

تصورات طلاب الجامعات حول استخدام الفكاهة في صفوف اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية

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الكلمات المفتاحية: الفكاهة ، استيعاب طلاب ، صفوف اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ، المستوى الجامعي، تعليم اللغة، وتعلم اللغة.

كيفية اقتباس البحث

امين ، اميد كريم صوفى محمد ، فاطمة حسن بيروت، تصورات طلاب الجامعات حول استخدام الفكاهة في صفوف اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، مجلة مركز بابل للدراسات الانسانية، تشرين الأول 2026، المجلد: 16، العدد: 10.

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AThe Use of Humour in EFL Classrooms: University Students' Perceptions

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المخلص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة تصورات الطلاب حول استخدام الفكاهة في صفوف اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) ، ويفحص دمج الفكاهة في العملية التعليمية وكيف يمكن أن يساهم في خلق بيئة صفية محفزة تدعم التعلم والتدريس. كما يستكشف البحث آراء الطلاب تجاه استخدام أستاذهم للفكاهة. يُعد تطوير وجهات نظر طلاب EFL داخل الصفوف موضوعاً محورياً في العديد من الدراسات السابقة، حيث أثبتت الفكاهة فعاليتها كأحدى الاستراتيجيات التعليمية الناجحة. وقد تم التعرف على العديد من الطرق التي تساهم في تعزيز تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، ويُعتبر استخدام الفكاهة أسلوباً داعماً إضافياً يساهم في تحسين عملية التعلم. يستند البحث إلى رسالة الماجستير الموسومة "استيعاب طلاب الجامعة لتوظيف الفكاهة في صفوف دراسة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية على مستوى الجامعة"، والتي تناولت تأثير الفكاهة على طلاب EFL في المستوى الجامعي. ويقوم البحث الحالي على فرضية أن الفكاهة

تعد أداة فعالة لتعزيز تعلم الطلاب ودعم اكتسابهم للغة الإنجليزية. يوضح البحث كيف تؤثر الفكاهة على تصورات طلاب السنة الثالثة في جامعات كركوك، رابرين، حلبجة، وجرمو. تم استخدام استبيان مكون من 20 بنداً تم توزيعه على 100 طالب كجزء من المنهج الكمي لدراسة آرائهم حول استخدام الفكاهة في الصف. وأظهرت نتائج الاستبيان أن نسبة كبيرة من الطلاب أيدوا استخدام أستاذهم للفكاهة، معتبرين إياها أسلوباً مفيداً وفعالاً يدعم تعلمهم للغة. كما تعمل الفكاهة على تحسين العملية التعليمية من خلال تقليل القلق، وزيادة الدافعية، وتعزيز المشاركة، وتحسين التركيز، وتعزيز الاحتفاظ بالمعلومات، مما يسهم في تعزيز تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية بشكل أكثر فعالية ومتعة.

تیگه‌یشتنی خویندکارانی زانکۆ سه‌بارت به به‌کاره‌ینانی گالته‌وگه‌پ له پۆله‌کانی خویندنی

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پوخته

ئامانجی ئەم توێژینه‌وه‌یه‌ لێکۆڵینه‌وه‌یه‌ له‌ تیگه‌یشتنی خویندکارانی زانکۆ سه‌بارت به‌کاره‌ینانی گالته‌وگه‌پ له‌ پۆله‌کانی زمانی ئینگلیزی وه‌ک زمانی بیانی. به‌ تایبه‌تی، توێژینه‌وه‌که‌ سه‌رنج ده‌خاته‌ سه‌ر رۆلی گالته‌وگه‌پ له‌ دروستکردنی دۆخیکێ گونجاو (EFL) بۆ فێربوون و کاریگه‌ریه‌کانی له‌سه‌ر هاندانی خویندکاران، به‌شداریکردنیان له‌ چالاکی ناو پۆل، و فێربوونی زمان. هه‌روه‌ها، هه‌ول ده‌دات تیگه‌یشتنیکێ قوڵتر بدات به‌ خویندکارانی زانکۆ له‌ روانگه‌ی ئەم ستراتیژیه‌ پەرورده‌یه‌وه‌. له‌م توێژینه‌وه‌یه‌دا 100 خویندکار راپرسیه‌کی 20 بابه‌تیان پێدرا سه‌بارت به‌ به‌کاره‌ینانی گالته‌وگه‌پ وه‌ 12 له‌ خویندکارانه‌ خراوه‌ گه‌روپێکه‌وه‌و چاوپێکه‌وتنیان له‌ گه‌ڵدا کرا به‌ 9 پرسیار بۆ چه‌سپاندنی ئه‌و زانیاریانه‌ی که‌ له‌ راپرسیه‌که‌دا پێشکەشیان کردوه‌ quantitative ، هه‌روه‌ها له‌ زانکۆکانی: که‌رکوک، راپهرین، هه‌له‌بجە، چه‌رمو، داتاكان له‌ سه‌ر 100 خویندکاری زانکۆ قو‌ناغی سییه‌م ئەنجام دراوه‌ بۆ گه‌یشتن به‌ ئامانجه‌کانی توێژینه‌وه‌، به‌ شێوه‌ی ئامار شیکراونه‌توه‌ بۆ تیگه‌یشتن و دۆزینه‌وه‌ی په‌یوه‌ندی له‌ نێوان به‌کاره‌ینانی گالته‌وگه‌پ و کارامه‌ی فێربوون. ئەنجامه‌کان وا پێشاندده‌ن که‌ زۆربه‌ی خویندکاران دیدی ئه‌رینیان هه‌یه‌ بۆ به‌کاره‌ینانی گالته‌وگه‌پ له‌ لایه‌ن مامۆستاکیانه‌وه‌. چونکه‌ وه‌ک ئاماریکی سو‌دبه‌خش ده‌بینرێت که‌ نیگه‌رانی که‌م ده‌کاته‌وه‌، هاندان زیاده‌کات، به‌شدارێ خویندکاران په‌رپێ ده‌دات، بیرو هۆش باشت‌تر ده‌کات. ئەم ئەنجامه‌ پشتگیریی له‌و بیروکهمیه‌ ده‌کات که‌ ده‌لێت: گالته‌وگه‌پ ئامرازیکێ پەرورده‌ی کاریگه‌ره‌ بۆ پشتیوانیکردنی فێربوونی زمان له‌ پۆله‌کانی (EFL).

کلیله‌ و شه‌هان: گالته‌وگه‌پ، تیگه‌یشتنی خویندکارانی زانکۆ، پۆله‌کانی EFL، ئاستی زانکۆی، فێرکردنی زمان و فێربوونی زمان.



Abstract

This research investigates the student's perceptions of using humour in EFL classrooms. It examines the incorporation of humour in the classroom and how it can facilitate and create pertinent conditions for learning and teaching. It explores students' perceptions towards their teachers' humour. This study is an extraction from the MA thesis entitled "Students' perceptions of the use of humour in EFL classrooms at the university level," which investigated the impact of humour on EFL students at the university level. The present study is based on the concept that humour is a highly effective tool for helping learners and supporting their learning in EFL classes. This research illustrates how humour affects third-year EFL students' perspectives from the universities of Kirkuk, Raparin, Halabja, and Charmo. A 20-item survey was given to 100 students as part of a quantitative method in order to investigate their views on the usage of humour. According to the questionnaire, a significant percentage of learners supported the use of humour in the classroom, which was viewed as important results by students, who considered that it significantly contributed to their learning. Descriptive statistical methods such as percentages and distributions of frequency were used in the quantitative analysis of questionnaire data to get at this conclusion. The results demonstrate that humour helps with language acquisition by reducing fear, increasing motivation, boosting participation, and improving focus, as well as promoting retention. By presenting real data from EFL students at university classrooms, this study expands the body of literature by shedding light on the educational benefits of humour in language classrooms.

1.Introduction

In recent years, there has been an increased focus on the purposes and objectives of humour in second language (L2) classes. An increasing number of studies in a variety of learning contexts indicate the potential benefits of humour, including enhancing motivation, focusing attention, reducing anxiety, and improving recall (Petraki & Nguyen 2016; Askildson 2005; Forman 2011). This study investigates at four universities—Kirkuk, Raparin, Halabja, and Charmo to determine if traditional methods that focus on teaching are still in use and whether humour can provide similar benefits in these contexts. In such a classroom that is focused, EFL students can connect different reasons to classroom humour, or they might not think of EFL classrooms as a setting where humour may be employed effectively. So, this study explores how humour is used to teach EFL students at four different universities so that EFL teachers may appreciate the various advantages of humour. It is

significant that the amount of academic research on humour is increasing. However, very little research has been done to find out how students feel about humour being used in the classroom while teaching English as a foreign language. The purpose of this study is to better understand humour from students' perspectives.

To the best of the present researcher's knowledge, there have been a few studies on the effects of humour and its relationship to perception among EFL university students, particularly in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. This gap needs to be addressed. Based on Brandl (2008) and Arnold & Douglas Brown (1999), EFL learners may experience higher levels of stress and anxiety as well as lower levels of motivation in EFL classes compared to other class subjects because they are required to use a foreign language (FL), have a low chance of demonstrating all of their abilities, and run a high risk of damaging their self-image when they make mistakes.

The majority of EFL university students (where the research is being conducted) are typically believed to be incorrectly perceptive during their lectures, which causes them to encounter an "affective filter" (Krashen, 1982) in their language, according to the present researcher's teaching experience. The purpose of this study is to investigate if the use of humour affected EFL university students' perceptions. The findings will assist teachers in improving lesson planning and classroom practices to better suit the needs of their English language learners. It should be mentioned that the majority of colleges in Iraq's Kurdistan Region currently use the Bologna system. According to this approach, university EFL teachers must make sure that their lessons are more student-centered than teacher-centered, and they are more likely to use modern teaching techniques like communicative language teaching.

Humour may be a useful technique for improving EFL students' perception, and such teaching approaches require greater perception from their students in order for them to be fully involved in their lessons. Researchers, EFL students, and curriculum developers may also be affected by the study's results. Humour has been an effective instrument in education in general and L2 learning in particular in recent years (Latiff & Daud, 2013), altering the way teachers convey knowledge in EFL classrooms. According to Chiasson (2002), humour increases students' motivation for the lesson by reducing stress, creating a more pleasant classroom environment, improving learning enjoyment, encouraging student participation with teachers or peers, and facilitating learning. According to Ziyaemehr, Kumar, and Abdullah (2011), using humour in the classroom improves educational effectiveness, creates a



non-threatening environment, boosts student confidence, and helps make the course material more understandable.

Due to the lack of research in this field, this study focuses on how EFL students perceive their instructor's use of humour in the classroom. Research on the EFL setting has been conducted (e.g., Antilla, 2008; Zhang & Xu, 2011). Thus, the purpose of this study is to find out how EFL students feel about their teachers' use of humour in the classroom. This study defines humour, provides a classification of humour types created by multiple researchers, explains the advantages of humour, summarizes prior research on the use of humour in L2 learning and teaching, and concludes by presenting research findings and connecting them to those of earlier studies.

2. Theoretical Background: Humour in the Language Classroom

2.1 Definition of Humour

Many attempts have been made throughout history to define humour and what audiences find amusing. According to accepted definitions in educational contexts, humour in this study is defined as any verbal or nonverbal behavior meant to entertain and create an informal educational setting during student-teacher interaction. The Latin word "humour" comes from the word "umor," meaning "body fluid," which controls human emotions and health. Anything that makes someone smile or laugh is generally regarded as humorous. Using humour to make others laugh may improve connections and give essential elements for communication (Octaberlina & Asrifan, 2021). Many researchers have defined the term humour. Humour is "the ability to understand, enjoy, and express what is amusing" (Leung, 2004). Faulkner (2011) expresses humour as any physical behavior or spoken statement, whether intentional or unintentional, that causes students to respond by laughing, giggling, and smiling.

A variety of parts must be taken into account when defining humour, such as the techniques people use to make others laugh, including jokes, amusing stories, puns, and clever comments. Personalities, typical behaviors, psychological traits, and the ability to identify and understand humour are all vital parts of its definition. (Willibald & Amy, 1998, p. 38) As noted by Friedman et al. (2002, p. 23), humour is defined as "humour is a teaching technique that may be utilized to engage students... and stimulate concept development." This term includes the general idea that students can be motivated and engaged when humour is used.

This term contains the broad concept that humour may be used to inspire and interact with students. Other scholars expand on this notion by analyzing another vital part, which is humor's objective or aim. For



instance, they define humour as "everything that the teacher and/or students find amusing or humorous" (Fadel & Al-Bargi, 2018, p. 16). In the same way, humour "involves nonverbal and verbal interactions that produce a positive cognitive or affective response from listeners" (Rizzo, 1999, p. 42). Also, laughter is an essential sign of humor in this investigation. Jokes, puzzles, witticisms, funny stories, visual humor, and even physical comedy can all make individuals laugh (Bryant et al., 1980, p. 5). Laughter from a teacher or student is perceived as humorous.

The definitions suggest that humour is a complex concept with emotional, social, and mental components. Humour can be defined as something that makes you smile or laugh. There are special cases, just like with every basic concept. Even if no one were laughing at the moment, it would still be possible to declare that something is hilarious. In fact, it sometimes becomes the case that others are laughing, but some may argue, "It's not funny." Laughter and smiles can also be proof of anxiety or worry. Despite these comments, the response plays a significant role in determining if something is hilarious. It may thus be possible to clarify why people smile by focusing on language.

2.2 Perception of Humour

The term "perception" is used widely in this context, despite its complexity and variety of psychological meanings. It includes similar ideas like understanding and comprehension. This choice supports the notion that humour is not just cognitive; it often arises unintentionally, can be misinterpreted, and results from situations instead of planned mental processes.

According to Wahyuni and Naim (2019), students' perceptions encompass their attitudes, beliefs, and interpretations of the educational process and the classroom environment. Students' perceptions of humour are crucial when deciding whether they perceive it as an unnecessary distraction or as a helpful instrument to alleviate tension and promote participation. Students in this study were usually more likely to think humour had a beneficial impact on learning, which is consistent with previous research. Its positive effects could be linked to its ability to gain and maintain students' attention throughout class. When students are really interested, they are more capable of comprehending and remembering the content (Abraham et al., 2014).

2.3 Humour in a Foreign Language Classroom

The biggest educational obstacle for students to learn is boredom. Karden (2020) argues that bored students will find it difficult to remember what they are studying. Therefore, student learning must be conducted as best it can. One of the most commonly employed



communication techniques in language classes is humour (Tunnisa, 2018). Because employing humour in the classroom has enhanced student motivation and produced a more comfortable environment by bridging the gap between the teacher and the students (Farnia & Mohammadi, 2021). When employing humour in the classroom, teachers have to be mindful of a number of factors, so it is important to pay attention. According to research by Rashidi et al. (2014), instructors who are wildly hilarious risk offending their students. Therefore, in a related investigation, Ali et al. (2015) found that teachers ought to be aware that humour that is aimed at specific students may be seen as insults or bias. Furthermore, as teachers' humour may cause anxiety and even trauma in their students, it is not appropriate to use humour to criticize or humiliate them (Petraki & Nguyen, 2016). Humour seems varied in different situations. It makes sense to believe that humour in the classroom is different from humour in other contexts. Humour may only be present in the classroom setting because the classroom as a community includes both conflict and solidarity (Kim & Park 2017).

When using humour in the classroom, teachers ought to keep to the seven rules put forth by Rareshide (1993). Firstly, instructors must be aware of and open-minded to the different uses of humour. Second, a student should not be made fun of or humiliated using humour. Third, humour should always be active rather than aimless. Fourth, if humour is employed, it should be devoted to the student's level of proficiency. Fifth, teachers must recognize the value of both planned and unplanned humour and include it in their lessons. Sixth, in order to show their students that they are human, instructors should sometimes laugh at themselves. Seventh, they should only employ irony in light-hearted ways (Rareshide, 1993). Many individuals think it is the responsibility of teachers to keep students' attention and make learning fun (Woo et al., 2019). Teachers begin by sharing experiences from their own lives, making gestures, presenting amusing things, or telling short stories (Kavandi & Kavandi, 2016). Teachers should therefore be inventive in order to avoid this type of issue.

2.4 Benefits of Humour

Figure 2.1 below shows the benefits of humour in the classroom clearly:

Humour may achieve a number of significant objectives that include all aspects of social interaction while being light-hearted, non-serious, and occasionally seen as frivolous and unnecessary. Humour is instructionally beneficial to learners since it enhances comprehension and learning of L2 and develops the retention of the learning materials (Ziyaemehr, Kumar

& Abdullah, 2011). Munoz (2005) highlights (a) that humour paves the way for building vocabulary, (b) that humor helps students to distinguish figurative meaning from literal meaning, (c) that humor contributes to developing students' visual memory and (d) that humor promotes students' ability to sort out linguistic problems. Morrison (2008) indicates that the benefits of the use of humour in the classroom are creating an optimal learning environment, supporting the change process, contributing to healthy mind/body balance, maximizing brain power, enhancing creativity, and facilitating communication.

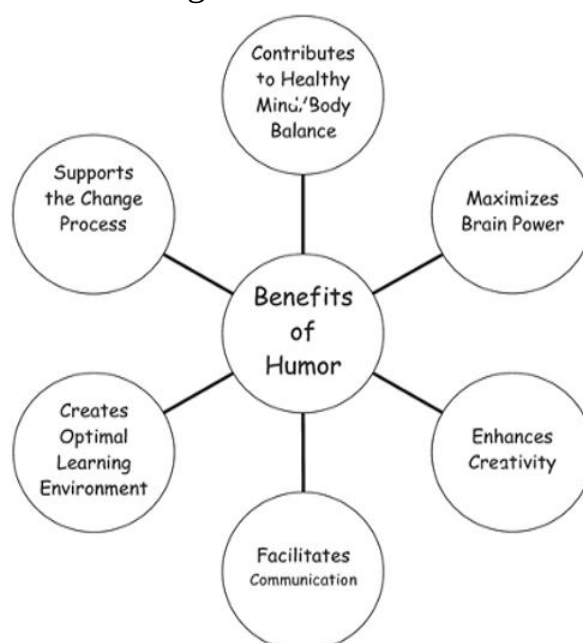


Figure 2.1 Benefits of Humour in the Classroom (Morrison, 2008, p. 10)

2.4.1 Physiological Benefits of Humour

Humour has been demonstrated to improve blood circulation, relax muscles, aid in digestion, and speed up the healing process following surgery (Cousins 1979; as cited from Ruch, 2007:179). Additionally, humour strengthens the body's defenses (Martin & Dobbin, 1988), increasing breathing and circulation (Fry & Rader, 1977), raising endorphin levels that aid in pain tolerance (Berk et al., 1989), in addition to reducing blood pressure. A physiological perspective that sees laughter as a release of stress is incorporated into the relief theory of humour. This notion of humour was supported by Freud. According to his theory, psychic energy is used in humorous situations and is physically discharged as laughter when it becomes excessive. In summary, science seems to support the claim that "laughter is the best medicine" (Fry & Savin, 1988).



2.4.2 Psychological Benefits of Humour

Psychological Advantages of Humour Olpin and Hesson (2013, p. 368) identify the main psychological advantages of humour: 1. Lowering anxiety and stress. 2. Increasing energy, confidence, self-esteem, and mood. 3. Boosting problem-solving, creativity, and memory 4. Improving relationships with others. Students always experience some degree of stress and anxiety during learning activities. Instead of making learning seem boring and uninteresting, humour may encourage students to find it fascinating and enjoyable (Berk, 1989).

2.4.3 Social Benefits of humour

Social Benefits of Humour Laughing and humour have various social benefits, such as improving teamwork, promoting group connection, defusing conflict, and building relationships. According to Sinnott (2013), p. 88, those who have a good sense of humour may be more socially competent and hence better able to ease social tensions, which may lead to more intimate relationships. Humorous people are also creative and adaptable, which makes them more accepting of new ideas and perspectives. Also, humour can assist in defusing tense circumstances or convey criticism in a way that is less menacing and serious (Axtell, 1998; Morreall, 1997). Additionally, Morreall (1997) noted a number of circumstances in which comedy can be helpful, including breaking terrible news, offering an apology, managing irrational criticisms, issuing commands and warnings, assessing and criticizing, resolving disputes, and much more.

2.4.4 Educational Benefits of humour

Advantages of education Humour in the classroom has generally been found to assist in easing tension, worry, anxiety, and boredom. Enhanced information retention (Garner, 2006; Kaplan & Pascoe, 1977), more understanding of the subject matter (Lucas, 2005), and enhanced student performance (Berk, 1996; Ziv, 1988) are some of the direct advantages of humour in education. It suggests wit, friendliness, and a kind attitude. On the other hand, wit indicates intelligence. Sharpness, cleverness, and immediacy are characteristics of wit. Witty remarks are meant to be entertaining and demonstrate a quick ability to identify and respond to incongruities. Then, wit is a type of humour.

2.5 Classification of Humour

Individuals deal with several kinds of conflict in their daily lives, which may appear in many ways and arise for many different reasons. Researchers have classified humour into verbal and nonverbal, mental and social, and stylistic components such as wordplay, irony, sarcasm, and storytelling. These variations make it clearer to comprehend how

humour works in various contexts. Additionally, as stated by Chee (2003), there are four main types of humour: (1) textual forms (like jokes and stories); (2) graphical forms (like cartoons and comics); (3) verbal forms (like puns, word games, and acronyms); and (4) action/games (like theater, video, role play, and contests). There are several different kinds of humour. Four types of humour were identified by Shade (1996): verbal, visual, auditory, and figural. This study's main focus is linguistic humour, which he classified into twelve types. Each sub type is explained in more detail in the section that follows:

2.5.1 Visual humour:

Can be expressed verbally or nonverbally. Ernida (as cited in Chaudhary, 2020) asserts that both the complexity of Shakespeare's plays and a simple joke shared among friends may be considered humorous. Humour can be a subjective experience or a communication tool; it can be based on common everyday facts or incorporate fiction and imagination; it can be amusing or offensive; it can be produced on an impulse of the moment or employed as a structured method of interpersonal and professional communication.

2.5.2 Verbal humor:

Verbal humour depends on the use of language to create a hilarious impact (Shade, 1996, as cited in Attardo, S. (1994)). In simple terms, puns, complete humour based on ambiguity, or humour based on the repetition of signifier components, such as alliteration, are ways to produce linguistic humour. In order to connect different semantic or pragmatic meanings, these forms of humour take full advantage of signifier changes. Semantic and pragmatic incongruity, on the other hand, is the best basis for referential humour.

2.5.2.1 Types of Verbal Humor

Verbal humour has several types, such as wordplay, sarcasm, and others.

2.5.2.1.1 Pun

Puns create lighthearted uses of language. It is a kind of humour that uses wordplay to express a specific meaning and interpretation. Sometimes words with similar sounds but different meanings are used in puns. This pun is taken from the classic "Shakespeare's play, Richard III."

2.5.2.1.2 Riddle

Shade (1996) suggested that a riddle might be compared to a word puzzle, an enigma, or a confusing reality. A joke and a riddle are similar in that they usually consist of a set of questions and answers and have a set format. Usually, riddles are questions with solutions. It uses joining facts to trick and fascinate people.





2.5.2.1.3 Joke

If it has any or all of the following elements: ambiguity, incongruity, abrupt shift in perspective, multiple meanings for words, idioms, and metaphors. Shade said that when examining verbal humour, a few different kinds of jokes stand out: 1. Phonological joke; 2. Lexical joke; 3. Structure a joke. 4. Deep structure joke: 5. A joke on metalanguage.

2.5.2.1.4 Satire

Satire is a type of literature that aims to be both hilarious and critical. It combines humour with criticism. LeBouef (2007) asserts that satires are increasingly being used as an artistic medium to critique human behavior. Exaggeration, distortion, and understatement are some of its techniques. An example can be seen in the section that follows from Shade (1996).

2.5.2.1.5 Limerick

Limericks are hilarious five-line poetry. The first requires rhyme, seven to ten syllables, and the same verbal cadence. second and fifth lines; also, the third and fourth lines must rhyme, have the same verbal rhythm (aa, bb, a), and include seven to ten syllables. A limerick is a five-line piece of silly poetry, based on Shade (1996). This limerick was drawn from King Lear in the year 1700.

2.5.2.1.6 Parody

Imitations of poetry, songs, tales, or films with the same style but ridiculously different contents are called parodies. The Cambridge for Advanced Learners Dictionary, 8th Edition, defines parody as any work of literature, music, art, speech, etc., that deliberately imitates a famous person's style or a specific situation, emphasizing the original's qualities in a light-hearted manner.

2.5.2.1.7 Anecdote

Anecdotal texts describe unexpected or amusing events, according to Gerot and Wignell (1995). Anecdotes are short stories about real people and real events that are typically amusing or interesting. A sound description of actual or hypothetical events is called a biographical anecdote.

2.5.2.1.8 Farce

A farce is one kind of humour that is renowned for its rude laughter. A specific incident is often imitated in a comedy. The passage that follows is taken from the monologue dialogue.

2.5.2.1.9 Irony

Speech that has an intended meaning that is contrary to the actual meaning is referred to as ironic. It is the discrepancy between expectations and reality, between what is said and done.



2.5.2.1.10 Sarcasm

Sarcasm makes people laugh by using taunts, scoffing remarks, or subtle sneers. Sarcasm is different from irony in that it is sharper and has the potential to offend people. According to the Cambridge for Advanced Learners Dictionary, third edition (2008), sarcasm is defined as a remark intended to offend someone or to offer criticism that has the opposite meaning of what is said in a light-hearted manner.

2.5.2.1. 11 tall tales

The majority of the details and events related to the characters, setting, and plots of tall tales are exaggerated. It ranges from the absurd to the impractical.

2.5.2.1.12 Wit

Wit's tone is strange and mocking, and the way it is phrased makes people laugh. Wit has traditionally been thought to have a sharp mind and a high level of intelligence. In conclusion, the previously mentioned examples make it evident what linguistic humour is. There are twelve various kinds of linguistic humour, each of which consists of an original joke that is presented in a variety of ways. Each variety has particular characteristics and will be used differently.

2.6 Humour theories:

The various methods that humans employ to practice humour are included in the theories of humour. They are separated into various kinds and formats to help scholars and students in comprehending the complexity of humour research. The superiority/derision theory, the incongruity theory, and the relief/release theory (Elkhayma, 2021).

2.6.1 Relief theory

The key concept in Freud's theory, which is widely accepted in psychology and linguistics, views humour as a way to express differences between individuals among people (Nilsen & Nilsen, 2019). According to this idea, humour is seen as a welcome change in the language classroom, as it shows how the discomfort and anxiety caused by instructor humour can help students who are unfamiliar (Ziyeemehr et al. 2011, p. 112).

2.6.2 Superiority theory

The origins of the superiority theory of humour date back to Plato and Aristotle in past times. The superiority theory claims that people make fun of other people's unfortunate events. (Farnia et al., 2020). As suggested by Jeder (2015, p. 829), "The pleasure of calling to humor comes from the feeling of superiority of the one who laughs."

2.6.3 The incongruity theory

The incongruity-resolution hypothesis of humour, which has its origins in psychology, perceives incongruity as a part of humour. Relying on



Beattie's (1776) Incongruity Resolution Theory, as cited in Raskin (1985), "Laughter arises from the view of two or more inconsistent, unsuitable, or incongruous parts or circumstances, considered as united in one complex object or assemblage, or as acquiring a sort of mutual relation from the peculiar way in which the mind takes notice of them."

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This section will explain the data collection and analysis plan. This study focuses on one of the MA study's research questions which is: does the use of humor in EFL university classrooms have an influence on students' perceptions? The research questions from the MA study facilitated the development of this hypothesis. When EFL teachers effectively incorporate humour into their lessons, students are more likely to be interested in and succeed in the language learning process.

3.1.1 Sample Selection

All participants were third-year students studying in the Colleges of Basic Education at universities in Raparin, Kirkuk, Halabja, and Charmo who were enrolled in the English Language program (2025–2026). Since it was a cost-effective way to gather feedback from a large number of participants (Cohen et al., 2011), only 100 because students were selected. A 20-item survey was utilized to gather quantitative information from the 100 undergraduate students who were divided into four groups across the different universities.

In order to standardize individuals as much as appropriate, this study specifically included third-year students participating in the English Language Foundation Course for a variety of factors. Purwanti et al. (2024) conducted interviews with third-year EFL students because they had enough English ability and classroom experience to talk about humour meaningfully.

Students in their third year of the English language program were intentionally included in this study to ensure demographic consistency. Since all of the participants were undergraduate students studying English as a foreign language (EFL), the first original objective of this study is to investigate the use of humor in educational settings. Second, the first researcher was in direct contact with the teaching staff while teaching one of the classes. He also requested the teachers assist the researcher by informing the students about this study before starting collecting data. Finally, there were 100 students, which was deemed sufficient for the data-gathering process. In addition, the questionnaires were completed on paper. After being evaluated, the completed surveys were transformed into digital data utilizing SPSS.



3.1.2 Data Analysis

According to Creswell and Plano-Clark (2017), the study employed an immediately preceding type of analysis, starting with a quantitative database for initial data analysis. The researcher then provided a comprehensive picture after carefully examining the datasets. Percentages for each item were obtained through entering and processing the survey findings. Descriptive quantitative data analysis was employed (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). The discussion about teachers' use of humour in the classroom was affected by the percentage of students' responses.

To gain a deeper understanding of the results, a qualitative component was carried out after the quantitative phase. Participants were specifically chosen depending on how close their results were to the group mean. Face-to-face approaches were used to gather data, and Excel and SPSS were used to analyze the results of the questionnaire and create descriptive statistics. The results were analyzed to find patterns from the students' answers about the use of humour in the classroom.

In addition to make sure the results were in line with the objectives of the study, the results were shown in the Results and Finding sections below with quantitative data analysis. This includes the methods used to process and analyze data as well as the steps taken to ensure validity and dependability. Thus, the study provided a systematic framework for studying how students perceive humour in EFL lessons and how it connects to motivation and humour types.

4. Results and Findings

4.1 Students' Data from Questionnaires

Students were given questionnaires to carry out in order to gather information about their opinions on the function of humour in the EFL learning process and the connection between humour use and perceptions of language learning. Twenty statements and questions were included in the questionnaires that were distributed to one hundred undergraduates. These surveys were supplied on stiff sheets; responses were gathered, data were manually entered into SPSS, and the data's reliability was evaluated.

4.2 Reliability of Data

Reliability is the degree to which data is dependable and consistent. To increase data confidence, an effective basis must be created. One of the key objectives of the projects is to keep data dependable. If a measurement technique consistently produces the same results when used repeatedly on the same subject, it is considered reliable. The reliability of information is evaluated by the Cronbach's Alpha value; acceptable internal consistency was suggested by Cronbach's Alpha (0.75). A



measurement called Cronbach's alpha is used to evaluate a set of items' internal consistency and determine how closely related they are. It is regarded as an assessment of the scale's reliability. Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.7 are regarded as significant for data. The data set gathered from the students has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.758, indicating that the data is reliable and significant as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.1: Case Processing Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	25	100.0
	Excluded	0	.0
	Total	25	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Table 4.2 Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.758	20

4.3 Results from Students

The questionnaire has been administered to a sample of 100 undergraduate students who have been enrolled in the universities of Raparin, Kirkuk, Halabja, and Charmo. The descriptive statistics of students' answers about the advantages of humour are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Students' responses to the survey items

N	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Using humour in the classroom promotes thinking critically and creativity.	2	2	26	52	18	3.8	0.82
2	I appreciate attending courses more because of the instructor's use of humour.	5	7	33	35	20	3.6	1.04
3	When the teacher makes jokes while teaching the class, I comprehend things better.	2	0	19	37	42	4.2	0.88
4	Teachers' use of humor as an engaging teaching strategy may improve students' learning outcomes.	1	8	22	43	26	3.9	0.94
5	When my teacher uses humor in the classroom, I feel free to ask questions.	0	7	17	44	32	4	0.89
6	I think that humor serves as a vital bridge for communication between instructor and students.	1	5	21	46	27	4	0.89
7	Instructors utilize humour to foster a fun and comfortable learning environment.	2	9	36	40	13	3.5	0.9
8	Instructors who use humor are more liked and favored than those who don't.	2	7	23	40	28	3.9	0.98
9	I have amusing conversations with both my teachers and other students during class.	0	12	41	35	12	3.5	0.86
10	Throughout my academic	2	15	30	38	15	3.5	0.99





	studies, I have frequently had teachers that use humour in their lessons.							
11	I occasionally find that humour in the classroom distracts me from the lesson	4	20	32	34	10	3.3	1.02
12	The mental health of learners may be affected by the humour in the classroom.	0	12	23	45	20	3.7	0.92
13	Compared to other teachers I have encountered; my teachers employ humour in their lessons more frequently.	1	12	34	38	15	3.5	0.93
14	I think that humor makes students feel motivated and inspired, which encourages them to study more.	1	3	18	44	34	4	0.93
15	All forms of humor that are appropriate can help students learn, but some types of humor can be detrimental.	4	5	13	37	41	4	1.05
16	I'm not afraid of making mistakes because humor is frequently used in the classroom.	5	11	24	32	28	3.7	1.14
17	Humour helps students in remembering what they have learned.	1	4	18	42	35	4	0.89
18	When humor is employed as a teaching tool, I am more likely to participate in class activities.	0	2	29	41	28	4	0.81
19	I understand and enjoy humor in my native tongue better than I do in	2	12	34	32	20	3.6	1.00

	English.							
20	When students find the lessons entertaining or humorous, they are more likely to participate in EFL classes.	1	4	24	43	28	3.9	0.88

4.4 Descriptive Statistics of Students' Data

Descriptive statistics were used on the students' data; questionnaire results were interpreted between students' responses on the relationship between the use of humour and perceptions. The respondents were asked to respond to a number of statements and questions on the questionnaire in order to express themselves and share their thoughts on how much humour was perceived by them. Regarding the findings, most of the students agreed that the use of humour by EFL teachers is believed to create a very supportive and comforting environment for EFL students, which generally improves learners' perceptions throughout an entire English language class.

The section demonstrates the results of the statements in the questionnaire that pertaining to the use of humour and perception which including the following:

1. Using humour in the classroom promotes thinking critically and creativity.
2. When the teacher makes jokes while teaching the class, I comprehend things better.
3. Instructors who use humor are more liked and favored than those who do not.
4. The mental health of learners may be affected by the humour in the classroom.
5. I'm not afraid of making mistakes because humor is frequently used in the classroom.





Table 4.4: Using humour in the classroom promotes thinking critically and creativity.

		Item1			Cumulative Percent
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	4.0
	Neutral	26	26.0	26.0	30.0
	Agree	52	52.0	52.0	82.0
	Strongly Agree	18	18.0	18.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

To begin with, statement 1: "Using humor in the classroom promotes critical and creative thinking." Over fifty percent of the students (52%) think and agree that their teachers' use of humour in the classroom fosters both critical and creative thinking. A quarter of them (26%) are neutral about it and believe that using it is appropriate after this. In addition, 18% of students highly approve and agree with the statement. Also, only 4% of students disagree with this statement, and they do not believe that humour helps foster critical and creative thinking. The majority of students agree that employing humour in the classroom can encourage critical and creative thinking, as indicated by the statement's mean score of 3.8. The standard deviation is 0.82.

Table 4.5: When the teacher makes a joke while teaching the class, I comprehend things better.

		Item3			Cumulative Percent
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Neutral	19	19.0	19.0	21.0
	Agree	37	37.0	37.0	58.0
	Strongly Agree	42	42.0	42.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Furthermore, the statement 3 remark, "When the teacher makes jokes while teaching the class, I comprehend things better," relates to how well students understand their lectures when their teachers employ humour. 42% of respondents strongly agree with this statement, stating that they find it easier to understand lectures when instructors use humour. A second higher percentage of agreement, 37% of them, comes after this. Additionally, 19% of students do not have an opinion. On the other hand,

only 2% of students disagree with this assertion, and they do not believe that using humour in the classroom improves comprehension. The average score for this statement is 4.2, indicating that most students agree that jokes made by the teacher during class lectures help students understand the material better. The standard deviation is 0.88.

Table 4.6: Instructors who use humor are more liked and favored than those who do not.

		Item8			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Disagree	7	7.0	7.0	9.0
	Neutral	23	23.0	23.0	32.0
	Agree	40	40.0	40.0	72.0
	Strongly Agree	28	28.0	28.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Moreover, a large number of students (40%) agree with statement 8, which states that “instructors who employ humour are more liked and preferred than those who do not.” Further, 28% of students completely and strongly agree with this statement. The remaining 23% of students do not agree or disagree with this statement. In addition, the statement's lowest percentages for “disagree” and “strongly disagree” are 7% and 2%, respectively. The majority of students agree that instructors who employ humour are more admired and preferred than those who do not, as indicated by the item's mean score of 3.9. The standard deviation is 0.98.

Table 4.7: The mental health of learners may be affected by the humour in the classroom.

		Item12			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	12	12.0	12.0	12.0
	Neutral	23	23.0	23.0	35.0
	Agree	45	45.0	45.0	80.0
	Strongly Agree	20	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Furthermore, statement 12 focuses on the connection between humour and mental health, suggesting that students' mental health may be



impacted by humour in the classroom. The largest number of students—45%—agree that using humour in the classroom has an effect on students' mental health. Additionally, 23% of them had no opinion regarding this item. However, 20% of students strongly concur with this assertion. Though, 12% of students argue that humour has no negative impact on students' mental health in the classroom. The majority of students agree that humour in the classroom may have an impact on students' mental health, as indicated by the item's mean score of 3.7. This item's standard deviation is 0.92.

Table 4.8: I'm not afraid of making mistakes because humor is frequently used in the classroom.

		Item16			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	5	5.0	5.0	5.0
	Disagree	11	11.0	11.0	16.0
	Neutral	24	24.0	24.0	40.0
	Agree	32	32.0	32.0	72.0
	Strongly Agree	28	28.0	28.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

Additionally, statement 16 discusses using humour and making mistakes in the classroom: Since “humour is commonly employed in the classroom, I'm not afraid of making mistakes.” In classes where humour is employed, the majority of students—32%—agree with the assertion and don't mind making mistakes. 28% of students strongly agree with this statement, which comes next. As well, 24% of them had no perspective on this remark. However, 11% of students disagree with it, and 5% strongly disagree, and they fear making mistakes because humour is often employed in the classroom. Since humour is regularly utilized in the classroom, the majority of students believe that they are not scared to make mistakes, as indicated by the statement's mean of 3.7. The standard deviation is 1.14.

5. Discussion

Regarding the findings, most of the students explained that the use of humour by EFL teachers is considered to create a very supportive and comfortable environment for EFL students, which generally improves learners' perception during an English language classroom lesson. Students in the present research particularly mentioned that when humour is employed in the classroom, it improves their perceptions of themselves, boosts participation, and makes them feel comfortable. A variety of

learners reported that using humour in the classroom assisted them to feel less nervous, more comfortable, and relaxed. The results of this research are consistent with earlier studies ((Petraki & Nguyen, 2016; Askildson, 2005; Forman, 2011; Brandl, 2008; Arnold & Brown, 1999; Krashen, 1982; Latiff & Daud, 2013; Anttila, 2008; Zhang & Xu, 2011; Chiasson, 2002; Ziyaeemehr et al., 2011).

The results indicate how humour promotes learners' motivation, participation, and performance in the classroom. An additional finding is that when a teacher is humorous and incorporates humour into everyday lessons, students reported that they arrived on time for their classes. This finding supports Faulkner (2011), finding that humour is any spoken or physical action, whether planned or unintentional, that makes students laugh, giggle, or smile. This finding supports the concept that students feel less anxious and more encouraged when their instructors use humour in the classroom.

Teachers should adhere to Rareshide's seven principles while utilizing humour in the classroom (1993). First, teachers need to be mindful of and open-minded to the various applications of humour. Second, humour should never be used to insult or criticize a student. Third, humour should never be aimless; it should always be active. Even if humour is used, it should be appropriate to the student's skill level. Fifth, instructors must understand the significance of planned and accidental humour and include it in their lessons. Sixth, teachers should occasionally make fun of themselves to demonstrate to their students that they are human. Seventh, they should only use irony in humorous contexts (Rareshide, 1993).

In pedagogy, humour is an essential instrument that can assist teachers in fostering an inspiring environment in the classroom to improve students' learning. Humour has been considered as classroom learning and has been the topic of years of research by educational scholars. motivator for teaching (Rochmawati, 2011). When the results of this study are analyzed, it can be seen that the use of humour in the classroom had beneficial impacts (e.g., helping students feel more relaxed, producing a more comfortable and positive learning environment). This result was consistent with earlier research by Medgyes (2001, 2002), Munoz (2005), Schmitz (2002), Senior (2001), and Ziyaeemehr et al. (2011). The findings of earlier research by Antilla (2008) demonstrated the detrimental impacts of humour in the classroom (e.g., humour being a waste of valuable learning time in the classroom and its use during a lesson being distracting). Despite this, the present investigation discovered the benefits of using humour in the classroom, such as raising student interest in learning a foreign language, humour helping learners



focus better on the lecture, and humour making students feel more relaxed in the classroom. As stated by Ziyaeemehr, Kumar, and Abdullah (2011), humour improves L2 understanding and learning and helps students recall the information.

As suggested by Morrison (2008), using humour in the classroom can help create the most effective educational environment, support the process of change, promote a healthy mind-body balance, maximize brain power, foster creativity, and facilitate communication. Students' attitudes, convictions, and interpretations of the learning process and the classroom setting are all included in their perceptions. When determining whether students view humour as an unnecessary diversion or as a useful tool to reduce stress and encourage participation, their opinions play a critical role. In the context of EFL, when students may be nervous about utilizing a foreign language, positive emotions of humour can make the learning environment more enjoyable and encouraging. Students use humour as a teaching tool (Wahyuni & Naim, 2019).

According to Wahyuni and Naim (2019), students' attitudes, convictions, and interpretations of the learning process and the classroom setting are all included in their perceptions. When determining whether students view humour as an unnecessary diversion or as a useful tool to reduce stress and encourage participation, their opinions play a critical role. In the context of EFL, when students may be nervous about utilizing a foreign language, positive emotions of humour can make the learning environment more enjoyable and encouraging. Students use humour as a teaching tool.

As indicated by Martin (2007, p. 11), there are three main categories of humour in regular social interactions: (1) Jokes are prepared, humorous stories that people remember and tell each other. (2) Spontaneous conversational humour, which is purposefully created during social interactions and can be either vocal or nonverbal. (3) Random or inadvertent hilarity.

Additionally, as indicated by Chee (2003), humour can be classified into four categories: (1) textual forms, such as jokes and stories; (2) graphical forms, such as cartoons and comics; (3) verbal forms, such as puns, word games, and acronyms; and (4) action/games, such as theater, video, role play, and competitions.

More precisely, the present investigation discovered that (a) humour was crucial to learning a foreign language, (b) students could learn more effectively when their foreign language teacher employed humour, and (c) they felt more connected to the teacher when he or she used humour; (d) they learned more about the foreign language's culture by being



exposed to its native humour; and (e) humour generally enhanced their ability to learn a foreign language by fostering a more relaxed and favorable learning environment. Unquestionably, a positive, calm, and comfortable environment for learning enhances student learning. However, students may become bored, frustrated, or stressed out in a discouraged, uninteresting, and frustrating classroom setting, which could have a detrimental impact on their learning. At this point, the teacher's use of humour in the EFL classroom can actually contribute to an efficient teaching and learning process.

6. Conclusion:

Humour's function in language learning is complicated; therefore, it needs to be studied from a variety of perspectives. The idea that humour may be utilized effectively in EFL classes and can encourage students during the lesson is corroborated by a significant number of relevant research studies and empirical evidence. It encourages students to pay attention and participate effectively in class. When humour is used in the class, students are kept calm. For the purpose of increasing encouragement and participation with the process of learning a language, EFL teachers should believe in employing humour as an effective educational technique. The current study results reveal seven findings related to how students responded to the teachers' use of humour 1) creating enjoyable learning activities; 2) stimulating students' innate interest; 3) reducing nervousness in the classroom; 4) helping learners with material comprehension; 5) promoting classroom interaction; 6) lowering tension and boredom; and 7) boosting student engagement.

Based on the results, it is recommended that EFL teachers in the class and other comparable settings incorporate humour into their lesson plans because of its beneficial effects on student participation and learning results. In an effort to use humour effectively, teachers should be familiar with the circumstances of the classroom in order to decide which types of humour are most appropriate; use humour purposefully to support lesson objectives; be respectful of culture to ensure appropriateness; encourage student participation to foster interaction; and continuously reflect on and modify their strategies based on learning outcomes and student feedback. By implementing these strategies, instructors can improve student performance and engagement in EFL classrooms by creating a more relaxed and motivating learning environment.



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