



Humour: A pedagogical Technique in EFL Classrooms

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How to Cite This Article

Hevar, M.T., Abbas, M.A., 2023. Humour: A pedagogical Technique in EFL Classrooms. Mitanni Journal, 4(2), Article 82.

DOI: [10.25156/ptjhss.v4n2y2023.pp951-963](https://doi.org/10.25156/ptjhss.v4n2y2023.pp951-963)

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Author contribution

The authors have contributed solely to all aspects of this research work.

Ethics information

Ethics approval was not required for this research.

Data availability statement

The data supporting this study's findings are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Funding information

No specific funding was received for conducting this research.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgements

The authors gratefully acknowledge the support of the English Language.

Declaration of Originality

The researcher's work focused on Humour: A pedagogical Technique in EFL Classrooms.

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Humour: A pedagogical Technique in EFL Classrooms

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Abstract:

Humour can be defined as anything, whether verbal or non-verbal, that the other party in a conversation find amusing. Jokes, stories, and puns are examples of verbal humor. Non-verbal humor can take the shape of facial expressions and body language. Fostering understanding of EFL students' humour has proven to be a successful tool. The use of humour in EFL teaching context has proven to be successful in creating a strong bond between the learner and the teacher, easing the learners' tension, and enhancing their engagement in the process of learning new items of vocabulary and semantics, syntaxes as well as communications rules of L2. This study has been extracted from the dissertation entitled 'Investigating the Use of Humour in Teaching Kurdish EFL University Students in Sulaimani City' and it deals with the theoretical background of humour and its use which has proven to be useful in the context of EFL.

Keywords: *Humour, EFL, Teaching and Learning English*

Received 02 December 2022; accepted 02 March 2023.
Available online 19 May 2026

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Introduction

Humour can be defined as anything that the other party in a conversation find amusing. The expression can either be verbal or non-verbal, which is the classification of humour. The word humour originates from Latin which refers to one of the four bodily fluids—along with blood, phlegm, choler, and black bile—whose balance was supposed to reflect one's state of health. A balanced individual, or one who is in good health, is referred to as being in good humour. (Al-Duleimi & Aziz, 2016, 105).

Humour has been defined differently by different scholars. For instance, Ruskin (1985, 1) defines *humour* and its use in everyday life as “Somebody hears or sees something and laughs. In most cases, this means that person finds the audial or visual stimulus funny” Ruskin further explains that almost everyone experiences humorous events, hilarious stories, and even humorous thoughts on a daily basis. A comprehensive definition is that humour is verbal and non-verbal communication that creates joy and amusement. Humor can take a variety of forms, including the instructor's behaviors, remarks, resources, and visualizations. Similarly, students' actions, materials, and visuals in a classroom can initiate humour (Stroud, 2013). Jokes, stories, and puns are instances of verbal humor. Nonverbal humor can include the use of body language and facial expressions. Regarding the notion that humour can positively contribute to establishing and enhancing people's social relationships, Mindess (1971, 21) defines humour as “a frame of mind, a manner of perceiving and experiencing life. It is a kind of outlook, a peculiar point of view, and one which has great therapeutic power”. It is worth mentioning that, in the current study, humour and its effects on EFL leaning and teaching are discussed regardless to specific cultural jokes such as the jokes that are only humourous in a particular English-speaking-country culture. That is to say, humour is taken as a verbal or nonverbal tool of communication that elicits joy and happiness.

1.2 Classifications of Humour:

In classrooms, teachers' use of humor may have an impact on their students' perception (Enck-Wanzer & Studies, 2009; Frymier, Wanzer, & Wojtaszczyk 2008). This section discusses the sorts of humour for being appropriate and inappropriate in such setting. According to a number research studies conducted on different varieties of humour seen in classrooms, humour is classified according to its function and form. In terms of function, the most straightforward, well-designed classification categorizes humour as either positive or negative (Enck-Wanzer & Studies, 2009, 16). Positive humour is often regarded as permissible for use within the classroom, while teachers should stay clear of negative humor (Bekelja Wanzer, Bainbridge Frymier, Wojtaszczyk, & Smith, 2006). Satpathy et al. (2004, 15) classified the kinds of humour they discovered into 34 helpful humour categories (for example, puns, jokes, humourous stories and statements, professional humour and jokes, cartoons, riddles, and memes) and 34 negative humour categories (such as dark humour , sarcasm, and ethnic, sexual, and violent or intimidating uses of humour). Excitingly, the students in Torok, McMorris, & Lin's (2004) study noticed that irony is acceptable for usage in learning and teaching, even though it is a form of negative humour. Nonetheless, Torok et al. (2004) study did not inquire why students believed sarcasm was suitable.

The division of humor into constructive and destructive uses is similar to what Bekelja Wanzer et al. (2006) found when they looked at students' assessments of the types of humor used by their teachers. Negative humor is typically viewed as inappropriate for use in the classroom, whilst positive humor is generally

accepted. Bekelja Wanzer et al. (2006, 11) classified the sorts of humour teachers employ into appropriate and improper categories using inductive analytic approaches. They classified 712 student-generated instances of humour into eight general categories (four appropriate and four improper) and 51 subcategories of humour. Based on their findings, Bekelja Wanzer et al. (2006, 15) found some similarities between appropriate and inappropriate humor styles, similar to Kliem et al.'s (2004) research study. The overlapping was portrayed in a student-targeted, ridiculing comedy. While taunting was considered acceptable, students found it to be highly inappropriate when it was directed at their intelligence, appearance, or sexual orientation. Nevertheless, they were not required to provide justification for their judgements of appropriateness, which is why some forms of humor were regarded as appropriate while others were not. Teachers must pay close attention to students' viewpoints to feel secure about employing humour in the classroom.

Bekelja Wanzer et al. (2006, 181) recognized the following categories of humour :

Appropriate humour: Humour that relates to the class/material content: An instructor employs funny examples, comical media or outdoor objects (funny experiments), jokes, amusing performances, funny role play, puns, and humorous anecdotes to connect the class topic to the material.

Unrelated to the class's content: A teacher may employ hilarious anecdotes, entertaining performances, jokes, humorous, creative language, amusing and entertaining media, or other non-class-related elements.

Self-deprecating humour: A teacher attempts to mock himself or herself, mock his or her characteristics, recount humiliating personal stories, and/or mock his or her abilities or faults.

Inadvertent or unintentional humour: Unintentional comedy, in which the teacher includes humour spontaneously.

Inappropriate humour or offensive humour: Sexual comments or jokes, obscene oral and nonverbal expressions, dark humour, sarcasm, and amusing references to illicit activities.

Students are targeted with disparaging humour: Students collectively: A tutor's use of comedy that is universally applicable to all his pupils regardless of their intellectual abilities, sex, or physical appearance.

One student has been singled out: Using humor to make a point about a student's academic performance, private life, beliefs, hobbies, appearance, gender, or religion.

Disadvantageous humour: the 'other' target: Use of humour by a teacher-directed towards those other than students. The instructor jokes about masculinity, a particular ethnic or racial crowd, or other instructors without reference to the class subject.

Another classification of humour according to function is demonstrated in investigations by Frymier et al. (2008, 12) and Nesi & Gardner (2012, 14). These researchers classified different types of humour according to their purpose using inductive analytic analysis. Bekelja Wanzer et al.'s (2006) categorisation of appropriate and inappropriate humor was expanded upon by Frymier et al. in 2008. Ten students' responses to 41 different humour subcategories were broken down by Frymier et al. (2008, 16) into five categories: other disparaging, linked, disconnected, offensive, and self-disparaging humour. The students also discussed why particular types were considered suitable and improper. This occurred because of the inconsistency in the students' assessments of appropriate comedy and their reactions to the humour. In contrast, such discrepancies were documented by Frymier et al. (2008) based on their understanding instead of student or teacher feedback.

Nesi & Gardner (2012) classified teasing between classes and students, class errors, class self-deprecation,

dark humour, disparaging of members of out-groups, and register and wordplay as forms of humour. Although Nesi & Gardner (2012, 171) classified humour by function, they left out the appropriateness factor. Even though some types of humour, including black humour and criticizing out-group members might not be suitable in the classroom, Nesi & Gardner (2012, 321) characterized them as serving certain purposes such as preserving social order, building rapport, and defusing stress. Given that the data were generated from the British Academic Spoken English (BASE) corpus, the researcher's interpretation of the data was employed again. Written text, audio and video recordings of the class, and thirty-seven seminars held at the Universities of Warwick and Reading make up the BASE corpus.

In addition, generic classifications have been developed to categorize the many forms of humour used in higher education. Award-winning instructors' teaching strategies were examined by Liu et al. (2001, 52), who found that each one included a humorous element. The categories were intended related humour, intended unrelated humour, spontaneous related humour, and unrelated unplanned comedy. According to Liu et al. (2001, 121), linked humour is a humour that is connected to the instructional goals or the course content (for instance, cartoons and long jokes).

Contrarily, unconnected humour, such as humorous remarks in response to comments, refers to a comedy that is employed in the classroom despite having no connection to the course material. MCQs, cartoons, current event items, ten most popular event listings, self-depicting remarks, self-inquiries, definitions, characters, and amusing comments were also employed by teachers. Bouaziz & Adjadj's (2016, 42) research looked at the forms of humour used by instructors from the teachers' point of view; They did not examine how students felt about how various sorts of humour affected their learning performance.

In summary, there are several ways to categorize humour. According to the various classifications, EFL teachers, learners, and academics may consider different sorts of humour to be appropriate or inappropriate for usage in higher education teaching and learning. Such categorizations, however, are not always accurate because humour happens under certain contexts and is interpreted uniquely by each teacher and student. In the following section, I will explore reasons why EFL instructors apply humour and the purposes of humour in higher education classrooms based on previous research.

1.3 Use of Humour:

The utilization of humour is considered as an effective teaching tool which can be made use of by EFL instructors in a classroom setting so as to enhance the process of language learning. A highly inspiring environment for EFL learners is generally thought to be created through the implementation of humour by ELF teachers which, in the long run, fosters learners' motivation.

Additionally, fostering understanding of EFL students' The use of humour in EFL teaching has been shown to be effective in establishing a comfortable rapport between teacher and student, reducing anxiety, holding students' attention, and facilitating the acquisition of new lexical items, semantic concepts, syntactic structures, and communicative norms of the target language. Furthermore, humour has proven to be useful in introducing the learners to the rules of the new languages, making them understand the culture of the people who speak the language they are learning (Bell, 2009).

Some scholars refer to the danger of utilising humour in EFL classes. For example, Sudol (1981: 27) states that joking poses a risk because all that the students may remember from class are a few jokes. The sense of

humour Sudol (ibid) discusses is the type of humour which refers to “telling jokes or funny stories, clowning around, and teasing or being sarcastic”.

However, several researchers have discovered the usefulness of implementing humour in a classroom setting (Hismanoglu, et al., 2018; Abdulmajeed & Hameed, 2017; Munoz, 2005; Anggraeni, 2019; Farahani & Abdollahi, 2018; Mahdilo & Izadpanah, 2017; Motlagh et al., 2014).

Abdulmajeed & Hameed (2017: 42-43) note that there is no need to suppress all sorts of humour and thus lose its many benefits, and that when appropriately managed, humour does not foster disruption in the classroom. Munoz (2005) highlights many benefits of employing humour in EFL classes in a number of ways (a) it establishes an elaborative atmosphere which leads to bring learners together, (b) it aids to having a cultural awareness to language by providing a context to the subject matter which builds cultural background, (c) it enhances students’ ability to build vocabulary more easily and stress-freely, and helps them to differentiate literal from figurative meaning. The types of humour, according to Munoz (ibid: 42), that EFL teachers can implement “range from idiomatic expressions, riddles, proverbs, pronunciation games, comics, the use of realia, jokes or typical grammatical errors”. Further, based on research proof, Lei (2010) lists 31 advantages of using humour as a pedagogical tool such as social, psychological, and cognitive benefits.

Hismanoglu, et al. (2018), by conducting a quantitative research study, examined the implementation of humour in the classroom setting. 110 students in a foundation program at a public university in the Aegean area (Turkey) were given a questionnaire by the researchers to fill out in order to get their opinions on the employment of comedy by EFL instructors. They discovered that the use of humour had effective results in the classroom. For example, it created an atmosphere in which students felt more relaxed and stress-free, besides learning the language more easily. Furthermore, a high degree of consensus was indicated by the students for the essential role of humour use in their classrooms.

Other studies have been conducted to determine this method's suitability in EFL study, and many researchers have discovered that humour plays a critical part in learning. For learning to be successful, students must be in a stable psychological state. Learning can be a vigorous process with lots of tension, especially with the anticipation of tests. Research conducted by Berk (2000) revealed that humour helps in relieving stress and reducing test anxiety, making students perform better. Humour has also proven to strengthen the relationships between the teachers and the learners. A study by Lovorn & Holaway (2015) also supports the importance of humour in the student-teacher relationship concluding that teachers with a great sense of humour tend to be popular with the learners as they are considered more effective. Stroud (2013), in his research on benefits and barriers of humour in learning amongst Japanese EFL students, found that fostering a relaxed learning environment lowers anxiety, improves retention, encourages class engagement, and increases learning satisfaction.

Some researchers such as Anggraeni et. al (2019), Al-Duleimi & Aziz (2016), and Hismanoğlu (2018) have observed the importance of humour in reducing anxiety. Research from Anggraeni et. al (2019) focused on whether blending humour and animation in EFL learning where students did projects on this blend factoring how it affected their confidence, creativity, and participation. A large portion of the sample agreed that blending humour and animation was helpful, especially with vocabulary and learning difficult materials. 100% of the students were preferred the periodic utilisation of animation in learning. From the research, blending humour in animation makes lectures interesting, brings out collaboration in learning, fosters critical

thinking and expression of opinions, and should be used as a teaching technique.

Al-Duleimi & Aziz (2016) focused on humour efficiencies in learning and as a teaching strategy. In testing the assumptions of humour as a pedagogical tool, they found out that it increases students' overall performance. The researchers also evaluated the psychological, physiological, social, and educational benefits of humour and how these correlate with learning.

Hişmanoğlu (2018) found out that humour positively affects creating a conducive learning environment and easing tension.

Another researcher, Gonulal (2018), in quoting the researches from Askildson (2005), Garner (2006), and Wagner & Urios-Aparisi (2011), supports their work, adding that a healthy and welcoming learning atmosphere can be created by using humour. The researcher adds that humour creates positive effects that help relieve learning stress, tension, and anxiety. Therefore, teachers can apply it to topics that are considered anxiety-inducing create ease. Like these research studies, Chabeli (2008) adds that humour boosts understanding in classrooms as it increases participation and learners' attention. With these, the retention of learned information improves. Furthermore, it increases the emotional appeal and stimulates the cognitive processes for retention and memory. According to Garner (2006), students who listened to talks with humorous inserts had an easier time recalling the material than those who listened to the identical presentation without any humour. Humour has also been seen as a catalyst in helping the learner understand the target language's culture. This thought is supported by Deneire (1995: 286), who adds that humour can be a tool for introducing language concepts and cultural information, thereby increasing the learners' competencies. The researcher further contributes that humour increases learners' linguistic competencies. Through humour, students can become more aware of structural and semantic differences between L1 and L2.

~~The study by~~ Al-Duleimi & Aziz (2016) discovered that humor eases tension and closes the communication gap between students and their teachers, makes learning fun, reduces cases of absenteeism, and improves the ability to learn FL. This has also been supported by Gonulal (2018) and Wanzer, Frymier, Wojitaszczyk & Smith's (2006) research study who found strengthened student-teacher relationships, improved learning, and retention as a result of reduced learning tension. The study by Hişmanoğlu (2018) supported the findings of the above researchers, adding that humour increases student interest in learning FL and enables a student to learn more about the foreign culture. The finding of this study also discredits studies from Zebila (2012), who argued that humour wasted precious learning time.

Anggraeni et. al (2019) found that humour helps with vocabulary and eases learning difficult materials like writing and reviewing when blended with animations. Additionally, blending humour with animation increases learners' digital literacy. Like the early researchers and additional studies from Garner (2006) and Morrison (2008), this research agrees that humour reduces learning tension and student language learning skills.

In short, using humour in EFL classes is advocated by numerous researchers, and there is evidence that it can help learners and teachers from various perspectives as discussed in the literature.

2. Humour and Language Learning Anxiety

A calm and psychologically secure classroom environment that fosters risk-taking and offers enough instructor and peer assistance is wanted to boost students' drive and self-assurance while lowering their anxiety (Oxford, 1999). This indicates that an ideal EFL classroom atmosphere fosters low learner anxiety

levels (Oxford, 1999). Anxiety in learning a foreign language is a hot research topic and is reported by many researchers (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2006).

Horwitz and Young (1991) explained the foreign language learning anxiety in a multi-dimensional notion that encompasses self-perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and actions associated with learning that arise from the specific nature of the language acquisition process. This intricate topic may be broken down into four components.

Communication anxiety refers to a learner's fear of talking with other others. It may manifest as difficulties in public speaking, comprehending and interacting with others, and being quiet learners during the learning process.

Test anxiety refers to students' dread of tests, quizzes, and other tasks used to assess their skills and efficiency, which may result in low motivation and unreasonable expectations for students.

Negative evaluation anxiety is defined as a learner's concern about how someone else sees them, which may involve avoiding evaluated situations and the assumption that others would negatively assess them.

Anxiety in the classroom refers to students' fear within a classroom setting, where elements like learning objectives and activities, instructor involvement, and even social pressure may all contribute to language learning anxiety (Brown, 2000). Researchers have proposed several strategies to create this encouraging environment and to enhance student learning. These strategies include language play, communicative activities and language games, activities for small groups and pairs rather than the entire class, clear tests, and humour employment (Horwitz & Young, 1991).

According to the studies reviewed, humour may help students learn more effectively by making them laugh. However, little study has been done on humour and its advantages. A review of how humour is discussed and investigated in the relevant literature will be provided in the next part, emphasizing the need for further study into humour.

3. Nature and Mechanism of Humour-

3.1 The superiority Theory

According to the superiority thesis, *humour* is defined as the act of mocking and/or laughing at another person's shortcomings or hard luck Zillmann (2000). From this vantage point, puns often feature a victor (the joke-teller) and an underdog (the joke's target) (Mathew & Vijayalakshmi, 2017, 55). The victor feels successful or dominant over the victim. In this context, superiority refers to criticizing, ridiculing, or hilariously humiliating someone. They are deemed hilarious when someone mocks and/or laughs at another's weakness, stupidity, or failure. Making fun of another person's foolishness or recklessness occurs when we believe we are more well-behaved, intelligent, or successful than that person.

Additionally, this theory discusses humour on a social and behavioral level, defining *humour* as a tool used to mock and shame specific inferiors. From a superiority standpoint, laughter displays power and superiority when directed at other people's shortcomings, failings, or inadequacies. It has been suggested that laughing at inappropriate behavior can coexist with a feeling of belonging and even promote group cohesion by imposing superiority at those being humiliated (Mathew & Vijayalakshmi, 2017, 21).

Due of the hierarchical nature of the classroom, superiority theory is pertinent in the teaching and learning environment. For a number of reasons, the instructor could make fun of the students (for instance, when

they are unable to respond to a question or when an inappropriate behavior is admonished). However, it is most emphatically not acceptable for the student to reciprocate by mocking the teacher.

Students, according to Bekelja Wanzer et al. (2006), hate teachers who make fun of their looks, intelligence, personal lives, viewpoints, interests, and religion. A teacher's disparaging statement about students may be hilarious, but it is unlikely to elicit laughter.

Superiority theory, however, does not fully explain the use of humour generally or in the classroom in particular. Not every humour gives its audience a sense of superiority. For instance, playing peekaboo with a child does not necessarily impart a perception of superiority. It may make people chuckle when someone bumps into a glass door, but that doesn't mean they feel superior. In other words, it's not common for people to laugh at other people's flaws (Morreall, 1982). There are other causes for laughter as well. An alternative justification for humour and its application is provided by the idea of incongruity.

3.2 The Incongruity Theory

According to the incongruity idea, "people giggle at things that startle them or that contravene a conventional pattern of thought" (Wilkins & Eisenbraun, 2009, 352). To put it another way, anything is considered humorous if it seems absurdly out of place or if it defies their expectations. This notion holds that a key element of comedy is being surprised. For instance, if a sports player slips while getting a medal, the event may be viewed as amusing, as the stumbling is not what people anticipate.

The fact that this amusing occurrence deviates from both the normal course of events and expectations made by others make us laugh. The term 'incongruity' refers to an incident that is incongruous, irrational, conflicting, shocking, different, absurd, or impulsive (Simmie, Martin, & Society, 2010). To put it another way, the mind may find something amusing if it notices an incongruity in an event or speech. This hypothesis can account for hilarious situations in the educational setting by positing odd situations in the class. The component of surprise has the potential to capture pupils' attention and make them laugh. However, incongruity theory has a drawback because it is not comprehensive enough to encompass all forms of comedy. Although Clark (1970, 21) states unequivocally that "the hilarious may be incongruous," not all incongruous situations are amusing. For instance, intending to sleep and discovering a snake beneath the twenty-two blankets will not elicit laughter. It is exceedingly improbable that this incident will cause laughing, but it can surprise you and make you feel like your thoughts and reality don't match up.

Given the reality of non-humorous activities, the theory of incongruity has been expanded to incorporate a more precise explanation of how the mind sees humour. This is considered to be the incongruity-resolution theory (Suls, 1983, 52). The hypothesis of incongruity-resolution elucidates why incongruity is viewed as amusing. In accordance with this theory, an incident is regarded as amusing in a joyful and non-threatening environment, and the incongruity is made to seem reasonable. Anything is therefore seen hilarious when it is both acknowledged as incongruous and taken to be so.

3.3 The Relief Theory

A common description of laughter is being a physical reaction to reduce stress or anxiety (Lynch, 2002). According to the relief hypothesis, laughing relieves stress or serves as a "safety valve" for releasing tension that has accumulated (Bellini, Nesi, & Computing, 2018, 80). In other words, the relief theory proposes that laughing can reduce stress, tension, and anxiety. When an individual's tensions are lessened, physiological relief occurs. As an illustration, if someone screams in fear when they see a snake on the bed hidden by the blanket, they might laugh after they understand it's a rubber snake that's been used as a toy.

The relief theory offers an alternative view of humour. It clarifies why a condition or tale that begins with doubtfulness or suspense and finishes comically may make people chuckle (Civikly, 1992, 57). Despite the incongruity theory, which describes humour as taking place in a benign and cheerful circumstance, the relief theory describes laughter and humour as occurring when people are worried or scared but then experience enjoying twenty-three sensations. Teachers can utilize humour in the classroom to defuse difficult circumstances, relax students, alleviate tension, and foster dialogue. By infusing humour into the classroom, a comfortable atmosphere favorable to learning can be created. Mora and Weaver (2015) discovered that when a teacher incorporates comedy into the classroom, students become significantly more relaxed and love to teach a hated subject (that they initially were intimidated to master).

The superiority, incongruity, and relief theories of humour all contribute to our understanding of humour in practice and have uses in the classroom. An additional humour theory with a close connection to instruction and learning is the instructional humour processing theory (IHPT). (Wanzer, 2010, 58).

4. Benefits of Humour

There is substantial proof in the literature that humour has several physiological, psychological, and social benefits for humans.

4.1 Psychological Benefits

Humour and its most obvious outward representation, laughter, has been shown to offer numerous health benefits, including relaxing muscles (Huss et al., 2016), boosting the immune system (Martin & Dobbin, 1988), stimulating circulation and respiration (Fry & Savin, 1988), raising endorphin levels that help with reduction of pain (Berk, 2000), and decreasing blood pressure (Fry & Savin, 1988). Less directly, humour may help people cope with sickness (Simon, 1988). To describe laughing, Cousins (1979) coined the phrase "internal jogging." In other words, apart from being common sense, the saying "Laughter is the best medicine" is supported by scientific evidence. Humour is a useful tool for coping with pain, illness, and/or stress health practitioners and professionals (Low, 1990). In this approach, humour benefits both patients and their carers as well as potential patient family members.. When humour is used constructively and generously for amusement or seeking solidarity (rather than to divide or display sarcasm), it has been shown to reduce anxiety and stress (Lehman et al., 2001), tension and depression (Berk, 2001) self-esteem (Martinez, 1989). These benefits are helpful for students' overall learning processes as well as for people who are experiencing a lot of stress and want to maintain their mental equilibrium (like instructors). It is understood that learning activities constantly cause stress and worry among pupils. Learners are learning new skills and developing added information, which might be difficult for them, raising the risk of failure. In these circumstances, motivation is essential to learn well. Humour may motivate students by helping them see learning as a pleasant and engaging activity rather than a chore (Kher, 1999). Even if failure occurs during the process of learning, employing humor may enable the students restore control and a sense of security, as well as provide the necessary "mental distance" to embrace the failure and ease any anxiety it may bring. (Morreall, 1997).

4.2 Social benefits

It is common knowledge that humorous people are believed to be more cheerful and popular (Billig, 2005; Lovorn & Holaway, 2015). "A grin is the shortest distance between two individuals," Victor Borge said, and

funny people show themselves as friendly, pleasant, and cooperative. During our first interaction, we typically exhibit another person a grin or a chuckle as a gesture of acceptance. Group cohesiveness is more likely to grow when members share humour (Senior, 2001), and members may become more tolerant and open to the views of others. (Morreall, 1997; Hayati et al., 2011). Sharing humor will make group members feel good about one another and the group as a whole since emotions are frequently tied to human experiences. Individuals with a sense of humour are also creative and versatile in their approach, making them more open to innovative ideas and perspectives. Furthermore, comedy may help relieve tension and ease the voicing of criticism less seriously and frighteningly (Al-Duleimi, et al., 2016; Morreall, 1997). Announcing bad news, apologizing, dealing with unjustified complaints, ordering, and warning, assessing and criticizing, and settling arguments are all instances in which humour may be advantageous, according to Morreall (1997).

In summary, research from various fields has demonstrated that humour benefits the physique, thoughts, and relationships. The preceding discussion illustrates comedy's physical, mental, and social benefits and makes a compelling argument for the classroom study of humour.

5. Conclusion:

The use of humour in EFL learning is efficient and it does not waste precious learning time. Humour can develop a positive relationship between the student and the teacher that may motivate the student to be more attentive and engaged in the class. Jokes, games and funny stories, as sorts of humour, have been found to reduce the learners' stress and provide them a relaxing learning environment, allowing them to retain the knowledge and the skills they have attained. Humour has also been found to be helpful for EFL students to internalize the English culture, which enables them to develop better communication skill in English especially with native speakers. When humour is blended with animations, it further improves the learners' digital literacy. Metacognitively speaking, learning difficult concepts or skills with the aid of the technique of humour has demonstrated positive results in using concepts that students struggle to understand.

6. Pedagogical Implications:

Humour has a significant influence on EFL learning and is not a waste of learning time as previously thought. Humour creates a serene learning environment that allows teachers and students to interact freely. The following recommendations can help enhance and improve the use of humour in EFL learning;

1. Teachers should be careful in their use of humour as excessive use may lead to deviations from the subject matter under study
2. Teachers should recognize cultural differences between L1 and L2 as some jokes on L2 could be insulting in L1, further dividing the class
3. Learners must be encouraged to be creative in their study and try to paraphrase their learning contents humourously without being criticized.

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