

077. The effect of humour strategies on speaking anxiety in EFL classes¹

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Abstract

English is an international language around the world (Crystal, 2020). Therefore, people have to learn how to speak English and how to communicate with other people who are from different countries or nationalities. However, there is not enough opportunities for education to speak English in Turkey. English language teaching in Turkey is usually carried out by just teaching grammar rules.. So, it can bring about some problems as learners can't speak English, or even if they can speak English, people are always afraid of making mistakes. Especially, they try to avoid making mistakes with grammar rules. The more learners focus on grammar while they are speaking, the more they can have some anxiety about speaking. Hence, most of the learners who learn English have anxiety about speaking. Though we have English classes from primary school to university, we can't speak English and it makes learners nervous while they are speaking. At this point, humour strategies can help to decrease speaking anxiety in t learners. Humour strategies can have some positive impact on overcoming speaking anxiety. The research aims to investigate the positive effects of humour strategies on speaking anxiety of English preparatory class 1st-year students studying at Necmettin Erbakan University School of Foreign Language. This study has been conducted with the participation of 250 university prep class students aged between 18-21. A mixed method has been used to collect data. Data has been collected through a survey of anxiety scale, a humour strategies scale, and interview questions.

Keywords: humour strategies, speaking anxiety, foreign language teaching, spoken English

Mizah stratejilerinin İngilizce yabancı dil sınıflarında konuşma kaygısına etkisi

Öz

İngilizce dünya çapında uluslararası bir dildir (Crystal, 2020). Bu nedenle, insanlar İngilizce konuşmayı ve farklı ülkelerden veya milletlerden olan diğer insanlarla nasıl iletişim kuracaklarını öğrenmek zorundadır. Ancak Türkiye'de İngilizce konuşmak için yeterli eğitim imkânı yok. Türkiye'de İngilizce öğretimi genellikle sadece dilbilgisi kurallarının öğretilmesiyle yapılır. Dolayısıyla öğrenenlerin İngilizce konuşamaması ya da İngilizce konuşsa bile insanlar her zaman hata yapmaktan korktukları için bazı sorunları da beraberinde getirebilir. Özellikle gramer kurallarında hata yapmaktan kaçınmaya çalışırlar. Öğrenciler konuşurken dilbilgisine ne kadar çok

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odaklanırlarsa, konuşma konusunda o kadar çok kaygıları olabilir. Bu nedenle, İngilizce öğrenen öğrencilerin çoğu konuşma konusunda kaygı duyar. İlkokuldan üniversiteye kadar İngilizce derslerimiz olmasına rağmen İngilizce konuşmıyoruz ve bu da öğrencileri konuşurken tedirgin ediyor. Bu noktada mizah stratejileri öğrenenlerde konuşma kaygısını azaltmaya yardımcı olabilir. Mizah stratejilerinin konuşma kaygısının üstesinden gelmede bazı olumlu etkileri olabilir. Araştırma, Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu'nda öğrenim gören İngilizce hazırlık sınıfı 1. sınıf öğrencilerinin mizah stratejilerinin konuşma kaygıları üzerindeki olumlu etkilerini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, yaşları 18-21 arasında değişen 250 üniversite hazırlık sınıfı öğrencisinin katılımıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Veri toplamak için karma bir yöntem kullanılmıştır. Veriler kaygı ölçeği anketi, mizah stratejileri ölçeği ve görüşme soruları aracılığıyla toplanmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Mizah stratejileri, konuşma kaygısı, yabancı dil öğretimi, konuşma İngilizcesi

1. Introduction

Among the four skills, speaking is considered to be the most important skill because if a person knows a language s/he is usually referred to as a speaker of that language (Ur, 1996). Spoken language production is often considered to be one of the most difficult aspects of language learning (Brown & Yule, 1983). Every language student encounters a fresh circumstance that may affect their entire character. Therefore, successful learning of a language requires total commitment, in-depth focus, and efficient emotion management (Brown, 2007). Students' attitudes are sometimes negatively affected by educational context elements such as English language instructors and English language-learning settings (e.g., classrooms, seating arrangements, and the physical learning environment) (Getie, 2020). The feeling and emotion of a learner can be affected by these factors and it can bring about anxiety toward language learning (Woodrow, L. 2006). Empirical research shows that a learner who is anxious about learning a new language can be unwilling to participate in learning activities and they can be less successful than learners who are not anxious about learning a foreign language. The foreign language learning process is unique because learners are required to communicate using a language that they have not mastered perfectly (Tsiplakides & Street, 2009). Hence, it can bring about some speaking anxiety and even it can create anxiety about learning a foreign language. Anxious could be a barrier to learning, especially to learning foreign languages. Students who exhibit communication apprehension do not feel comfortable communicating in the target language in front of others, due to their limited knowledge of the language, especially in speaking and listening skills (Tsiplakides & Street, 2009) It is crucial to deal with speaking anxiety.

To get over the speaking anxiety, there are some solutions. One of the most important solutions is to create a non-stressful environment for the learners (Ekizer, 2021). Various researchers have commonly stated some reasons for using humour in classroom atmosphere: its effect as a relaxing, comforting, and tension-reducing device, its humanizing effect on teacher image, and its effect of maintaining/increasing student interest and enjoyment (Azizinezhad & Hashemi, 2011). So, humour in EFL classes can have a profound impact on the learning process of the learners. Especially for teenagers, it is important to make positive and funny conversations with them. In this way, teachers can decrease anxiety and eliminate the barriers which are in front of learning a foreign language. For example, when a teacher stumbles by saying a vocabulary, s/he can mention it and laugh at her/himself. Thanks to this attitude, learners can feel relaxed and they are not afraid of making mistakes, especially pronunciation mistakes. According to Azizinezhad & Hashemi, psychologically speaking, humour and laughter help shy language learners to participate in the class more and feel as a part of the group. It's a way of dealing with those

language learners who are too afraid, shy, or nervous to express themselves in a foreign language (Azizinezhad & Hashemi, 2011).

The main goal of learning English as a foreign language is to speak and understand the target language for several opportunities. However, speaking anxiety makes this success harder for learners. These difficulties lead many researchers to look into this problem and try to cure it (Çağatay, 2015). Most studies on language anxiety have demonstrated negative effects on language learning performance and communicative competence, and academics are still attempting to develop novel strategies for minimizing its influence in EFL programs. This research focuses on the effects of humour strategies on speaking anxiety in EFL classes.

As mentioned above, speaking anxiety is a huge negative impact on learning a foreign language. Learners and teachers need to overcome this situation, and find a solution to this problem. In EFL classes, even though the learners can know English, they can be unwilling to participate in the learning process, or they think that they can make a mistake in grammar or pronunciation because of speaking anxiety. It is a big trouble that needs to be handled. This research aims to investigate the effects of humour strategies on the speaking anxiety of learners who are preparatory class students. The main research interest is whether humour strategies have positive effects on speaking anxiety or not. Previous studies have indicated that humour strategies have positive effects on speaking anxiety.

2. Literature review

2.1 Speaking Anxiety

According to (Özodaşık, 2020), anxiety is a sentimental state that makes people tense and stressed. Anxiety can emerge from different causes. Speaking anxiety is one of the vital causes of anxiety nowadays. Speaking anxiety associated with learning or utilizing a foreign language includes feelings of uneasiness, concern, nervousness, and trepidation. The emotions might be related to the acting ability to speak. Because of its close connection to fluency in the target language, research shows that foreign language anxiety is a major issue in language schools across the world. Psychologists classify anxiety related to learning a new language as a distinct anxiety disorder. Anxiety may strike anybody at any time, but those who are genetically prone to it may experience it more frequently and intensely than others. However, because the anxiety associated with learning a foreign language is situational, it might impact even people who don't suffer from a generalized anxiety disorder. Having trouble communicating with other people, being anxious about exams, and worrying about being judged negatively are the primary sources of anxiety when learning a foreign language. Anxiety over speaking a foreign language can hinder a learner's progress in many ways, but it can be alleviated via conscious efforts on the part of both the learner and the instructor.

2.2 Causes of Speaking Anxiety

A study carried out by Tsiplakides & Street (2009) aimed to investigate a helpful variety of suggestions, arising from a classroom-based case study, which would assist teachers to decrease language anxiety, enhancing motivation, and fostering English language acquisition. The research comprised of fifteen 13- to 14-year-old students in the third year of lower secondary school in Greece. Three times a week, students attended 45-minute classes. The research aim is to investigate Qualitative data collection was

used to collect data. Data analysis revealed that students suffered from public-speaking anxiety due to a combination of poor self-esteem and the belief that their peers had inadequate abilities.

Çağatay, (2015) has investigated EFL students' Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety (FLSA) as well as its potential causes and potential remedies. Foreign language learning involves cognitive and emotive components on the side of the learners. Anxiety is one of the most often recognized difficulties regarding emotive domains in the language acquisition process. This challenge is especially prevalent in speaking courses when students must simultaneously receive linguistic inputs and generate their ideas. Numerous researchers investigate and seek a remedy for this prevalent issue due to these obstacles. The majority of studies on language anxiety have shown negative effects on language learning performance and communicative competence, and researchers are currently attempting to develop novel strategies for minimizing its influence in language classes. The participants were 147 Turkish students enrolled in an English preparation program at a public institution. Students at each skill level were given a questionnaire to investigate their FLSA. According to the statistics, EFL students suffer a considerable amount of FLSA. In addition, female pupils seem quite apprehensive while speaking. Another notable finding is that students' FLSA scores improve while conversing with a native speaker as opposed to their classmates. Regarding the competence level of pupils, the FLSA does not seem to rely on this factor. The findings of this research suggest that tackling FLSA in a way that is inclusive of both sexes and encouraging EFL students to engage in genuine environments like study abroad programs may be more beneficial to the student's language acquisition and communicative ability.

According to Rajitha & Alamelu,(2020) anxiety over communicating in English is widely recognized as one of the most difficult problems to solve in the field of education. Numerous in-depth studies on the origins and causes of public-speaking anxiety have been conducted by educators and scholars. Anxiety over public speaking may be affected by a wide variety of internal and environmental variables. This research examines the causes of students' public-speaking jitters across the disciplines of the Arts and Sciences at the university level. It aims to identify the awareness of the factors causing speaking anxiety by Final Year Arts and Science college students of various disciplines and to analyse the strategies or self-improvement steps taken by the students. It also delves into the methods through which they overcame their fears of public speaking. Several causes of anxiety among college and university students have been identified. Different aspects of speaking anxiety are shown by the research, many of which have intimate ties to the students themselves. The study's findings show that senior-year college students are affected by several different variables. It is clear from the statistics that, educators should first determine what their students need, then carefully construct lessons and, if necessary, adapt their pedagogy to meet the current situation if they want to improve their students' communication skills.

2.3 Humour in Language Classroom

Understanding language and words, as well as how they are used, what they mean, how they are used, how they fit into the society, and what they imply are all important components of humour. Since each community has a slightly distinct idea of what is hilarious, humour seldom crosses cultural boundaries well (Dobson, 1987). Research in English language teaching (Maurice 1988) has proven the miraculous effects of using humour in the classroom on both students' and teachers' health. It has been a teaching experience that using humour in the classroom is a great way to maintain the attention and enthusiasm of the pupils. According to Richards and Lockhart (1994), the use of humour and light-heartedness in the classroom may also allow students who are naturally more introverted to feel more comfortable joining in on group projects and activities in their language studies without fear of being singled out or

making a fool of themselves. This is especially crucial in a communicative classroom where authentic conversation, collaborative projects, and student-teacher dialogue are emphasized. (Kim & Park, 2017) also investigates the literature on humour in the language classroom and suggests implications for instructors on the use of comedy. Laughter is widely acknowledged to have a calming effect on students of a foreign language, helping them to overcome their fears and focus on the language itself. Some Asian countries' educators are reportedly wary of using humour for fear of provoking a class disruption. According to the findings of this study, the use of humour in the classroom should be deliberate, well-planned, and pertinent to the topic at hand.

There have been a lot of studies on the value of an encouraging classroom environment for foreign language learners throughout the years. Humour is a crucial ingredient in creating a beneficial learning environment for learners of foreign languages. Students are utilized as the indication and technique in acquiring insights as they are the ones who experienced the learning process, however, there is a lack of research on the efficacy of using humour in the EFL classroom, especially in the context of inspiring the students to study. Thus, a study was conducted to look at students' views towards the effects of humour on their intrinsic motivation to learn English (Salmee & Arif, 2019). UiTM's Faculty of Education administered the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI) to 70 students enrolled in a variety of programs for this study. According to the results of this study, the vast majority of participants think that humour may boost students' intrinsic drive to learn English.

3. Methodology

This study has been conducted with the participation of 250 preparatory class students aged 18-21 at Necmettin Erbakan University. These were English preparatory class students who are enrolled in different departments in this preparatory class, who cannot pass the foreign language preparatory exam at the beginning of the academic year, and who are obliged to complete the intensive English preparatory class program given by the School of Foreign Languages. It was a 4-week study carried out in the first semester of the 2022/2023 academic year. Humour strategies and speaking anxiety surveys and interview questions were utilized for this study to collect data. This article focuses on the effects of humour strategies on speaking anxiety in EFL classes. For this purpose, this research article assumed to find answers to several research questions as to whether learners can overcome their speaking anxiety by the use of humour strategies. If so, in what ways, to what extent do humour strategies have a positive impact on the learners' anxiety, and finally, to what extent are humour strategies compatible with the requirements of the learners?

Firstly, after the literature review, survey questions have been formed on Google forms which were in real class time. Participants have been volunteers for the study. This study has 3 variables; age, gender, and department of the learners. Each of the variables has been evaluated in the analysis. Interview questions have been conducted with 10 volunteer students from the department of English Language Teaching. According to their answers, in-depth content analysis has been utilized. See Ethics Committee approval report number 2022/441 Appendix D.

3.1 Data Collection and Analysis

To collect data for this study, three different tools were employed. Speaking anxiety scale was adapted from (Orakcı, 2018) and humour strategies scale was adapted from (Gonulal, 2018). The interview type was semi-structured which includes open-ended questions about humour strategies and speaking

anxiety. Ten interview questions were directed to the learners and their responses were recorded, transcribed, and analysed by the researchers.

For this study mixed method was used. Mixed methods design incorporates techniques from qualitative and quantitative methods to answer research questions (Byrne & Humble, 2007). Quantitative research encompasses a range of methods concerned with the systematic investigation of social phenomena, using statistical or numerical data (Watson 2015). On the other hand, Qualitative research focuses on understanding a research query as a humanistic or idealistic approach (Babu et al., 2013). The semi-structured interview was evaluated through strategies in qualitative data analysis. Speaking anxiety scale and humour strategies scale were assessed with SPSS analysis which belongs to quantitative data analysis. After the data collected for the research was transferred to the SPSS 26 program, it was first checked whether there were any reverse items in the scale used to prepare the data for analysis. Items 1, 3, and 9 in the English-Speaking Anxiety Scale and items 3, 4, 5, 9, 12, 14, 15, 17, and 25 in the Humour Scale were reverse coded. The presence of missing data was checked through the program and no missing data was found. The reliability score of the scale used was calculated with the data obtained as a result of the application made within the scope of the research. The Cronbach's alpha value of the English Speaking Anxiety Scale was calculated as 0.92 and the Humour Scale as 0.94 in this study. So, it can be understood that the reliability of the scales was high.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Quantitative Results

In this section, analyses of the participants' data are included.

4.1.1 Frequency Distribution of the Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Participants

Frequency and percentage values according to the gender of the participants are given in Table 1.

		Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	100	39,7
	Female	152	60,3
	Total	252	100
Age	18	73	29
	19	102	40,5
	20	54	21,4
	21	23	9,1
	Total	252	100
Institute	Institute of science and technology	96	38,1
	Institute of social sciences	140	55,6
	Institute of educational sciences	16	6,3

Total	252	100
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Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Values According to Sociodemographic Characteristics of Learners

Regarding the sociodemographic characteristics of the participants, when Table 1 is examined, the number of male participants is 100 (39.7%) and the number of female participants is 152 (60.3%). Among the participants, 73 (29%) people are 18 years old, 102 (40.5%) people are 19, 54 (21.4%) people are 20, and 23 (9.1%) people are 21 years old. Among the students, 96 people (38.1%) are studying at the Institute of Science, 140 people (55.6%) are studying at the Institute of Social Sciences and 16 people (6.3%) are studying at the Institute of Educational Sciences.

4.1.2 T-test Results of Students' English Speaking Anxiety Levels by Gender

Independent samples t-test was applied to test whether students' English-speaking anxiety differs according to gender. To make sure whether the t-test is usable or not, the test assumptions were examined. First, it was checked for normality and the presence of extreme values. When the boxplots were examined, it was seen that there were no extreme values in the data set. According to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results, the scores of female and male students showed a normal distribution ($p > .05$). When the histogram graph was examined, it was observed that the group was normally distributed. Therefore, the data was used as it was, without making any changes to the data or using a non-parametric alternative test. Since Levene's Test of Equal Variances does not give a significant p-value, the homogeneity of variances is in question. Therefore, the option with an equal variance assumption was considered for the independent samples t-test results. According to the independent samples t-test results, students' English-speaking anxiety levels show a significant difference according to gender. $t(250)=-4,304, p < .05$.

		N	\bar{X}	ss	Std. Error	t	p	Cohen's d
Speaking Anxiety Level	Male	100	40,07	13,38	1,337	-4,304	0,00	-1,17
	Female	152	48,05	15,05	1,220			

Table 2 T-Test Results of English Speaking Anxiety Levels by Gender

When the group data is examined, the average speaking anxiety levels of female students is 48.05 ($n = 152$; $SS = 15,05$), while the average of male students is 40.07 ($n = 100$; $SS = 13,38$).

4.1.3 ANOVA Results of Students' Speaking Anxiety Levels by Age

One-way ANOVA was applied to test whether students' speaking anxiety levels differ according to age. To check whether the t-test is usable or not, the test assumptions were examined. According to the boxplot analysis, no extreme data are available. When histogram graphs are examined, it is observed that the distributions are nearly normal. Levene's statistics were examined to see if the variances were equal, and since the p-value was not statistically substantive, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met. The ANOVA test revealed that speaking anxiety did not show significant differences between the ages of the students, $F(3, 248) = 1,88, p > .05, \omega^2 = 0,01$.

	N	\bar{X}	ss	Std. Error	F	p	ω^2
18	73	42,29	15,5	1,81429	1,878	0,134	0,01
19	102	46,47	14,7	1,45633			
20	54	46,85	14,6	1,99482			
21	23	41,40	13,4	2,80509			
Total	252	44,88	14,9	0,53440			

Table 3. One-Way Analysis of Variance Results of Speaking Anxiety Levels by Age

The change in speaking anxiety in all ages is not substantive.

4.1.4 Mann Whitney U Results of Students' Perceptions of Humour by Gender

To check whether the t-test is useable, and to test whether students' perceptions of humour differ according to gender, test assumptions were examined. First, the presence of normality and extreme values was checked. When the boxplots were examined, it was seen that there were no extreme values in the data set.

According to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results, the scores of female and male students did not show a normal distribution ($p < .05$). When the histogram graph was examined, it was observed that the group was not normally distributed. Therefore, the Mann-Whitney U test, which is the nonparametric equivalent of the t-test, was used.

Table 4. Mann Whitney U Test Results of Perceptions of Humour by Gender

	N	Mean Rank	Wilcoxon Text	Up	
Humour strategies	Male	100	40,07	13,38	7.782,0
	Female	152	48,05	15,05	0,75

As a result of the Mann-Whitney U test analysis, which was used to measure the humour perceptions of male and female students, no substantive difference was found between the two groups in terms of students' humour perceptions ($U=7.782$, $p > .05$).

4.1.5 Kruskal Wallis H Test Results of Students' Perceptions of Humour by Age

To test whether students' sense of humour differed significantly according to age, test assumptions were examined to check whether a one-way analysis of variance could be used. First, the presence of normality and extreme values was checked. When the boxplots were examined, it was seen that there were no extreme values in the data set. According to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results, the scores of female and male students did not show a normal distribution ($p < .05$). When the histogram graph was examined, it was observed that the group was not normally distributed. Therefore, the Kruskal Wallis H test, which is the nonparametric equivalent of a one-way analysis of variance, was used.

Table 5. Mann Whitney U Test Results of Perceptions of Humour by Gender

	N	Mean rank	SD	χ^2	p
18	73	143,49	3	9,040	0,029
19	102	126,35			
Humour Strategies	20	54	116,99		
	21	23	95,57		
Total	252				

As a result of the Kruskal Wallis H test, which was conducted to determine whether students' humour perceptions differed significantly according to the age variable, the difference between humour perception scores was found to be statistically substantive ($\chi^2 = 9.040$, $p < .05$). Mann Whitney U, which was conducted to test between which groups the difference was, showed that the difference between the 18-year-old group and the 21-year-old group was statistically substantive in favour of the 18-year-old group ($U = 527.5$, $p < .05$).

4.1.6 Spearman-Brown Rank Correlation Test Results Conducted to Determine the Relationship Between Students' Humour Strategies and Speaking Anxiety

Pearson Correlation Coefficient assumptions were checked to test whether there is a significant relationship between students' humour strategies and their speaking anxiety levels. The normality assumption of the humour perceptions variable could not be met. The Spearman-Brown Rank Correlation test has been used since the variables to be correlated do not show normal distribution.

Table 6. Spearman-Brown Rank Correlation Test Results

	N	\bar{X}	Ss	r	p
Humour Strategies	252	44,88	14,905	-0,068	0,28
Speaking Anxiety	252	106,44	15,413		

According to the results of the Spearman-Brown Rank Correlation test conducted to test whether there is a significant relationship between students' humour strategies and their speaking anxiety levels, there is no statistically substantive relationship between the variables.

4.2 Qualitative Results

The interview questions given in the Appendices have been directed to 10 voluntary EFL class students whose answers were transcribed. The students have been assumed to give sincere replies. According to the answers, the use of humour in the classroom was shaped around two themes: a) the positive impact of humour and b) the negative impact of the humour. In accordance with the students' answers, the codes were formed under themes for better data analysis. The codes were shown in table 1, and table 2. And the themes will be explained below by giving examples from students' answers to interview questions.

4.2.1 The positive impact of humour strategies

The first theme is the positive impact of humour and how these advantages can make a lesson enjoyable and motivate students. From the answers, it can be easily understood that using humour has a lot of positive aspects for both students and teachers. The learners thought that if a teacher uses humour in EFL classes, it boosts their learning motivation. The more EFL classes have fun, the more students have input. According to the answers of the students, teachers can use any humour in the class except for private things. Teachers can use humour in class unless it isn't offensive to students.

Table 1. The Positive Impact of Humour

The positive impact of humour strategies	Repetitions
Motivating	4
Feeling relaxed	4
Making things more memorable	2

Concerning students' answers, the first theme 'the positive impact of humour' was formed. In this theme, two codes were determined. 'Amazing' and 'have fun' could be encountered in the replies of the students. The code 'amazing' was repeated 4 times and 'having fun' was repeated 6 times. As it can be seen above, the repeated codes displayed that most of the students agreed about the positive impact of the humour.

Some of the students' replies for this theme were:

'When the teacher lectures in a way that amuses me, I feel relaxed and this helps me with English. For example, I join more to lessons.'

'I think jokes are memorable things, and when you combine the lesson with jokes, students remember the rules or the words more easily.'

'Humour can make the class better if students get bored. Also, the teacher's enthusiasm may increase. And students can focus on English lessons.'

From the examples, it is apparent that humour has a profound impact on English lessons. The majority of the students claimed that humour makes grammar rules and vocabulary memorable in an enjoyable way. If the English lessons are enjoyable, it makes students more active in class. So, as it is seen from the replies, humour motivates the learners.

4.2.2 The negative impact of humour strategies

According to the second theme, humour has some negative impact on both students and teachers. This theme was discovered in the interview answers of students. Under the theme of the negative impact on humour, the codes 'authority gap and offensive jokes' were shaped. The code authority gap was repeated 3 times and offensive jokes were repeated 4 times. These results exhibit that humour can have some negative impact on both teachers and students.

Table 2. The negative impact of humour

The negative impact of humour strategies	Repetitions
Authority gap	3
Offensive jokes	4
Disrupt the course	3

Incompatible with students' replies, the authority gap could be caused by humour of the teachers. The teacher can't authorize the class because of too much humour in the class. It can give students the opportunity to be more relaxed and motivated by the cosy atmosphere. Furthermore, according to the replies, some students suggested that humour should be limited otherwise they couldn't focus on English lessons. The other code is offensive jokes. The learners enjoy jokes and puns in English classes, but they shouldn't be offensive, and they shouldn't be about the private life of the learners. The students find these senses of humours offensive. Therefore, offensive jokes reduce the motivation of the students not only to participate in activities but also they can hate English classes because of the teacher's sense of humour. Also, some students claimed that humour in English classes can disrupt the course. Some of the learners want a serious atmosphere in the lesson. They think that if there is a joke or humour in the lesson, the learners can't focus on the topic. There are some examples from the students' replies:

'I think you can use the humour without distributing the flow of the lesson. Because students may not focus on the lesson.'

'I think humour has a positive effect on language education, but also in every aspect of life, but without missing the dose.'

'But I must say that it should not be about someone's personal life in there. It might be too much for them.'

'Teacher can lose authority because of humour.'

When the quantitative results of the study are examined, it can be clearly recognized that there is a significant difference in the speaking anxiety level between genders. Female students seem to show a higher level of anxiety when compared to male students. However, The ANOVA test revealed that speaking anxiety did not show significant differences among different ages of students. Similarly, according to the results of the Spearman-Brown Rank Correlation test conducted to test whether there is a significant relationship between students' humour strategies and their speaking anxiety levels, no statistically substantive relationship between the variables has been found. In order to validate and support the quantitative analysis of the study, a semi-structured interview has been conducted. Ten interview questions in accordance with the survey have been queried to 10 voluntary EFL class students whose answers have been transcribed. Following an in-depth content analysis, themes and codes have been formed under 2 main categories. The positive and the negative impact of Humour strategies. The repeated codes displayed that most of the students agreed upon the positive impact of the humour. On the other side, incompatible with the students' replies, an 'authority gap' could be caused by the use of

humour, which has been considered as a negative impact. Moreover, 'being offensive' and 'disrupting the course' are also the themes composed of the detailed analysis.

English has a profound impact on people around the world. Especially, for adults, they need to know English to find a good job for their future. At this point, learning English is inevitable. However, it doesn't mean that learning English is just part of the grammar rule or reading a book. It is more than that. From the present study, it can be inferred that Humour strategies make students less anxious and more motivated in their language learning environments. Therefore, teachers can and should make use of humour strategies in their classes. Moreover, most of the learners have speaking anxiety, especially in front of the whole class or a teacher. To negotiate this barrier, humour strategies can be utilized. This article discusses whether humour strategies affect speaking anxiety or not. Furthermore, by using humour in the classroom, teachers can create a positive and supportive learning environment, which can help students to feel more confident when speaking. When students feel that their teachers are approachable and supportive, they are more likely to speak up and participate in class discussions. This participation can then help students to improve their speaking skills and reduce their speaking anxiety.

Most of the studies show that humour strategies have a positive impact on students' speaking anxiety. Humour strategies reduce stress level and create a comfortable environment for the students in EFL classes. Humour can also help students relax while learning and reduce tension in the classroom; this is in line with previous research putting forward that humour is beneficial in creating an environment conducive to learning, since it breaks the barriers of communication in the classroom (Kisno 2014).

5. Conclusion

The use of humour strategies in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) has been found to have a positive effect on reducing speaking anxiety in students. Speaking anxiety is a common issue among EFL learners, as they may feel self-conscious or nervous about making mistakes or being judged by their peers or teacher. However, incorporating humour into the classroom can help to create a more relaxed and enjoyable learning environment, which can in turn reduce students' speaking anxiety.

Consequently, using humour as a teaching tool is an innovative approach. Teachers often fall behind if they are unable to meet the task of educating the next generation in 21st-century skills using cutting-edge technologies and facilities. English teachers who benefit from humour strategies are more likely to be catchy for the EFL students. Consequently, educators need to study humour and develop the abilities necessary to effectively employ it in the classroom. Through the use of suitable and relevant "humour," students may become more engaged in classroom activities. If a teacher wants to treat pupils with effectiveness and keeps them focused on their studies, s/he should think about things like how often s/he cracks jokes and how sensitive the learners to the jokes.

This study is a step to find out the effects of humour strategies on preparatory class students in a public university in Turkey. Incorporating humour strategies into the EFL classroom can be an effective way to reduce speaking anxiety among students. By creating a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment, students are more likely to feel comfortable and confident when speaking in English, which can help to improve their overall language proficiency. It is important for teachers to consider different humour strategies that can be used in their classroom and how to apply them effectively. Humour can be used to introduce new vocabulary and grammar concepts, in role-playing activities, personalize instruction, and make the class more interactive. Moreover, it can also create a positive and supportive learning

environment which can help students to feel more confident and reduce their speaking anxiety. Finally, humour can be an effective strategy to reduce speaking anxiety in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms. By creating a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere, students may feel more comfortable participating in class and speaking in English. Humour can also serve as a way to break the ice and build rapport with students. Additionally, incorporating humour into language instruction can make the material more engaging and memorable for students. However, it's important to note that not all types of humour may be appropriate or effective, and it's important to be mindful of cultural differences when using humour in the classroom.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

1. How long have you been studying English, and how do you feel about your English-learning experience? Please describe your attitudes toward your English classes.
2. Please recall your favourite English class and describe what you enjoy most about it.
3. Please attempt to recall the English course you disliked the most and explain why.
4. How would you recommend learning English in an English classroom?
5. What is the meaning of humour to you?
6. How do you believe humour may assist you in learning English?
7. What types of humour should a teacher utilize in the classroom?
8. How do you feel when you do not grasp a teacher's or classmate's joke?
9. How frequently should humour be utilized in the classroom?
10. Do you have any suggestions on the application of humour in English classrooms?

APPENDIX B

Speaking Anxiety Scale

Sevgili Öğrenciler, bu çalışma, İngilizce konuşma kaygınızı belirlemeye yönelik bir ölçme aracıdır. Aşağıda belirtilen beşli derecelendirme ölçeği üzerinde uygun gelen seçeneği (ölçek noktasını) işaretleyerek (X) belirtmeniz beklenmektedir. Çalışmaya göstermiş olduğunuz ilgiden dolayı teşekkür ederim.

Sıra İfadeler

1.Hiç Katılmıyorum 2.Katılmıyorum 3.Kararsızım 4.Katılıyorum 5.Tamamen katılıyorum

1

Yabancı birisiyle İngilizce bir şeyler konuşmayı seviyorum.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

2

İngilizce dersinde, hazırlık yapmadan konuşmak zorunda olduğumda çok kaygılanırım.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

3

İngilizce dersinde konuşurken kendime güvenirim.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

4

İngilizce konuşurken diğer öğrencilerin beni anlamayacağından endişe duyarım.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

5

İngilizce konuşurken tedirgin olurum.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

6

İngilizce dersinde herhangi bir konu hakkında konuşmam gerektiğinde kendimden emin olamam.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

7

İngilizce konuşurken diğer öğrencilerin bana güleceklerinden kaygı duyarım.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

8

Diğer öğrencilerin İngilizceyi benden daha iyi konuştuğunu düşünürüm.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

9

Diğer öğrencilerin önünde İngilizce konuşma konusunda kendime güvenirim.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

10

İngilizce konuşurken, ana dilden İngilizce diline kelimeleri tek tek tercüme ettiğimde kendimi tedirgin hissedirim.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

11

İngilizce dersinde sorulan sorulara gönüllü olarak cevap vermek beni utandırır.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

12

İngilizce dersinde konuşurken hata yapmaktan korkarım.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

13

Öğretmenin İngilizce olarak ne dediğini anlamadığım zaman kendimi tedirgin hissedirim.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

14

İngilizce öğretmeni bana sorular sorduğunda, kendimi gergin hissedirim.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

15

İngilizce konuşma yaparken korku içinde olurum.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

16

İngilizce konuşurken kelimeleri yanlış telaffuz edeceğim diye kaygı duyarım.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

APPENDIX C

Humour Strategies Scale

HELL: Humour in English Language Learning	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I am more attentive in class when the English instructor uses humour.	1		3	4		6
2. When the English instructor uses humour in the classroom, I feel my stress level decreases.	1		3	4		6
3. I feel more distracted when the English instructor uses humour in the classroom.	1		3	4		6
4. When the English instructor uses funny examples in the classroom, I feel anxious.	1		3	4		6
5. English instructors who use humour in the classroom are unprofessional.	1		3	4		6
6. I am more likely to pay attention to the topics when the English instructor uses funny examples in the classroom.	1		3	4		6
7. I am more likely to take part in classroom activities when these activities are funny.	1		3	4		6
8. I want my English instructor to have a sense of humour.	1		3	4		6
9. I learn English better if the English instructor teaches English in a serious manner.	1		3	4		6
10. When the English instructor uses funny examples, it makes me more interested in learning English.	1		3	4		6
11. I find English instructors who use jokes more effective in teaching English.	1		3	4		6
12. I lose my interest in learning English when the English instructor uses humour very often in the classroom.	1		3	4		6
13. An English instructor who has a sense of humour encourages me to learn English.	1		3	4		6
14. It is hard to pay attention to the class when the English instructor uses funny explanations.	1		3	4		6
15. A funny English instructor decreases my motivation to learn English.	1		3	4		6
16. I am more likely to focus on classroom materials in a humorous English classroom.	1		3	4		6
17. I feel more stressed when the English instructor uses funny examples.	1		3	4		6
18. Having an English instructor who uses humour reduces my stress about learning English.	1		3	4		6
19. I prefer taking English courses with an English instructor who uses humour in the classroom.	1		3	4		6
20. I feel more comfortable when the English instructor uses humour in the classroom.	1		3	4		6
21. I do not feel anxious when I laugh in the classroom.	1		3	4		6
22. I do not miss an English class when I find the class funny.	1		3	4		6
23. When the English instructor uses humour in the classroom, I am not afraid to ask questions.	1		3	4		6
24. I am not afraid of making mistakes in the classroom where humour is used frequently.	1		3	4		6
25. I am more likely to attend class when there is a serious classroom atmosphere.	1		3	4		6