

Using Jokes or Humor for Language Teaching

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Humor is something that makes the person Laugh or Smile. Humor is the quality of being funny. Humor is the ability to be amused by things.

A sense of Humor is an inborn human capacity, like the ability to walk and talk. A Joke is the most common form of Humor. What we can teach is the language of Humor. Humor is one of the best Vehicles for Language Teaching and its motivational value cannot be overestimated! Jokes are the tool to create Humor or Laughter and if the teacher makes the use of Jokes into his classroom, it makes atmosphere tension free, so students learn the language with ease. Krashen says that learner can learn in the Atmosphere of ease. Jokes make the learner Active Participants. Through Jokes teacher can make the learners think on it and thereby improve their language unconsciously.

It will also examine how Non-Native English-speaking teachers can benefit from using Humor in Language Classroom. Most teachers and learners are, at the beginning, reluctant (unwilling) to use Jokes with much language content in them. That is why most teachers avoid using Humor in ELT. However, the use of Humor does not necessarily force the learners and the teachers to be Comedians. The reason to use Humorous texts is to enhance language learning and to increase student participation in Classroom Activities.

“Joke is something said or done to amuse people and cause Laughter. Especially a funny story or amusing trick.” some people like to hear or make a Joke, because it making situation being Conductive and Fun.

Jokes are the source of Enjoyment for those who understand it, However if someone continually misses the punch line one becomes frustrated. One, who laughs last, laughs best, runs the adage, but in Cohen’s paraphrase. One who laughs last is generally the last to get the Joke or The leaner that is not very proficient in the language. This matter is very important in Jokes which one should keep in mind while teaching Jokes for language learning. Laughing matters aims to develop the skill or understanding Jokes in English.

Jokes should not be used as a full time long lesson activity but as a fun time activity in classroom. Jokes have a Universal Appeal and Cultural Bound. Humor is the best source of Authentic Cultural information about other people. The Culture-Based Jokes may require students as well as teachers to be familiar with the Target Culture. Due to their Cultural Motives of the language, such Jokes are the most difficult ones and some students may have problems comprehending them. Students should be familiar with the culture which the Jokes reflect because if they are not familiar, they cannot understand the Meaning of the Jokes as well as the Culture of others.

For example,

Teacher: (To a new day) What is your name?

New Boy: Elbert Erras

Teacher: Always say 'Sir' please, when you are speaking to the master. It is more polite.

New Boy: (Apologetically)_____. (Students choose from the following choices.)

A. Elbert Arras, sir B. Elbert Arras C. Sir Elbert Arras D. Arras Elbert, sir

Above Joke is written by China Teacher for Cultural awareness measure the student. This is one of the typical Mini-Cloze Tests we can use to Test Students Cultural Knowledge.

Joke is again Idiosyncratic and Person Bound because meaning is different from Individual to Individual. English Humor can be used to discuss and expand on Typical Life Experiences, exemplifying typical Social Phenomenon of the Target Culture.

For example,

Client: Do you charge by the hour?

Lawyer: No, I don't.

Client: Then, how do you charge for a consultation?

Lawyer: I charge by the number of questions asked.

Client: How much do you charge for one question?

Lawyer: Thirty dollars.

Client: That's expensive.

Lawyer: Yes, and you now owe me ninety dollars.

The Audience should be Intelligent enough to get the Joke. The effect of Joke greatly depends on the synergy between the Joke, The Joker and the 'Jokee.' Jokee is important in the Joke. Not everybody is a Good Joke teller so it is of high importance to extensively prepared oneself for such an activity. Even the most Amusing and Entertaining Joke loses its significance if it is told at an improper time and place.

It is probably true that the Joke is most common form of Humor but one cannot teach Humor. One can teach the Language of Humor. After all most humorous stuff is deeply embedded in language. We can use the language to make Humor accessible for students and, conversely, use Humor to make the language accessible. Humor is one of the best Vehicles for Language Teaching and its Motivational value cannot be overestimated.

Advantages of Using Jokes in the Language Teaching in Classroom

- 1) Jokes help the learners to improve their Pronunciation. In some of the Joke the speaker repeats the same Word, Sound and Pronunciation again and again and thus, the students learn the right Pronunciation of that Word. The Jokes with Tongue Twister make our Tongue Flexible and improve our Pronunciation aspects.

For Example:

There is no need to light a night light on a light night like tonight for a night light's a slight light on a night like tonight.

Whether the weather be fine or whether the weather be not,

Whether the weather be cold or whether the weather be hot,

We weather the weather whatever the weather and whether we like it or not.

- 2) Joke is a good Vehicle for providing Authentic Cultural information about other people for example the learner can get idea regarding the way of Speaking of the people of particular Region, their Cultures, Traditions, Customs, Ethical Values, Festival etc. It builds the bridges between Cultures and Individuals. Humor is an ideal form of promoting understanding and friendship.
- 3) It brings students closer to each other. A Joke is the best when cracked in the company of friends so it can connect participants with the shared moment of fun. At class reunion, for instance, former classmates take it in turns to amuse one another with funny stories from past years.
- 4) It Reduces the Tension of the learners for example, for any reason if the classroom atmosphere or an individual in the class is much tensed, and a good Joke is cracked, everyone's face breaks into a Hundred Dimples and Furrows. Jokes can reduce Anxiety. Thus, it relieves the class out of tensed and stressed situation and makes all feel at ease. Moreover, People who Laugh a Lot Live Longer. Perhaps one thing is certain laughter improves the quality of life or in the way it also improves the quality of language learning.
- 5) It develops Creative Thinking in learners for example, If the teacher tell them incomplete Joke and ask them to complete remain part then it forces them to think about proper end.

For example, The teacher Narrate this Joke incomplete before the student:

After the operation, the Doctor tells his Patient that he has a good news and bad news which news he wants first?

The patient goes for bad news.

The doctor tells him that he has had to remove his right lung.

The patient asks what is the good news?

Then the doctor says ...

- 6) Here in this activity students may replay in different ways like: Then the doctor says...Now there is enough space for your liver. But the left lung is all right. There is no need of lung. By this activity teacher can get a Variety of Creative Answers. Moreover it helps the students to get exposed to different ways of expressing language. Thus, Jokes are very useful in Language Teaching it provides Innovative Language Exposure.
- 7) Through Jokes learner can practice language items in Genuine Contexts. It teaches how to use language in Proper Contexts. Also One-liner Jokes have good context, e.g. My Boss is so unpopular even his own Shadow Refuses to Follow Him. The student will get aware of using language in proper context. Jokes are the best example to display the language used in Real Life. It provides Memorable Chunks of language for example Proverb generally we don't like to teach but if we make it funny it creates interest in learner and will provoke him to access language.

For example:

An Apple a day keeps the Doctor away.

An Onion a day keeps Everybody away.

An Apple a day keeps the Doctor away but too much a day brings a Doctor today.

A student will also get motivated to generate such fun provoking language chunks and thus, will access the language in a better way.

- 8) Through Jokes teacher can teach language with Fun. It creates Atmosphere of Joy of learning. Joke will enliven the classroom atmosphere. It will incite them to participate in the fun driving activities. It will lead them to access language innovatively and generate more quality of language.
- 9) It enhances the Motivation of the Learner. The language used in Joke is very Easy, Simple and Fun Provoked. So naturally the students get tempted to access language experimentatively and thus, it enhances the level of Motivation. It reinforces previously learnt item whatever the student has learnt up till now, he tries to associate and experiment them into the Joke, he may use variety of Tenses, Verbs, Nouns, Adjectives, etc. Which he has learnt till now.
- 10) English Humor covers every aspect of Interpersonal Relationships: Parent-Child, Employer-Employee, Doctor-Patient, Lawyer-Client, Teacher-Student, Clerk-Customer, to name but a few. It can provide rich social and cultural knowledge of the Target Community for EFL students.

