emotionality” is highlighted. It is defined by Morrison as follows “A state of being in which the individual is said to flourish. The research is based on the belief that positive emotions extend the capacity of attention, cognition, and action” (p. 161). It means, positive emotions can be represented by motivation, self- esteem, self- confidence, safety. These feelings are the key to maximize learning. “Humor can jolt us out of our habitual frame of mind, thereby decreasing or eliminating the negative feelings. Humor can be a powerful antidote” (Berk, 2002, p. 43). Dan Goleman, expert on emotional intelligence, denotes “we can easily change the mood of the people around us through emotional responses. Of course, most of us are willing to change not because we see the light, but because we feel the heat”. In other words, the change comes about not because we permit that, but because the negative impact of some emotions urge us to do. As for the academic context, instructor seeks for changing his students’ moods whenever it is necessary. It is worth mentioning that self- esteem, motivation, anxiety, stress, tension are factors that are crucially related to language learning.

1.6.1.1.1. Humor and Motivation

It can be said that motivation is substantially the heart of language learning. “Motivation is probably the most frequently used catch-all term for explaining the success or failure of virtually and complex task. It is easy to assume that success in any task is due simply to the fact that someone is motivated” (Brown, 2000, p.160). Motivation can be defined as “the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity” (Gardner, 1985, p. 10).

Motivation plays a significant role in the language learning success. It is the determiner of the level of L2 achievement, “long- term goals” cannot be realized merely by the individual abilities; they need "sufficient motivation" (Dörnyei and Csizer, 1998). Nevertheless, “the most pressing question related to motivation is not what motivation is but rather *how* it can be increased” (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 51).

To obtain more successful outcomes in the language classroom, humor can be adopted as a pedagogical strategy. Unmotivated students pose a huge challenge for teachers. One way to motivate and stimulate student interest in a topic is to use humor (Gilbertson, 2006). Jonas (2010) reports that the teacher’s enthusiasm maintains students’ interest in subject matter. Working in environment built on humor can develop teacher’s morale, motivation, and job satisfaction so that automatically student kept motivated.

Humor increases motivation. “Most of students enjoy a lecture more if humor is incorporated. Fun is motivating” (Gore, 2004, p.76) even if the subject matter is of little interest to the learners (Renninger & Hidi, 2002, p.173). It leads students to attend the classes very constantly and focus on a task (Lyons, 2005). Moreover, when teaching embraces a timely and relevant humor (Shade, 1996), lessons perceived “as interesting, high in support, and affirming” James (2001, as cited in Gore, 2004, p.76) so that the more relevant to the subject matter humor is; the more motivated students will be.

1.6.1.1.2. Humor and Negative Emotions

Being bored, anxious, stressed, depressed can easily handicap learning. “The intervening humor response to problem stimuli can significantly reduce the impact and possibly paralyzing effects of those negative reactions” (Berk, 2002, p.42). Berk further writes that humor provides a sense of control, self- protection, empowerment, and

superiority over problems. It makes student “Rambo in classroom”. Page and Page (2010) find that “nothing dissipates the stress more quickly than humor. Humor can reduce pain, diffuse anger and anxiety, buffer the amount of stress experienced, and give one a sense of power in the middle of chaos” (p. 142).

According to Hyman & Pedrick (2006), using humor to manage difficult situations makes them less threatening and less stressful. Humor is a coping mechanism that permits students to temporarily detach themselves from threatening classroom situations (Roedelein, 2002). It reduces several types of anxiety in classroom such as test anxiety, relieves tension, and mental fatigue. Moreover, if teachers bore their students, they become baby- sitters rather than teachers. One way to relieve boredom is coordinating humor with teaching; it “provides a fresh and much needed infusion of energy for learning process” (Shade, 1996). Humor is the best rest for the body and mind, it helps to connect with others, and perceive life differently (Casto, 2004).

1.6.1.1.3. Humor and Self- Esteem and Self- Confidence

Self- esteem is a paramount element for language learning. Arnold (1999) argues that students who encounter low self- esteem may feel insecure, may avoid take risks to interact in classroom; they may even stop attending classes. Then they will be unable to reach their learning goals. Canfield and Wells (1994) urge teachers to create safe environment where students feel that they are valued and supported. Coopersmith (1976, p.4, as cited in Brown, 2000) defines self-esteem as:

By self-esteem, we refer to the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself; it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which an individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy. In short, self esteem is a personal judgement of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes that the individuals hold towards themselves. It is a

subjective experience which the individual conveys to others by verbal reports and other overt expressive behavior. (p. 145)

Humor enhances self-esteem. Epictetus, Greek philosopher says “men are disturbed not by things, but by the view which they take of them” (as cited in Kerr, 2001, p. 15). The appropriate use of humor helps improve students’ and teachers’ positive self- image. Students can explore, play and take risks even mistakes are done. The learning process then is no more “traumatic experience”. Additionally, it spurs sense of belongingness through which students, over time, obtain high level of self-confidence as well as sense of security, and share their humorous experiences (Shade, 1996).

1.6.1.2. Humor and Classroom Environment

The environment plays a significant role in the learning process. Anxiety poses an obstacle for the teaching and learning process; it prevents lessons from being presented smoothly. The students then cannot refine learning. One thing that teachers can do to reduce FL anxiety is to create a positive classroom climate (Ely, 1986, as cited in Dornyei, 2001, p. 364) which promotes students to practice their FL freely without being afraid (Kristmanson, 2000). Humor is accompanied by increased motivation by which students take risks to communicate in classroom (Chee, 2003). Jonas recommends to make humor “a staple of teachers” (2010, p. 3) since it develops positive emotions needed for enhancing learning.

Humor enhances positive environment. The nature of positive humor is to found a positive atmosphere that triggers students’ desire to participate in classroom interaction by decreasing anxiety and stress (Chaisson, 2002). Kristmanson (2000) stresses the relation between humor and positive classroom management. Whenever teaching is coupled with humor, the classroom environment for language learning is

welcoming; it is no longer threatening or intimidating. Humor can be of a service to manage the classroom without teacher's authority and embarrassing in the class (Proctor, 1994). So using humor cannot be considered as misbehavior, but as a classroom management strategy through which students collaborate with each other and with their teacher to progress learning.

Humor creates friendship. Hashem (1994) demonstrates that humor improves the classroom atmosphere and develops relationships among students so that can help avoid negative situations and consequences. It creates a warm social environment, and an atmosphere of cordiality and friendships among students themselves (Young, 1991). Further, humor establishes students- teacher rapport. While enhancing the general classroom environment, humor serves as “an immediacy behavior that decreases the psychological distance between teacher and student” (Shade, 1996, p. 105). i.e., through the use of humor, relationship of trust between teacher and students is reinforced.

1.6.1.3. Humor and Communication and Relationships

Humor facilitates classroom communication. “Humor can occasionally provide a moment of deep, intrapersonal communication between learner and teacher”. It creates more pleasant environment where bonds among students evolved, then the completion of learning task is facilitated (Shade, 1996). Crawford (1994b), of the department of communication at Fort Hays State University, notes that “humor is a communication tactic used to engender students support. Teachers typically use humor to increase the communication in classroom, partially through the important symbolic realm to create a positive atmosphere” (as cited in Jonas, 2001, p. 58). In general, humor aims at successful communication conducive to optimal learning.

Classroom communication leads to solid relationships among students and between teacher and students. Humor bonuses such as improving friendships are basically related to communication competence (Brooks, 1992). Morrison indicates that the purposeful incorporation of humor supplies successful communication. It builds and maintains relationships through generating trust among classmates and reducing tension, fear, and anger. “Leaders who have the ability to assist others in seeing the ‘humor’ in difficult situations can nurture communication and ease tense situation” (2008, p. 4). Lead teachers are able to manage classroom communication and rapport through the use of humor.

Through communication, humor develops teamwork. Kerr (2001) pronounces that humor “breaks down the barriers and opens up hearts, creating environment conducive to open, honest communication”, it softens teacher’s authority, and improves the lesson delivery. Consequently, students feel more pleased to work in groups. “Teams that laugh together work well together”. Humor furthers “sense of unity”, “sense of camaraderie”, promotes participation, and minimizes conflicts, then “you can’t be serious” in the workplace. In short, humor encourages cooperative learning.

1.6.2. Humor and Cognitive Abilities

It may be believed that humor can affect our emotion but not our cognition. However, many authors argue that humor is multi- influential. It has not only psychological and physiological, but also, cognitive impact. This latter refers to creativity, critical thinking, as well as information comprehension and retention.

1.6.2.1. Creativity and critical thinking

Humor sparks creativity and critical thinking. Shade (1996) finds that humor enhances divergent thinking through which “unusual juxtapositions” between pieces of information already known and new ones are made. It means, in an original way, humor helps to connect previous and new ideas even if they are unrelated. Shade cites Arthur Koestler saying “Ha- Ha leads to Ah-Ha!” This expression refers to that humor promotes creativity, it “frees mind from fixed mind sets and paradigms”. In other words, humor can bridge the right hemisphere (responsible of logical analytical thinking) and left one (responsible of creative and critical thinking), transforming “Ha-Ha into Aha” Alice Isen, a psychologist at the University of Maryland in Baltimore (as cited in Herbert, 1991).

It makes sense, then, that humor is firmly tied to creativity. They are “powerful forms of energy that feed off each other”. Sense of humor assists to dispose of “mental constipation”. Humorous people are able to play with ideas and change perspectives, make new connections, and look at things differently (Kerr, 2001). Morrison (2008) also advocates this idea. She maintains:

Creativity is the ability of the brain to bring together diverse ideas that will generate the thinking necessary for complex problem solving. Humor and creativity are great companions, each a perfect complement for the other in nourishing thinking. Risk-taking is the nucleus of creativity and of humor; the freedom to express wild ideas activates spirited conversation and sparks the imagination. The creative process flourishes when accompanied by a sense of humor (p. 3).

What seems apparent is that creativity is a gifted human innate so that some people are creative and others are not. However, creativity is an ability that can be acquired and developed since humor can prompt it.

In a study conducted in 1972, Hauck and Thomas discover that humor is related to intelligence and creativity. Innovative and successful students tend to have sense of humor (Jonas, 2001). (Scriven and Hefferin, 1998, p. 14) state:

When people are laughing, their brains seem to operate more efficiently and symmetrically. Humor seems to facilitate a more balanced cerebral activity that leads to creative thinking. This creative thinking produces different solutions to problems than the individual or group might otherwise generate.

Humor increases the brain activity so that the brain becomes powerful enough to produce ingenious ideas. Wit develops higher- order thinking that featured by being investigative, seeking, and grasping (Nilson, 1987). Humor relaxes the brain. In this case, it serves as "an elixir which soothes the mind into thinking more clearly about higher order relationships" (Herbert, 1991). Jonas indicates the following picture as an example for student creativity



Figure 1.3 Egg Plant (as cited in Jonas, 2001, p. 86)

1.6.2.2. Attention and Retention

Before it is stored, information must be attended to. Forbes & Salisbury-Glennon & Strom (2006) note that when processing information, data need enough attention and concentration to be interpreted and stored in the long- term memory.

Instructor should employ some techniques to hook students and maintain their engagement (Berk, 2002). Hunter (1982) defines hook- “the set of actions, activities, or experiences that pull students into the learning process to engage their emotions and focus their minds” (as cited in Berk, 2002, p.5). Humor can hook bored and inattentive students (Morrison, 2008).

Humor captures students’ attention. Humor has the potential to hold students’ attention and keep them interested in the material presented, and “thereby beginning the learning process” (Deiter, 2000). In order to attract students’ attention, lectures should be interesting, accompanied by suspense and examples that are vivid and intriguing (McKeachie, 1994). Nicewonder (2001) prioritizes the use of humor while teaching as it creates the atmosphere where students are highly involved and attentive to the material.

Information delivered humorously is absolutely unforgettable. We naturally born with “the most amazing software” – our brains- which are “capable of storing 20 million computer CDs worth of information” (Kerr, 2001, p.61). What if the latter is presented in a funny way! In humorous situations, people can remember anything said to them longer and more effectively. “Instructors who use humor, even if it is not the best humor in the world, are still more appreciated than instructors who do not try humor” (Jonas, 2010, p. 3).

How does humor induce retention? Through amusing anecdotes, jokes, or funny examples, professors can easily pull their students’ attention to what he is saying, the students’ brains are relaxed and super- active to start storage. Quina (1989, as cited in Csikszentmihalyi & McCormack, 1995) explains:

If teachers and learners can laugh together, they can most likely work together as well. In these days of standards and high-stakes accountability, if students are comfortable and enjoy the learning process, they are more likely to remember more of the material presented. Enthusiastic teachers spend time thinking

about ways to present information in positive ways that will be memorable for students. This light touch affects not only attention-getting goals, but also creativity, ingenuity, participation, and pride of ownership. (pp.27-28)

Hightet (1963, p. 63) says “ the wise teacher will continue to introduce flashes of humor extraneously, because he knows that fifty- five of work plus five minute of laughter are worth twice as much as sixty minutes of unvaried work” (as cited in shade, 1996, p. 105). This amount of humor can attract students’ attention and promotes retention. For instance, in class of Grammar, the teacher can use the following joke in order to explain the notion (negation+ to have): *The teacher asks Jim: Jimmy, why aren’t you writing? Jim: I don’t has a pencil. The teacher: Jimmy it is not correct, the correct way is: I don’t have a pencil, he doesn’t have a pencil, they don’t have a pencil. Jim: Wow, who stole all pencils then!* In short, information interjected with jokes is memorable.

1.6.3. Humor and Flexibility

Coping with difficult situation is one of leader’s characteristics. Effective teachers are featured by such trait. This latter is symbolized by the following points:

- Adapting to varied roles, jobs responsibilities, schedules and contexts.
- Working effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities.
- Dealing positively with praise, setbacks and criticism.
- Understanding, negotiating and balancing diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions, particularly in multi-cultural environments (Partnership for 21st Century skills, 2009, p.6)

Humor promotes the key traits of those who can adapt to change in their lives: creative thinking that facilitates problem-solving and flexible attitudes that keep people away from stress resulted from changes or problems. To be flexible, you should be balanced. Humor guards you from being “stumble” or “fumble”. A healthy sense of humor “maintains your sanity and perspective”. Hence, you will be capable of keeping “all balls in the air for long”; you can manage all what you have in charge (Kerr, 2001). Morrison (2008) deduces that humor is substantial for managing difficulties because

some people tend to adapt to everyday change with enjoyment and feelings of hope and optimism. She states:

Most of us experience unexpected change, suffering, and loss in our lives. When we are able to find the humor in a situation, we can begin to heal and move ahead. Painful experiences, if met with hope and optimism, can produce remarkable growth opportunities. In fact, humor frequently emerges from the downside of our lives. Laughter and tears are closely related, which is why many comedians began their careers by laughing through the tragedy in their lives. This ability for humorous optimism in the face of difficulty is truly a miracle tonic. Change is good—you go first.

Students, when confronted by some challenging situation, humor provides them with the energy needed to come over the negative consequences that may result. We can say that humor is not the “first- aids”, but the “ongoing- aids” that help to resist not only educational life changes, but also professional life changes.

Conclusion

Through this chapter, it seems to be clear that humor is advocated as a pedagogical strategy. Many authors recommend the use of humor in the academic context. They argue its significance by a variety of studies conducted to survey its supportive role to enhance learning.

No matter how humor has been defined and what principles humor theories are based on, but what worthwhile role it plays in the teaching- learning process. In addition to its therapeutic function in medicine and psychology, humor has the potential to give rise to successful learners and, thus, to successful workers.

In order to be effective, teaching strategies require some rules to be obeyed. The appropriate and timely humor relies on a set of principles. Following these standards, it will be easy for professors to make humor an integral part of material to be learnt, and then their teaching will be conducive to optimal learning.

Chapter Two: The Research Methodology

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Introduction

The present study is undertaken for the sake of investigating the effect of humor as pedagogical strategy on the teaching- learning process. Selecting the appropriate methodology for a research work helps to conduct valid investigation. Throughout this chapter, the methodology design is dealt with, including the techniques chosen, their description and administration.

2.1. Methodology Design

Methodology is the practical way for achieving the aim of the research undertaken. Its emphasis on the research plan, structure and execution under scientific criteria (Mouton & Marais, 1996) leads to regard it as an integral part of any study conducted. Through methodology, the researcher is able to explain the nature of data, select the appropriate methods to process data collected in order to, at the end, generate the findings (Leedy, 1993). In short, methodology simplifies the way of dealing with a problematic topic. The methodology of each study is chosen under a specific criterion. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) state that the research method can be determined by the research question. As for the present study, the descriptive design is the suitable methodology for the question stated.

The descriptive study is not like the experimental study within which a comparison takes place between two groups (control and experimental groups) to dictate the validity of the hypothesis. Descriptive design is the one within which the researcher describes the reasons or the effects of a problem in order to find a solution. As Burns and Grove (2001) affirm, the descriptive study permits to detect problems in order to solve them. For the application of this type of study, the researcher should

choose one of or a combination of different procedures such as: observations, tests, questionnaires and interviews. The choice of procedures depends on the “aim of the research work, the sample under investigation, the time available and the nature of the data collected”. Some of procedures represent the quantitative method and others represent the qualitative method.

The observation and the questionnaire are the representatives chosen for this descriptive study. The observation is prepared to collect quantitative data, and the questionnaire is planned to collect qualitative data. When observations cannot easily be translated into numbers, the qualitative method helps to gain a deeper understanding of the human experience (Rubin & Babbie, 2001). Therefore, the use of the methods afoot at the same time leads to the study credibility and reliability since they complete each other.

2.2. The Observation

Why is such technique designed for students rather than a questionnaire or an interview? Honestly, adopting the observation is a right decision. Students received many questionnaires to be filled, so that they feel bored and become unwilling to respond to more questions. Moreover, it is better to see how they behave rather than to be told about how they behave.

2.2.1. The Aim of the Observation

The observation aims at investigating the students’ behaviors with humorous teacher, their adaptation to the suggested strategy and their performance within humor based- classroom.

2.2.2. Administration and Procedure

The observation is conducted on the first year students at the English Branch at Biskra University. The choice of this population is due to many reasons. The students are freshmen; they learn in new environment, deal with new modules with new curriculum, receive knowledge from different teachers in different manners, and meet different people with distinct cultures. The students, in this case, feel anxious, bored, then their desire to learn may evaporate. The proposed strategy can be the solution for these problems.

It is helpful to work on a representative sample randomly selected from a population. The sample consists of (60) students: (45) females and (15) males, they aged between 20- 21 years old. The sample was observed from April 25th to May 09th 2012 in Biskra University. Fortnight seems not enough to watch students' behaviors, so extra sessions were set to achieve the objective identified. Through this observation, the researcher focused on many points such as the relationship between students and their teacher, among students themselves, etc. For this purpose, the researcher has attended two different classes; linguistics and oral expression.

2.2.3. Description

Observation is way of gathering data by watching behavior, events, or noting physical characteristics in their natural setting. For this study, covert direct observation is selected. It is preferable to use overt observation for ethical reasons; students should be informed that they are being observed. Instead, covert observation has been chosen just to guarantee that students behave naturally. However, the ethics are absolutely considered. The observation is also direct since it allows the researcher to watch an interaction, a process, or a behavior as it occurs. In addition to structured observation that is based on observing preidentified items, unstructured observation has taken place

to pick up unexpected behaviors. Although, there have been certain performances and behaviors to be observed, the procedure used to record data collected from the observation has been field note. The latter gives space to observe and comment on unpredicted happenings.

2.3. Questionnaire for Teachers

2.3.1. The Aim of the Questionnaire

Because teachers play a decisive role in the fulfillment of the teaching task, they are also concerned with this topic. It is requisite to consider their attitudes and perspectives about the application of humor in the educational context for the sake of effectively explore the use of humor as a teaching tool.

2.3.2. Administration and Procedure

The questionnaire is mainly designed for teachers who are in charge of teaching first year students. However, since most teachers are new, the questionnaire is also delivered to teachers who are more experienced. This would add to the validity of the study with regard to the teachers' various views that may differ according to the years of experience and age. In this study, the questionnaire is designed for teachers purposefully. Teachers take the task seriously and provide the researcher with accurate information.

The questionnaire has been administered to teachers at the English Branch at Biskra University during a two-week period from April 25th to Mai 9th, 2012. Since teachers have not enough time, they preferred to answer it at home then return it after a

given period of time (the maximum one week). The questionnaire was handed out to (25) teachers; however, only (20) teachers have handed back their questionnaire.

2.3.3. Description

The questionnaire comprises 20 questions. Two types of questions are included.

1. *Numeric questions*: through these questions, background information about the participants is obtained; for example, the teacher's seniority and age.
2. *Close-ended questions*: most of prepared questions are closed ended. The participants choose one of the pre- determined answers. Some of those questions are accompanied with follow- up questions that demand explanation or justification for certain choices. The close- ended questions have been designed for the reason that teachers were restricted with time and have a lot of duties. Those questions include only two multiple choices questions, and the rest are scale questions. The majority of the latter takes the form of agreement scale. They are planned to get hold of the extent to which the respondents agree or disagree with the notion stated. The analysts prefer to use such type of questions since they are quick, easy to read and complete, easy to collect data and easy to analyze (McNabb, 2008, p.147). The agreement scale questions are known by Likert scale that is developed by Rensis Likert in 1932.

The questions revolve around two headlines preceded by general questions. The first covers the relation between humor and teaching, and the second deals with the correlation between humor and learning.

Background Questions

The questions are asked to state the teachers' gender, age, degree and seniority (years of experience). These questions appear to be a convention in any questionnaire; however, they are necessary for this study.

Section One: Teaching and Humor (from Q1 through Q8)

In this section, the researcher tried to investigate the teachers' thoughts about the link between humor and the teaching task; is there any connection between the two? In other words, these questions aim at identifying whether the teachers use humor in classroom or not, and whether humor can make effective teaching or not.

- In (Q1), the teachers are asked to indicate to what extent humor is necessary in classroom.
- (Q2) requires describing humor as teaching tool (supporting, nonsense or disturbing). This question needs to be followed by a justification for the answer chosen.
- (Q3) demands to state to what extent the teachers are agree or disagree with considering humor as a paramount trait of effective teacher.
- In (Q4), the teacher should answer when (in which part of the lesson: introduction, details, examples) humor may be used in classroom, then they provide a clarification for their choices.
- In (Q5), the teachers are expected to tick the amount of humor they believe it is necessary to be used in classroom.
- (Q6) tackles the relation between humor and the lesson content; how much of humor used in classroom is content- based.

- Through (Q7), the form of humor that mostly used in classroom by teachers is recognized.
- (Q8) seeks to determine how much students are allowed to use humor in classroom.

Section Two: humor and learning (from Q9 through Q16)

This section pursues information about the effect of humor on the learning process. Most questions in this section take the form of agreement (Likert) scale questions. Considering the use of humor as a pedagogical strategy, they aim to decide the teachers' agreement or disagreement about creating a positive learning climate, establishing rapport relationship between the teacher and students, increasing creativity and divergent thinking, encouraging cooperative learning, developing communicative skill. Only two questions take the form of different options rating. The teachers resolve on to what extent humor facilitates learning in (Q1), and decreases anxiety in (Q15).

Conclusion

The first step of conducting a research work is identifying the methodology necessary for collecting data. This chapter presents the methodology design selected for study. It provides brief information about the descriptive design which is applied through two different procedures: observation and questionnaire. Each of which is fully described stating the main features, the reason for choosing it rather than other procedures and the aims for which it is used.

Chapter three: Findings and Discussions

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Introduction

So far, the review of literature related to humor in language teaching and learning as well as the methodology design selected for the study are presented. The next step of any research design is to move to something more practical. It is necessary for data to be collected analyzed and discussed in order to, at the end, to draw the final conclusion. This chapter is devoted to the findings of the research, some recommendations and suggestions.

3.1. Observation

3.1.1. Data Analysis

Item 1: Activities used to apply humor in classroom

The teachers used different procedures such as “teacher- role play” and “competitions” to embody humor in classroom. In fact, they intend to entertain the students to engage them in the task of learning, so they can achieve their academic goals.

Teacher- role play

Considering that “linguistics” is perceived as hard module by the students, the teacher has created this technique to simplify the process of obtaining and retaining information. This technique has comprised two steps. In the first step, a volunteer has played the role of the teacher and has shared the explanation of the lesson with the rest of the students, after preparing the lesson at home through reading the handouts given to them. In this step, the teacher has not interfered in the students’ discussion. In the second step, the teacher has taken his role back and has clarified the ideas that have seemed difficult to be understood by the students. This activity has mainly aimed at

teaching students how to interact in large groups without being anxious to be mistaken and afraid from being laughed at.

Competitions

This type of activities has been implemented in both linguistics and oral expression classes. In this activity, the students have worked in small groups of seven or eight members. In linguistics class, the students have been sitting in pairs, and in oral expression class, the students have been sitting in the “U” shape. However, the sitting arrangement has been changed to fit the needs of the group work. The teams have been mixed genders.

In linguistics class, the members of each group have discussed some points of the lesson determined by the teacher in the handouts distributed. After a given period of time, a representative of each group has explained what the members of the group have decided to present. Then, the members of the other groups have written some comments and questions to be stated after the presentation has been finished. Any grammatical mistakes have been highlighted during the presentation by the teacher. After that, the latter has decided which group has been the best to be rewarded and then has clarified any ambiguous ideas.

In oral expression classes, the competition has taken the form of games. Four games have been presented. Brain teasers games have included “Mimes” and “Riddles”; these games have urged the students to use their critical thinking. In “Mimes”, a representative of a group has tried to explain a title of a movie or a song to his/ her classmates in the group using only gestures, the rest of the group has tried to surmise the answer. Through “Riddles”, students have used their higher order thinking to find the answer.

Moreover, linguistic games have included “Letters and Words” and “Read it fast”; these games have aimed to improve students’ linguistic competence. “Letters and Words” has enriched the students’ vocabulary as well as spelling, and has developed their pronunciation. In this game, the teacher has listed a group of letters and has asked the students to construct words. Through “Read it fast”, students have practiced their fluency. They have read a statement such as “*how many cans can a can can, if a can can can cans*” as fast as possible without mistakes. This statement has had the potential to identify some homonyms.

Item 2: Students Reactions

- ❖ In both activities, most students have responded positively. They have shared sense of unity and sense of belongingness within the large and the small groups. Students have considered the classroom as a community where they are an integral part of it.
- ❖ As an evidence for the previous point, it has been very clear that students have enjoyed the sessions through indicating high levels of enthusiasm, satisfaction and motivation to participate in such activities.
- ❖ An important point should be mentioned is classroom interaction. Students- students interaction has been higher than students- teacher interaction. In spite of different ages, genders, cultures, students have exchanged ideas.

3.1.2. Discussion

Through the data analysis of the observation, some insights about the students’ reactions and attitudes toward using humor as a teaching tool are revealed.

1. Students seem to appreciate the use of humor as a pedagogical strategy since this makes them feel relaxed so that they desire to learn.
2. The students put their teacher in the spotlight and take their first impression on him. Hence humorous teacher is seen as a good or effective teacher who increases the students' passionate interest in learning.
3. Students are easily influenced by their teacher's mood. So humorous teacher leads students to be in a good mood that allows them to focus in the material presented and makes them eager for what is coming next.
4. In spite of noise resulted from humor, students learn. Students prefer some positive noise to be in the classroom since it makes them active, maintain their engagement and most importantly leads them to be at ease. In addition, the noise breaks the formality of the educational context.
5. They like to be amused to learn. Students do not like to be passive participants; only receive knowledge. Rather, they require some entertainment to be active participants and take part in the smooth running of the lesson.
6. Students- teacher and students- students relationships are essential factor for language learning. Humor establishes rapport relationships. So that the students melt within the classroom environment.
7. Students appreciate the environment created by humor as it challenges conflicts and is based on sense of safety and sensitivity to different cultures.

8. Students show a very clear satisfaction on the humorous teacher because s/he arms them to arise their positive emotions especially self-confidence and self- esteem, and teaches them how to be collaborative and cooperative.
9. They regard humorous teacher as effective classroom leader and manager since s/he behaves respectfully toward them what results them to be respectful toward him/ her and toward each other.

3.2. Questionnaire

3.2.1. Data Analysis

3.2.1.1. Background Questions:

Teachers' gender

Gender	Subject	%
Male	07	35
Female	13	65

Table 3. 1: Teachers' Gender

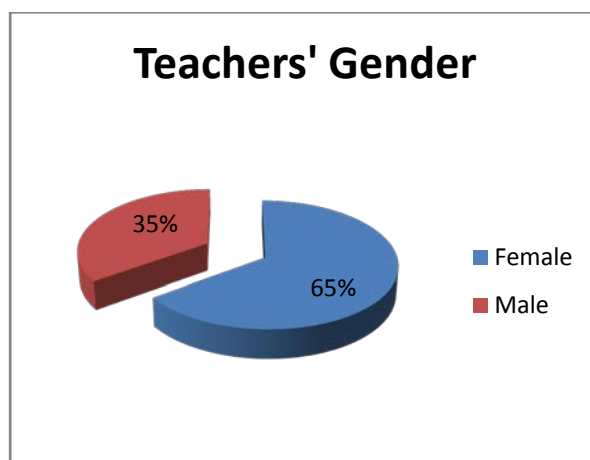


Figure 3.1

From the results, it is clear that most respondents are females. It is recorded that thirteen (13) = (65 %) female teachers out of twenty (20) have participated in this questionnaire. While, only seven (7) = (35%) male teachers have answered the questionnaire. Different genders reflect different ways of thinking. So humor produced and appreciated by males is totally distinct from that by females.

Teachers' age

age	Subject	%
25- 30	09	45
31- 40	07	35
41- 56	04	20

Table 3.2: Teachers' Age

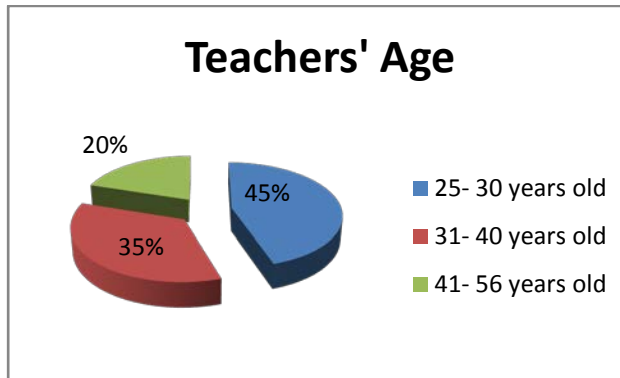


Figure 3.2

Age or generation is another factor that determines the humor production and appreciation differences among people. Through the above table, three generations are classified. The majority of teachers participated in the questionnaire (45%) aged between 25 and 30 years. It can be said that age differences may represent different humor uses in classroom.

Teachers' degree

Degree	Subject	%
License (BA)	06	30
Magister	14	70

Table 3.3: Teachers' Degree

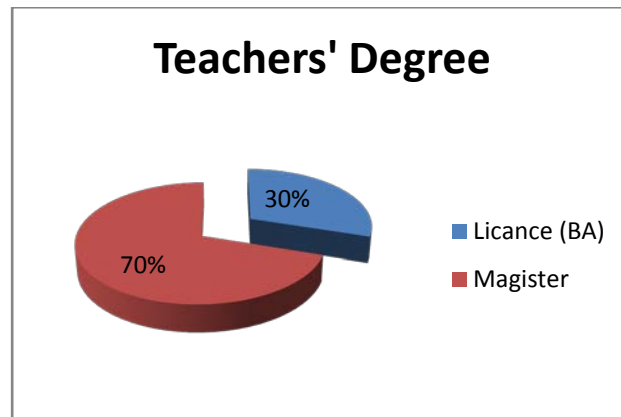


Figure 3.3

What is noticed most in this table is that (70%) of the participants has Magister degree. However, this adds nothing to the study conducted; this question has not been taken into account in the questionnaire's analysis.

Teachers' Seniority

Seniority	Subject	%
1- 5 years	06	30
6- 10 years	07	35
10- 30 years	03	15
No answer	04	20

Table 3.4: Teachers' Seniority

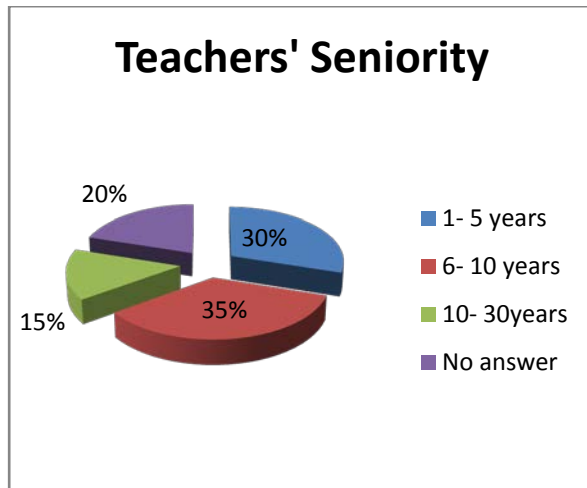


Figure 3.4

According to the table, a sum of 35% has from 6- 10 years of experience, 30% have from 1- 5 years, and 15% have from 10- 30 years of experience, the remaining 20% didn't fill the box. The experience may play a role in determining to what extent teachers can monitor the use of humour in classroom.

3.2.1.2. Section One: Humor and Teaching

Item 1: You think that using humor in Classroom is:

Option	Very necessary	Considerably necessary	Necessary	Slightly necessary	Not necessary
Subject	04	07	06	03	00
%	20	35	30	15	00

Table 3.5: The Necessity of Humor in Classroom.

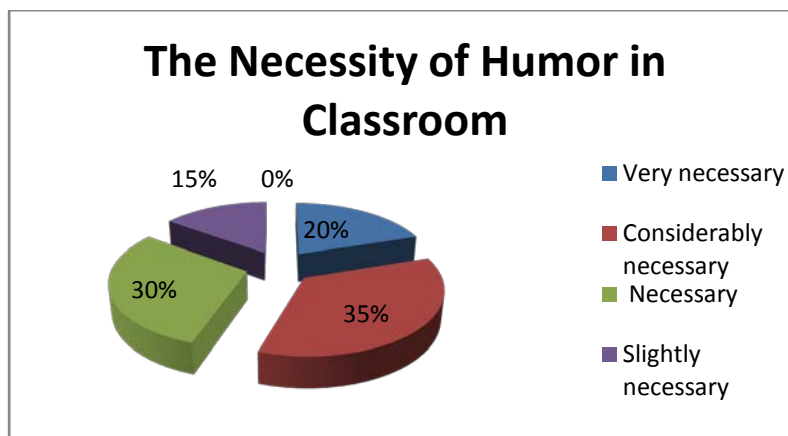


Figure 3.5

There are different views for the necessity of using humor in classroom. Most of subjects (07) or about (35%) regard that humor is considerably necessary in classroom, others (30%) believe it is necessary, about (20%) consider humor very necessary making the total (85%) of positive responses, the rest (15%) see that humor is slightly necessary.

From the results, this idea gained acceptance from the participants. This could be due to teachers' belief that humor may support their teaching so that it will be helpful for learning. Moreover, the diverse teachers' perspectives about the degree of humor necessity in classroom indicate that the amount of humor used in classroom differs also according to each teacher.

Item 2: Humor, in classroom, is considered as:

Option	Supporting teaching tool	Nonsense teaching tool	Disturbing teaching tool
Subject	19	01	00
%	95	5	00

Table 3.6: Humor as a Teaching Tool

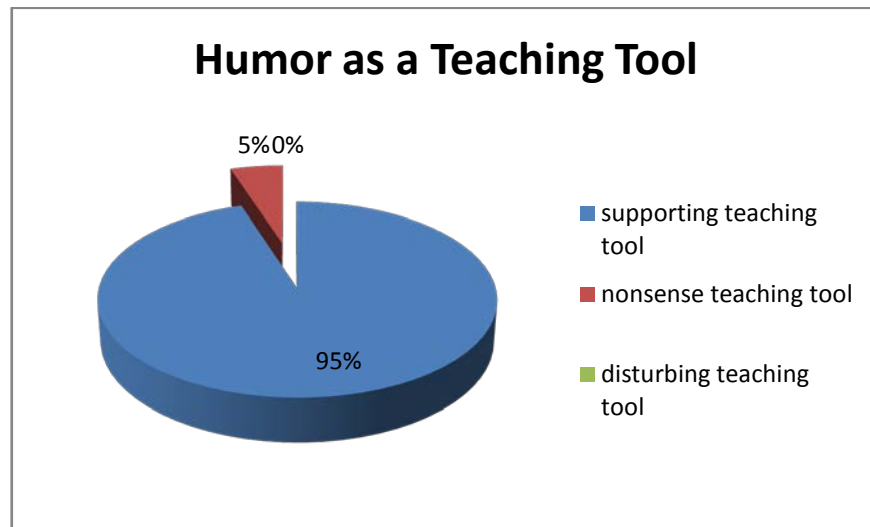


Figure 3.6

This question is the basic of the research work; therefore, the table is followed by a graph to clarify the results presented on it. The item spots a light on the teachers' stances on humor as a teaching tool whether it is supporting, nonsense or disturbing tool. Humor is viewed as a nonsense teaching tool only by one subject (5%), the majority of respondents (95%) advocate humor as a supporting teaching tool. This means that teachers appreciate the use of humor in classroom as a teaching tool since they are knowledgeable about the magical bonuses it supplies the teachers and learners (e.g. Motivation, interest, enthusiasm and satisfaction, etc).

The respondents explain why they count humor as a "supporting teaching tool". They regard humor as a positive energy. It creates a healthy atmosphere where students are attentive and curious. Humor serves as a catalyst for learning especially for inhibited students; it breaks routine, changes the learning mood and makes it more enjoyable. One of the justifications stated as follows: *"It clearly motivates students and make them feel confident, we can see that in their faces. They are relaxed"*.

Item 3: Sense of humor is a paramount quality of effective teacher.

Option	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Subject	02	14	03	01	00
%	10	70	15	5	00

Table 3.7: Humor and Teacher Effectiveness

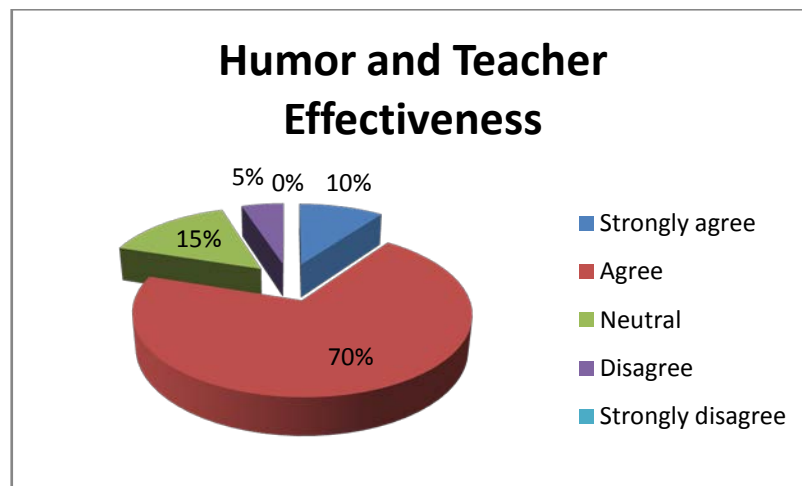


Figure 7

To be effective, teachers need to be characterized by some qualities. Humor can be one of the major features of effective teacher. According to the table, the results are encouraging. (70%) is in the agree slot, (10%) is concerned with teachers who strongly agree with the item stated, making the total (80%) of positive responses. Whereas, (15%) of the subjects opt for neutral, and only (5%) of the participants choose disagree category. The results clearly indicate the teachers' favor with humor as one of the main traits of good teacher. In that, the teachers are aware of that the instructor's mood influences his/ her students' mood; thus, the humorous friendly teacher helps students feel more relaxed and more motivated so that they can participate in the classroom discussion.

Item 4: If you decide to use at teaching tool, would prefer to use for:

Option	Introducing the lesson	More explanation	Giving examples	All of them	Option 2+ option 3
Subject	02	00	07	09	02
%	10	00	35	45	10

Table 3.8: The Appropriate Time for Using Humor

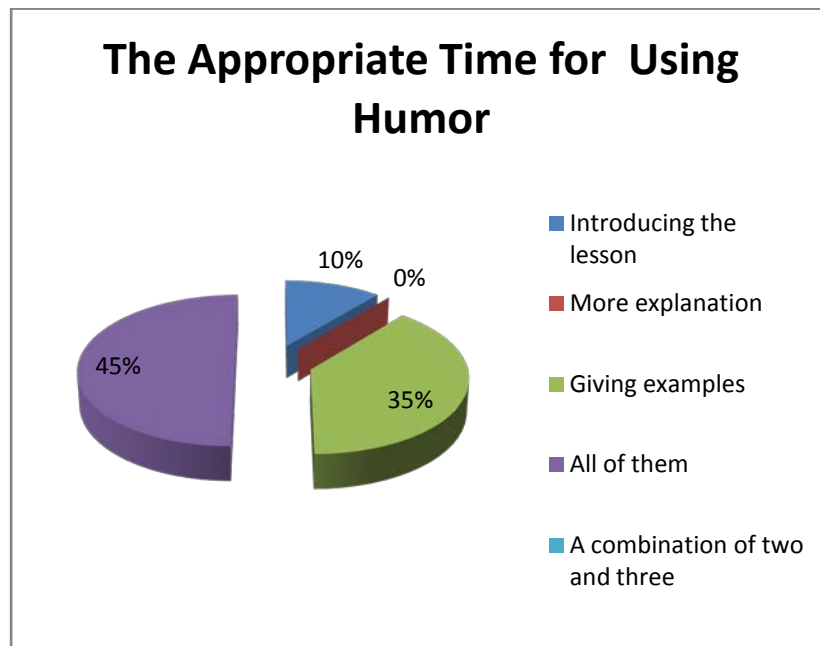


Figure 3.8

To guarantee a successful use of humor, it should be used when it is necessary. The timely humor is effective. So this question should be answered: When can teachers utilize humor in classroom? At the beginning of the lesson, during the lesson for more explanation or at the end of the lesson for giving examples? Considering the results on the table, the teachers prefer to use humor at all lesson stages for the necessity of humor in the whole session.

The highest percentage (45%) goes for “all of them” category. Advocators of this category believe that humor is an essential factor that should be presented during

the whole session. It is used at the beginning in order to distress the atmosphere, at the middle to break monotony to maintain students' engagement, and at the end mainly while giving examples in order to help students retain information. Others argue that the use of humor depends on the situation and the time. It can be used at the beginning as well as at the middle as a break especially when dealing with heavy lesson (abstract themes), they adds that the most important when using humor is that it shouldn't be planned, it has to come spontaneously.

(35%) goes for "giving examples" category. Subjects who select this category affirm that students understand better with examples especially when they are funny and close to reality (e.g., funny anecdotes). While, (10%) goes for "introducing the lesson" category. It is proved that the use of humor at the beginning of the lesson is due to the potential that *"it breaks the ice and paves the way for engaging the students in the lesson"*.

When making the statistics of this item, a new option emerged (a combination of category N° 2 and category N° 3). Though, merely (10%) of the respondents opt for this choice. They think that humor should be used most for more explanation as repetition of information in a funny way maintains students' attention and avoid boredom, and for giving examples because funny but pedagogical instances help understand information.

Item 5: How much humor should be used in classroom?

Option	None	Very little	Little	Much	So much
Subject	01	01	12	04	02
%	5	5	60	20	10

Table 3.9: The Appropriate Amount of Using Humor in Classroom

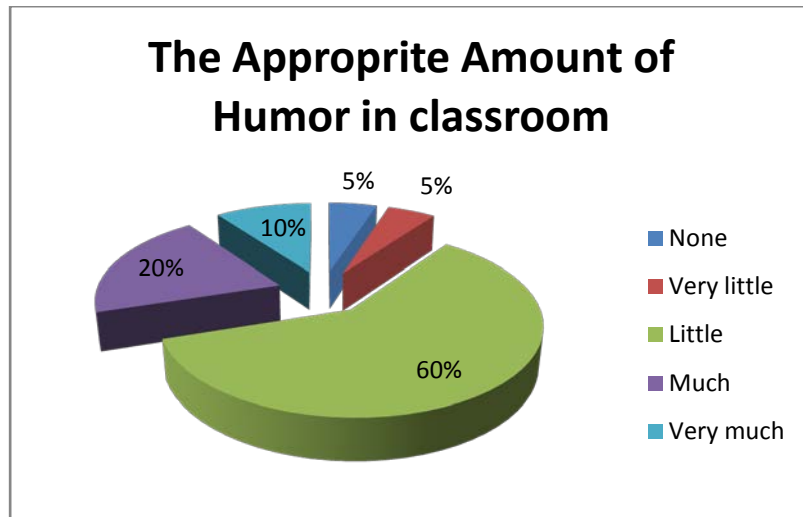


Figure 3.9

The use of humor depends on some principles should be followed. For instance, effective humor is based on the appropriate amount of using it in classroom. Humor should be neither overused nor used little since that leads humor to lose its effectiveness. This item is prepared for the sake of determining the amount of humor should be used in classroom in accordance of teachers' view. The table above summarizes the results obtained. (5%) of the subjects believe that humor should not be used in classroom at all, against (20%) agree with much use of humor. Not surprising, a sum of (10%) claim that so much humor should be used in the classroom. Whereas, the highest percentage (60%) of the participants opts for little use of humor.

Item 6: How much of the humor you use is related to the lesson topic?

Option	None	Very little	Little	Most	All
Subject	00	03	09	08	00
%	00	15	45	40	00

Table 3.10: Humor and Content- Relevance

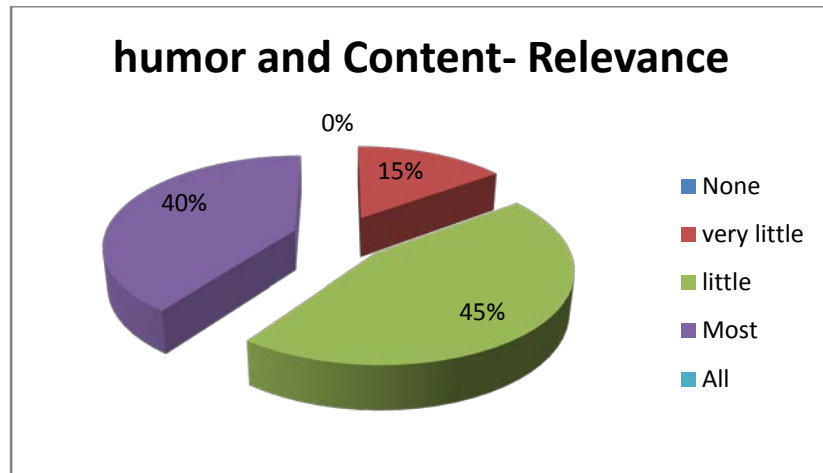


Figure 3.10

Humor is effective when it is content- related. Nevertheless, the statistics related to this item shows the opposite. Participants opt neither for “none” nor for “all” categories. It is recorded that the majority of subjects (09) or (45%) indicate that they use little humor content- based; however, most of humor used by (08) respondents or (40%) is relevant to subject matter. A volume of (03) participants or (15%) use very little humor that is content- related. In that end, teachers don’t use humor that is related to the lesson topic may be because they do not recognize that there is a tight relation between humor and the lesson content; humor is no longer effective when it is irrelevant to the theme presented.

Item 7: Which form of humor do you most?

Option	Jokes	Puns	Funny riddles	Funny anecdotes	Funny examples
Subject	02	00	00	00	07
%	10	00	00	00	35

Table 3.11a: Form of Humor Most Used

In classroom, many humor forms can be used such as jokes, puns, funny riddles, funny anecdotes, or even funny examples. The teachers are asked to state which form

they use most. The results show that funny examples are the form which used most. In that (07) teachers (35%) most of time use funny examples. Only (02) teachers (10%) use jokes. The rest of teachers use combinations of different types. The table below presents the statistics obtained:

Option	Funny anecdotes + funny examples	Funny examples + jokes	Funny examples+ funny anecdotes+ jokes
subjects	04	02	05
%	20	10	25

Table 3.11b: Form of Humor Most Used

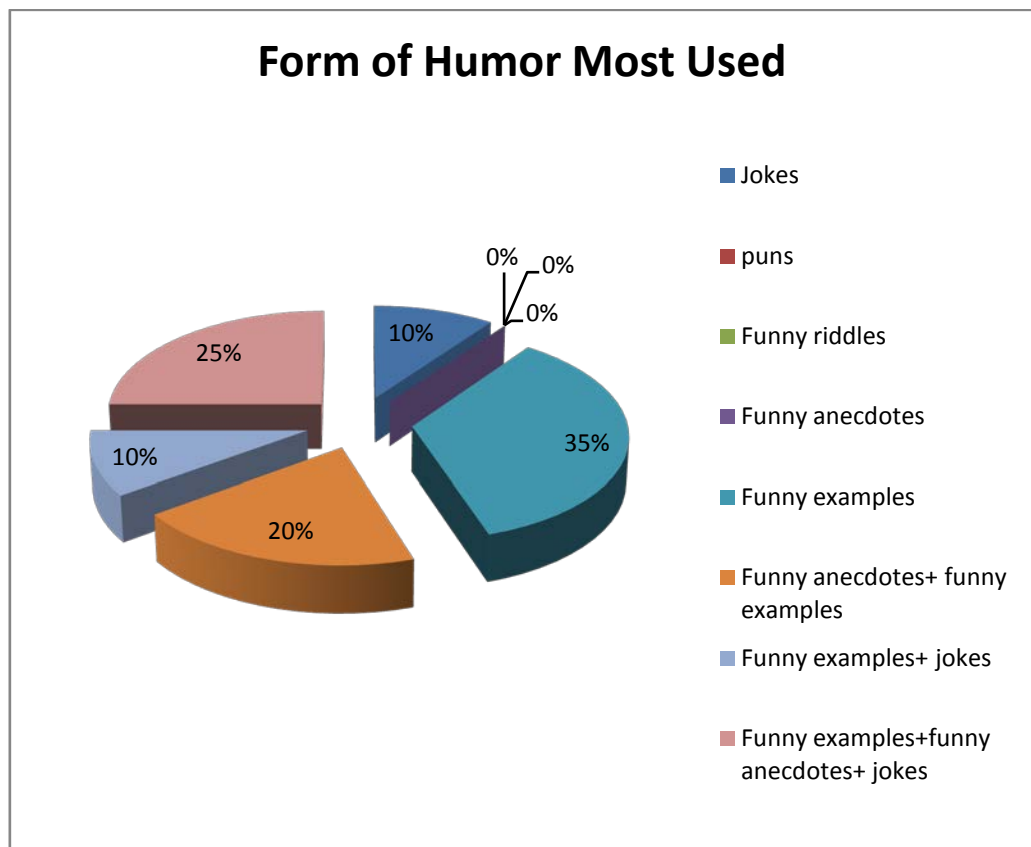


Figure 3.11

(05) teachers (25%) prefer to use funny examples, funny anecdotes and jokes. (04) teachers (20%) use a combination of funny examples and funny anecdotes. The remaining (02) participants (10%) utilize funny examples and jokes.

Item 8: Do you allow your students to use humor to communicate in the classroom?

Option	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Subject	00	05	10	03	02
%	00	25	50	15	10

Table 3.12: Students' Opportunity to Use Humor

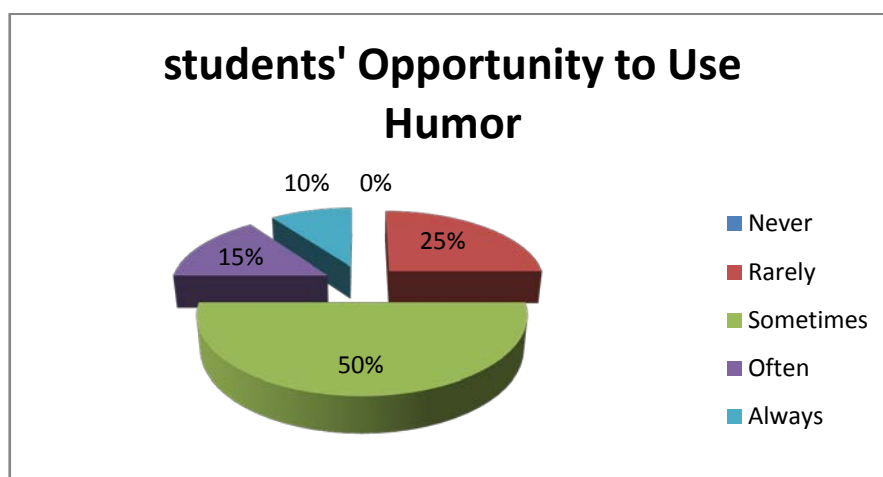


Figure 3.12

Humorous teacher is the one who allows his/ her students to communicate in classroom using humor. This helps the teacher to identify the type of humor appreciated by the students, and helps the students themselves to practice the TL without being afraid. Humor never creates a noisy class, but a well managed classroom. Humor establishes discipline. Although, a numerical minority of (02) participants (10%) always permit their students to use humor when communicating, and (03) respondents (15%) often allow students to communicate using humor. (05) Subjects (25%) rarely authorize

the students to use humor in classroom; however, the highest quantity (10) or (50%) indicates that the students are entitled to sometimes use humor to communicate. The results demonstrate that teachers may not know the managing role humor plays in the classroom that is why they allow their students to use humor only from time to time.

3.2.1.3. Section Two: Humor and Learning

Item 9: using humor in classroom:

Option	Strongly facilitates learning	Facilitates learning	No effect	Slightly improves learning	Hinders learning
Subject	02	16	00	02	00
%	10	80	00	10	00

Table 3.13: Humor and Learning

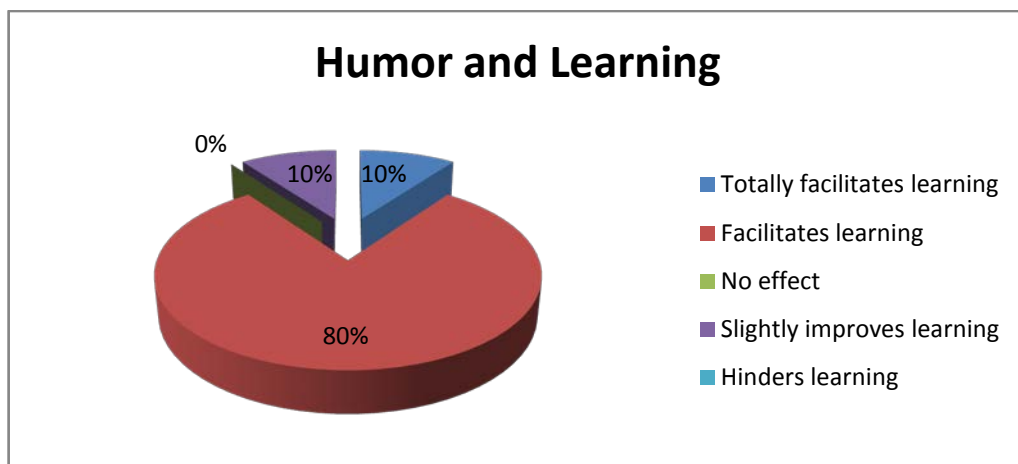


Figure 3.13

Humor is bi- influential; it affects both the teaching and learning tasks. So, in order to decide to what extent humor facilitates or hinders learning, this item is designed. In accordance to the results on the table (13), the teachers have positive attitudes toward

this idea. Out of (20) teachers, (16) or (80%) support the idea that humor facilitates learning, and a further (02) or (10%) support the idea that humor strongly facilitates learning; making a total (18) or (90%) of positive responses. In comparison, only (02) respondents or (10%) think that humor slightly facilitates learning. The teachers hold that humor makes learning easier because it installs a comfortable (non- threatening) climate, eliminates most psychological hampers such as boredom, anxiety, stress, pressure and fear. In addition, it causes a positive perception of the learning process, refreshes students’ memory and energy, and makes students more positive, interactive and cooperative. In a poetic way, it is stated that *“once you use humor in class, students could touch and feel the thing they are learning, humor touches emotions”*

Item 10: Students learn better when they are amused.

Option	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Subject	05	14	01	00	00
%	25	70	5	00	00

Table 3.14: Humor and learners’ amusement

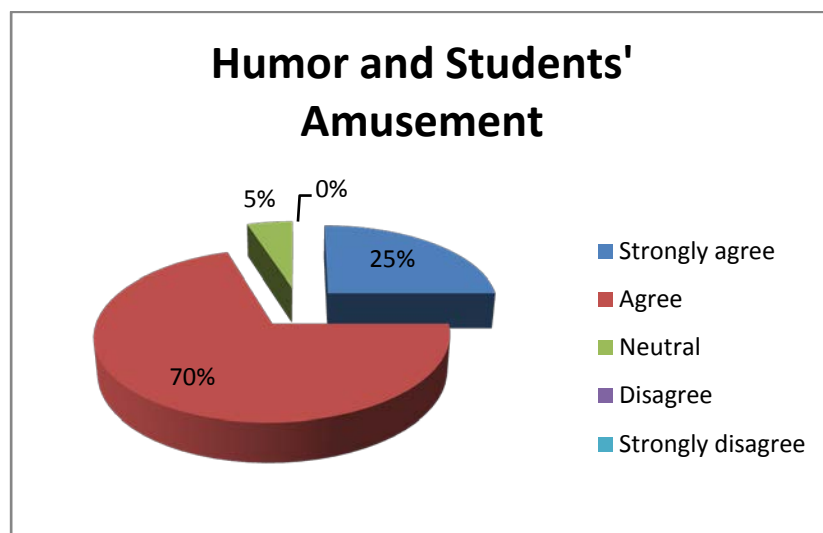


Figure 3.14

When observing a class laughing, in spite of the opposite, many think that they are not learning. For this sake, the participants are asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the statement “students learn better when they are amused”. The results show respondents’ agreement with the highest percentage (95%); in that, (70%) of the subjects choose “agree” option, and (25%) of the respondents indicate their strongly agreement with the idea. Only (5%) of the responses opt for disagree category.

Item 11: Does humor create an atmosphere conducive to learning?

Option	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Subject	04	15	01	00	00
%	20	75	5	00	00

Table 3.15: Humor and Positive Classroom Atmosphere

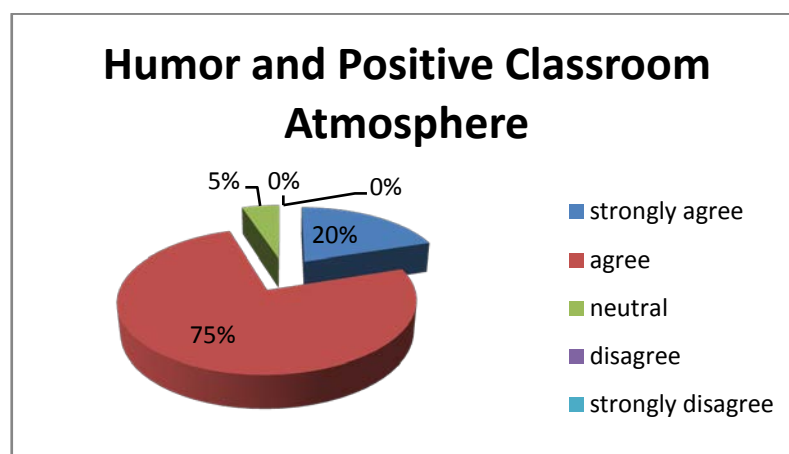


Figure 3.15

In order to create students riveted on learning, a non threatening environment should be established. For that reason, teachers utilize different strategies. Fortunately, when it comes to the use of humor, respondents indicate their agreement. The table above is followed by the figure to present the paramount importance of the positive

atmosphere for the learning process. (95%) of teachers display their agreement: (75%) for the agree category, and (20%) for strongly agree category. Except (01) questioned teachers (5%) prefer to be neutral.

Item 12: To what extent does humor decrease students’ anxiety?

Option	Totally decreases anxiety	Decreases anxiety	No effect	Slightly increases anxiety	Totally increases anxiety
Subject	02	18	00	00	00
%	10	90	00	00	00

Table 3.16: Humor and Anxiety

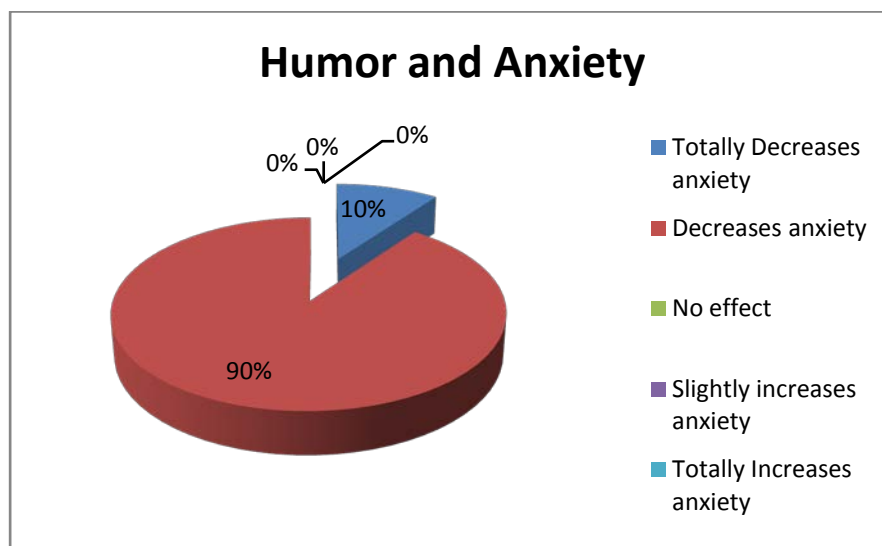


Figure 3.16

Anxiety is the main symptom of stressful situations faced in the classroom. This calls for the use of tools that challenge such symptom which can be the major reason for learning fossilization. When suggesting humor as a device to decrease anxiety, respondents select neither “slightly increases anxiety” nor “totally increases anxiety”, and they go apart from choosing “no effect” category. Teachers show their total

agreement (100%). A sum of (90%) opts for decreases anxiety option, and a volume of (10%) opts for totally decreases anxiety.

Item 13: Humor results in rapport between instructor and students

Option	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly agree
Subject	03	15	02	00	00
%	15	75	10	00	00

Table 3.17: humor and Rapport

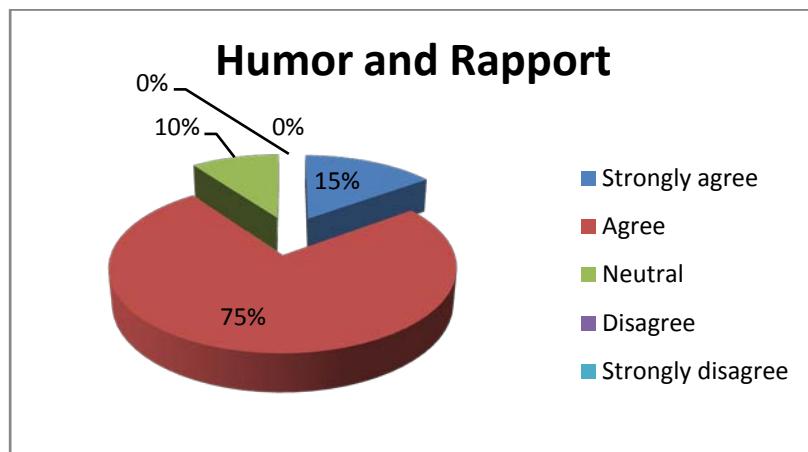


Figure 3.17

Generally, students prefer the teacher who makes them closer to him/her, and shares with them partnership and friendship relations that are mainly based on trust and understanding. Rapport relationships can be maintained by the use of humor. (15) participants (75%) agree with this idea, and a further (03) participants (15%) strongly agree with the idea making a total (90%) of positive attitudes toward this item. In comparison, only (02) teachers (10%) prefer to be neutral. The teachers have not opt neither disagree nor strongly disagree categories;

Item 14: Does humor increase creativity and critical thinking?

Option	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Subject	03	12	04	01	00
%	15	60	20	5	00

Table 3.18: Humor and Creativity and Critical Thinking

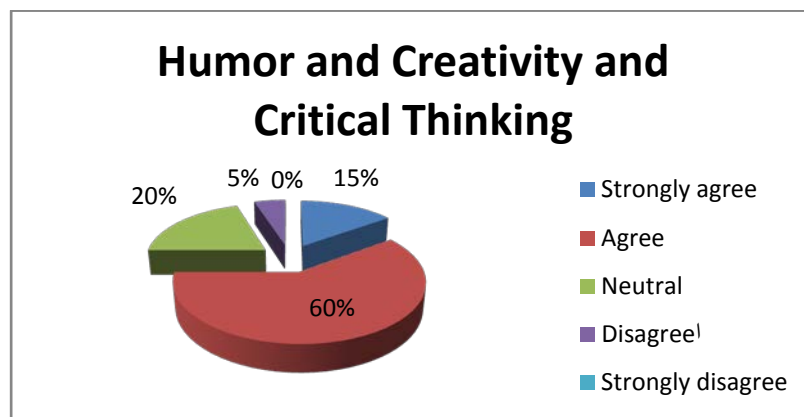


Figure 3.18

Humor relaxes the brain; it activates both hemispheres to work in parallel, so that it enhances creativity and critical thinking. Teachers, in this case, are required to describe their level of agreement with the item (14). As it is presented in the table above, except one teacher (5%) indicates his disagreement. Whereas, (12) teachers (60%) indicate their agreement with the idea stated, and (03) participants (15%) demonstrate that they are strongly agree with the idea, in total the highest percentage (75%) presents positive responses. (04) respondents (20%) opt for neutral category.

Item 15: Does humor encourage cooperative learning?

Option	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Subject	03	13	03	01	00

%	15	65	15	5	00
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Table 3.19: Humor and Cooperative Learning

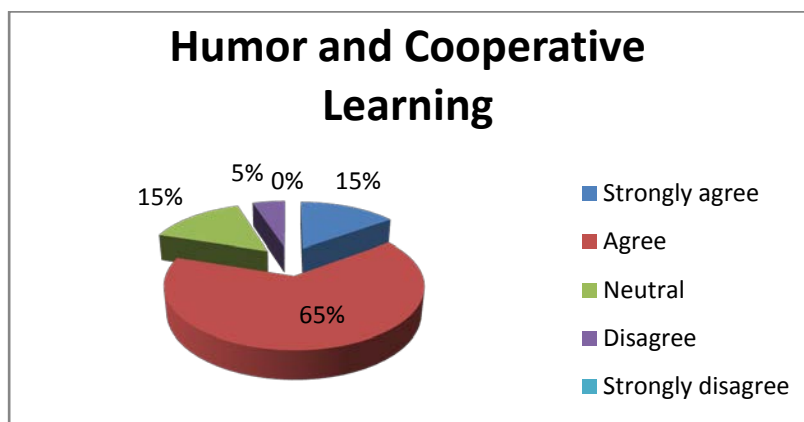


Figure 3.19

It is neither an antibiotic nor a drug; however, “humor is the best medicine” for many psychological problems that prevent them to be cooperative to learn. This idea is supported by teachers since the majority of them (16) (80%) shows approval on promoting cooperative learning by the use of humor. (13) respondents (65%) agree with the idea, and further (03) participants (15%) strongly agree with the item. (03) teachers (15%) select neutral category, and only one teacher (5%) indicates his disagreement.

Item 16: Does humor develop communicative skill?

Option	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly agree
Subject	06	12	02	00	00
%	30	60	10	00	00

Table 3.20: Humor and Communication

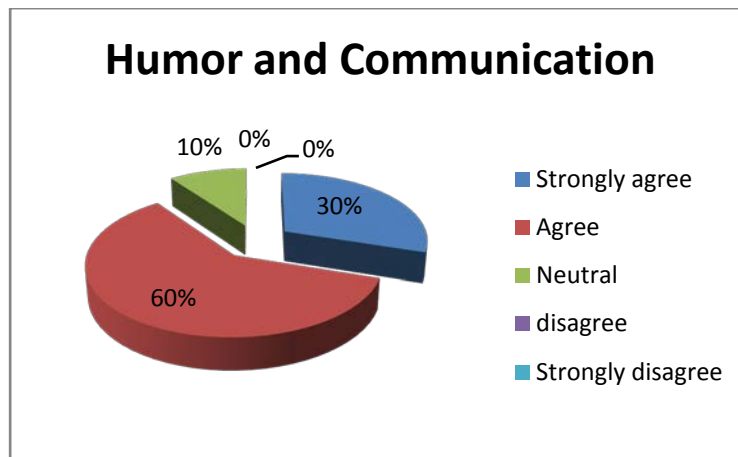


Figure 3.20

To be more fluent and more competent, students need to practice the FL as much as possible. Communication is the key to learn English. Communication skills can be developed by the use of humor. The teachers are asked whether they are agree or not with that humor has the potential to improve communicative skills. The results, on the table, present teachers' purely agreement with the item making a sum of (90%): (12) teachers (60%) opt for agree category, and other (06) teachers (30%) opt for strongly agree category. Only (02) teachers (10%) out of (20) opt for neutral category, and no teacher opt for negative responses (disagree, strongly disagree).

3.2. Discussion

The analysis of the questionnaire designed for teachers has disclosed important insights about teachers' attitudes toward using humor as a pedagogical strategy.

1. In fact, males and females have different perspectives on humor. Although, they respond to the questionnaire mostly in the same way.
2. Teachers are ready to adopt humor as a pedagogical strategy as they deem to believe that this teaching tool would add a lot to their professional credibility. As Shade (1996) states "if you engage in appropriate classroom humor you are

not going to endanger your personal or professional credibility. In fact, in some ways, you may enhance it” (p.85). Humor draws a good image for the humorous teacher in her/ his students’ colleagues’ minds.

3. Teachers enjoy their teaching process and think that humor can make better schooling experience for them as well as for their students through increasing their satisfaction and happiness about this experience.
4. Supporting the previous points, teachers regard humor as a necessary pedagogical strategy that support both teaching and learning, this means that they are knowledgeable about their students’ needs to be humanized.
5. Teachers believe that humorous teacher is effective teacher since he is active, open-minded, learning facilitator and friendly. Also, they believe in the seriousness of humor. The latter never make lesson presentation a sketch for merely entertainment, rather it makes the teaching task more serious; “Humor is a way of saying something serious” (Tosta, 2001, p. 27). Through humor, there is a serious message conveyed should be interpreted. Like in some sketches, problems, for examples, are discussed in a hilarious way.
6. Instructors seem to recognize the effectiveness of humor on the learning process. Thus, humor provides students with the positive energy that absolutely helps to facilitate learning. In fact, students learn better when they are amused.
7. Humor helps timid and shy students to talk freely and express themselves easily especially in team- work. Humor intensifies students’ self- confident and self-esteem. Hence, it makes active, communicative and cooperative students.
8. Humor establishes comfortable environments, creates lively class, it lights the classroom darkness and pumps life in classroom. Teachers advocate that the setting can be one of the main reasons that make students feel bored and

exhausted especially in the afternoon; some humor can lighten the classroom and involve the students in spite of such conditions.

9. As a result of the prior note, the teachers intend to use humor to help students challenge learning context difficulties such as the inappropriate time designed for classes and sometimes for the place where learning take place. In other words, they use humor to promote students' flexibility.
10. Joining humor to all stages of the lesson is perceived by teachers as a necessary feature of effective humor. This may reveal that they can take the lead to maintain the students' attention and engagement in the whole session.
11. Entertaining examples are the favorite form of humor in classroom. Most of teachers tend to use examples especially to explain difficult topics. Moreover, entertaining examples are the best assistant to retain information.
12. Teachers are mindful of the miracles resulted by utilizing humor in classroom. For instance, the psychological hampers like anxiety, stress, and depression can be lowered by humor. Instead, the positive emotions such as motivation, desire, willingness and enthusiasm are boosted.
13. Yet, teachers appear oblivious to some principle on which humor depends to be effective.
14. Instructors use little humor in classroom what leads students to be a bit hesitant to participate, communicate and even use humor in class.
15. Teachers seem to be unaware of that humor has the potential to manage the classroom and urges students to control their behaviors because of the short time devoted to students to use humor to communicate. This means that teachers are demanded to give more space to the students to use humor in class so as to reduce learning inhibitions.

16. The instructors use little of humor content- related in classroom what means that they do not know that using humor which is irrelevant to subject matter is meaningless. In this case, humor goes apart from its real function, enhancing learning, for which it is designed as a pedagogical strategy and loses its effectiveness.

3.2. Recommendations

- ❖ The most important thing should be known is that teaching is not only a science through which instructor only provides knowledge, but also an art through which the instructor is sensitive to challenges that may hamper learning especially psychological ones.
- ❖ In addition to that the teacher has a decisive role in the teaching- learning process, there are the learners who have an integral part in the same process; they can be considered the core of the teaching- learning process.
- ❖ When selecting a strategy for TEFL, it should be taken into account students' needs. In other words, adopting a pedagogical strategy is based on the conception that "if a student's personal and interpersonal needs are not met, the academic needs may be never met" (Wrench, 2009, p.42). Strategy that never improves students' positive emotions is ineffective. So that the instructor fails to lead students to enhance learning.
- ❖ An emphasis should be put on the most paramount students' need which is to be humanized. Laughing is a crucial component of students' humanity. Thus, having fun in the classroom can be a relaxing tool that stimulates better learning.
- ❖ Also, teachers' belief in the effectiveness of the strategy and their readiness to apply it in the classroom are significant principles for adopting a new teaching

tool. As for humor, unless the instructor subscribes its application, the main objective, for which the strategy is designed, will not be achieved.

- ❖ Humor should be the heart of teaching and learning process due to the precious treasures it presents to teachers and students. In addition to satisfaction, happiness and enthusiasm, the most pivotal treasure is that making the schooling experience an amazing one that will be unforgettable.
- ❖ Considering the amount of humor should be used by teachers, it is essential to increase the dosage of humor in classroom. Much of humor challenges the learning inhibitions. In fact, a classroom full of fun is the best context for learning to take place.
- ❖ With regard to humor content- based, it is necessary for humor to be relevant to the subject matter. Hence, if most or all humor used in classroom is related to lesson topic, it will be meaningful. Humor content- related helps to avoid destruction and maintains students' attention and engagement.
- ❖ Counting the time devoted to the students to utilize humor, it is helpful for students to often or always use humor to communicate in the FL. The much humor students use in classroom, the more successful communicative they will be since it reforms mainly their self- confidence and self- esteem.
- ❖ Infusing humor with teaching can change many people' perspectives about the education in general especially the main parts of teaching- learning process: teachers and learners who believe that schooling experience is the worst experience ever. "In the work place, you cannot be serious" (Kerr, 2001). Let's give some space for humor in classroom. Who seeks a deep breath, just laugh!

3.3. Limitations of the study

At the very beginning, it is important to indicate some difficulties when collecting background data. Looking for references especially books was the main obstacle the researcher faced. Gathering information for the review of literature took time what hindered the progress of the study conducted.

This research is conducted through the use of two procedures: classroom observation and questionnaire. Classroom observation needs a long period of time to watch thoroughly what is going on in the classroom and pay attention to the sudden changes that may take place in order to guarantee its reliability. However some extra sessions were designed to fill the time gap, the data collected from the observation was not enough. This was the main reason for restricting the findings of the research. So it is hard to evaluate the reliability of the conclusion.

Conclusion:

Throughout this chapter, the data collected using the selected procedures is analyzed. Questionnaire data analysis is presented through statistical tables and graphs showing percentages. Whereas, the observation data analysis is presented through stating notes and comments. Data analysis of each procedure is discussed. This chapter is ended by some recommendations and limitations of the study.

General Conclusion

Admitting the positive impact of humor on our private lives, this study is conducted to investigate its effect on a different type of lives; the educational life. The research is an attempt to prove that humor can be used as a pedagogical strategy that can create successful learners and prepare them to be successful workers as well. As a teaching tool, humor is not a matter of being foolish or clown to make students laugh at, but it is that energy that helps the teacher as well as the students to control their negative emotions toward the teaching- learning setting.

Humor is the learning defibrillator. When the students are calm, the classroom is viewed as if it is empty and dark. Some jokes or humorous items can give life again to students and light the classroom. Humor is a vehicle through which students can relate to their teacher and classmates in a friendly way. It enables the teacher to create a positive environment where boredom, anxiety and stress are reduced and students are encouraged to take more risks in using their FL. So that they express themselves without fear of ridicule or criticism.

In order to insure its effectiveness, the use of humor in classroom should be accompanied by pre- determined objectives, it should be content- related, natural, spontaneous, non offensive and non subjective. Furthermore, it should be taken into account that puns, jokes, riddles, funny anecdotes, etc are the most appropriate humor forms in the classroom.

Apart from humor principles and forms, the study has revealed that teachers and students appreciate its application as a pedagogical strategy. Throughout the discussion

of the data collected, teachers and students demonstrate their belief in the effectiveness of humor and indicate their readiness to adopt it.

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Appendix

Teacher's Attitude Questionnaire:

Dear teacher,

This questionnaire is prepared to investigate the impact of humor on the teaching-learning process. It will be very kind of you if you answer the following questions. Your answers will absolutely help me conduct my research.

Age

Gender

Degree

Seniority

Section one: Humor and teaching



You think that using humor in classroom is:

Very necessary	Considerably necessary	Necessary	Slightly necessary	Not necessary
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>



Humor, in classroom, is considered as:

Supporting teaching tool	Nonsense teaching tool	Disturbing teaching tool
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

➤ What evidence do you have on that?

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



Sense of humor is a paramount quality of effective teacher

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree

--	--	--	--	--



If you decide to use it as a teaching tool, would you prefer to apply it for:

Introducing the lesson More explanation Giving examples All of them

--	--	--	--

➤ What evidence do you have on this ?

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



How much humor should be used in classroom ?

None Very little Little Much So much

--	--	--	--	--



How much of the humor you use is related to the lesson topic ?

None Very little Little Most All

--	--	--	--	--



Which form of humor do you use most ?

Jokes Puns Funny riddles Funny anecdotes Funny examples

--	--	--	--	--

➤ If there are other forms, state them please

.....



Do you allow your students to use humor to communicate in the classroom ?

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always

--	--	--	--	--

Section Two: Humor and learning



Using humor in classroom :

Strongly facilitates facilitates no effect slightly improves hinders learning
learning learning learning

--	--	--	--	--

➤ Why ?.....



Students learn better when they are amused

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree

--	--	--	--	--



Does humor create an atmosphere conducive to learning ?

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree

--	--	--	--	--



To what extent does humor decrease students' anxiety ?

Totally decreases decreases no effect slightly increases totally increases
 anxiety anxiety anxiety anxiety

--	--	--	--	--



Humor results in rapport between instructor and students

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly
disagree

--	--	--	--	--



Does humor increase creativity and critical thinking ?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly
disagree

--	--	--	--	--



Does humor encourage cooperative learning ?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly
disagree

--	--	--	--	--



Does humor develop communicative skill ?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly
disagree

--	--	--	--	--