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Research Article

Examining Medical Students' Views on the Use of Humour

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Abstract: Humour is often considered a vital component of a language classroom, as its positive effects on learning are undeniable. These effects include capturing and maintaining student interest, creating a relaxing and comfortable classroom atmosphere, and fostering bonds among class members. In other words, humour makes learning more enjoyable. Shatz and LoSchiavo (2006) state that learning is fun and should be. For that reason, humour should not be left out of the classroom and ignored as the side product of the lesson. Instead, it can help with content delivery and promote learning by making learning more effective, thanks to students' increased interest and attention. Thus, a teacher incorporating humour into their practices can offer students a more engaging and friendly learning experience. This paper examines university students' opinions about the effect of humour use on language learning. A mixed-methods research design, employing both quantitative and qualitative data, was used to provide a more comprehensive picture. The data for this study were collected through a questionnaire, and semi-structured follow-up interviews were also utilised to complement the data. The quantitative data were analysed through descriptive statistics, and the interviews were studied consecutively via thematic analysis. Two hundred sixty-four medical students at a Turkish state university volunteered to participate in the study. The study revealed that Turkish medical students stress that humour serves various pedagogical functions, such as raising student interest, reinforcing learning the lesson content, explaining complex concepts, and encouraging students to ask more questions. It also refines our understanding of humour and its relationship with language learning by allowing us to delve deeper into medical students' perceptions of teachers' humour in English classes.
Keywords: *humour, student views, medical students, language classroom.*

INTRODUCTION

Humour has numerous positive effects on learning, including holding students' attention, creating a calm and comfortable classroom environment, and fostering social bonds among students. Thus, it is always regarded as an essential part of the classroom. In other words, humour makes learning more enjoyable. According to Shatz and LoSchiavo (2006), language learning should be enjoyable, and enjoyment should not be considered a byproduct of the lesson. Instead, it can improve how the content is delivered and encourage learning because of the students' heightened interest and focus. Nevertheless, it is strongly advised that it might be a valuable tool for drawing and holding students' attention during the lesson, but it cannot be depended upon. In addition, although it can be useful for drawing and holding students' attention during a lesson, it is strongly discouraged from being the sole teaching strategy (Shatz & LoSchiavo, 2006).

There are many advantages to using humour in the classroom, such as helping the teacher break down barriers that prevent students from being motivated, self-assured, shy, hesitant, and stressed in a language classroom. Thus, a cheerful and welcoming environment is necessary for language classes. Language learners are more willing to participate in classes where they feel at ease, and teachers who use humour tend to gain more popularity with their students and consistently have high attention rates. Humour may contribute to attention-boosting in several ways. According to Davies and Apter (1980), humour helps the teacher "attract attention to himself and to what he is saying. After that, it might be helpful to keep that focus for a while" (p. 238). Therefore, a positive

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classroom environment is essential to make learning less stressful, frightening, or intimidating (Krishmanson, 2000). Incorporating instructional strategies like sharing humourous stories and anecdotes into class activities can foster an encouraging atmosphere and enhance students' learning and retention.

Additionally, learning through humour improves the retention of information in long-term memory (Casper, 1999). Humour creates the ideal environment for students to learn to the best of their abilities by lowering any negative emotions (e.g., anxiety, fear, abandonment, or boredom) that may prevent them from doing so (Walter, 1990). According to Medgeys (2002), no learning environment is more beneficial than the one in which students feel free to express their opinions and anxiety levels are low enough to allow for optimal learning. According to Schmitz (2002), teachers with skills in using humour build sincere and respectful relationships with their students (Al-Duleimi & Aziz, 2016; Gonulal, 2018). Students may find learning more enjoyable in a classroom setting like this, and potentially humour will undoubtedly support instruction.

Creating a positive environment for the students is one of the primary duties of a teacher. According to Bell (2009), the teacher is the one who will determine whether or not humour is appropriate for the setting and circumstances in the classroom. When employed skilfully, humour can support the lesson's pedagogical objectives and be a useful teaching tool. If not, employing humour may have unfavourable effects such as hurting someone's feelings, humiliation, and low self-esteem. Teachers should, therefore, get to know their students well and use humour sparingly in the classroom (Pomerantz & Bell, 2011). Besides the advantages listed above, humour without hurting anybody is a piece of art (Morrison, 2008; Wagner & Eduardo, 2011). In the classroom context, the use of humour should not cause any student to feel alienated. Humour about sensitive subjects such as gender, sex, or religion should be avoided. According to Schmitz (2002), educators should set a positive example for their students and adopt an inclusive mindset, including utilising humour to preserve community within the classroom. In addition, Sullivan (1992) cautions educators that poor classroom management practices can result in the loss of significant instructional time.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Humour in Language Classrooms

Humour is "anything that the teacher and/or students find funny or amusing" (Wanzer et al., 2006, p. 182). According to this definition, humour may originate from the teacher, the students, or even another source. Humour is also defined as "the ability to understand, enjoy, and express what is amusing" (Leung, 2004, p.1). This definition is more concerned with "humans" than "things", in contrast to Wanzer et al. (2006)'s because it concentrates on the "reception" end of the humour continuum rather than the "creation" end. However, whether or not a speaker finds a joke, pun, or other type of humour funny determines whether or not they will laugh. Defining humour as a competence suggests that a speaker can identify humorous texts and create them without necessarily knowing the rules governing humour (Attardo, 1994). Even though there are many definitions, all of them support that humour is the use of both spoken and unspoken communication to produce happiness and laughter in common.

A plethora of studies have shown that humour in the classroom is beneficial for teaching English (Bilokcuoglu & Debreli, 2018; Civikly, 1986; Gonulal, 2018; Heidari-Shahreza, 2024). A teacher can quickly get the class's attention by telling jokes or sharing something humourous at the beginning of the class (Berk, 1996; Brown & Tomlin, 1996; Bryant et al., 1980, 1997; Pollio & Humphreys, 1996; Weisi & Mohammadi, 2023; Ziv, 1988). Students value and enjoy learning from a teacher who uses humour (Bilokcuoglu & Debreli, 2018; Civikly, 1986; Gonulal, 2018; Heidari-Shahreza, 2024). Since one of a teacher's best qualities is having a good sense of humour, teachers who incorporate humour into their lessons are said to be more effective (Bilokcuoglu & Debreli, 2018; Brown & Tomlin, 1996; Kelly & Kelly, 1982; Lowman, 1994). For English language learners, jokes

create a fun and relaxing environment in the classroom. Students learn better when having fun in the classroom, and if the class can laugh together, they will probably learn better as a group (Gorham & Christopher, 1990; Loomax & Moosavi, 1998) by making students feel more at ease when learning the target language (Bilokcuoglu & Debreli, 2018; Weisi & Mohammadi, 2023). Many studies support the idea that humour helps transform a dull classroom environment into one that is vibrant and energetic, which increases students' preparedness for the lesson (Gorham & Christopher, 1990; Loomax & Moosavi, 1998). Studies have even demonstrated that a humour-rich classroom can contribute to student attendance (Bilokcuoglu, Debreli, 2018; Devadoss & Foltz, 1996; Gonulal, 2018; Romer, 1993; White, 1992).

Humour also enables students to demonstrate their community within the classroom (Provine, 2000). Students can participate in group discussions without feeling afraid or anxious because they feel part of the group (Pollio & Humphreys, 1996). This is especially crucial in language classrooms, where learning the target language depends on interaction, participation, and communication. When used as a teaching tool, humour also motivates students to learn, which boosts their motivation and aptitude for language acquisition (Dodge & Rossett, 1982). When a lesson incorporates humour, students learn it more quickly and retain it longer because the information in a humourous episode is more likely to be remembered for longer (Al-Duleimi & Aziz, 2016; Hill, 1988). According to Kher, Molstad, and Donahue (1999), using suitable humour can positively improve the impact of the lesson. To put it briefly, humour eases stress, promotes self-expression, eases humiliation, and prevents boredom.

In addition to its pedagogical advantages, psychological effects are also worth mentioning. Students' emotional environments are vital for learning (Kristmanson, 2000). Students trying to learn a new language may feel anxious and hesitant when forced to communicate in a language they are not yet proficient in. When humour is used in a positive environment, students can participate more actively in the lesson, practice the language, and gain more knowledge. Nevertheless, if not employed carefully, it functions as a two-edged sword; thus, it can have the opposite effect and ruin the classroom environment. In other words, sing humour can be tricky since it can be very contextual, subjective, and personal, and the teacher may not always know how well-received it will be. Each student may have a different sense of humour (Garner, 2003). Something that one person finds funny may seem cheesy to another. Hostile humour can cause hurt feelings and lower motivation in students. Examples of this type of humour include offensive jokes, sarcasm, mimicry, mocking, and remarks about the race, gender, colour, or religion of the students. If a teacher uses humour carelessly, it can damage the relationship between students and teachers and cause them to lose respect, popularity, and credibility. Watson and Emerson (1988) highlight that

> when humour is planned as part of the teaching strategy, a caring environment is established, there is an attitude of flexibility, and communication between student and teacher is that of freedom and openness. The tone is set allowing for human error with freedom to explore alternatives in the learning situation. This reduces the authoritarian position of the teacher, allowing the teacher to be a facilitator of the learning process. Fear and anxiety, only natural in a new and unknown situation, become less of a threat as a partnership between student and instructor develops (p. 89).

Therefore, considering the previously mentioned variables, humour in the classroom must be targeted, relevant, and specific to the material to be most effective. If these points are not considered, humour use would be ineffective in the classroom (Korobkin,1988). Consequently, the importance of humour is disregarded as it gives the impression that humour fails to address educational goals and jeopardises classroom management.

In light of this context, humour was operationalised as any spoken, written, visual, or performed action that the teacher or students find funny in class, even if it is not funny per se. This was done based on the main ideas from the definitions of humour. Thus, he current study will investigate the relationship between humour and learning, students' perceptions of the teacher's

humour, whether or not they prefer humour in the mother or target language, and the function humour serves in language learning.

Humour Types

In order to understand the educational effects of various forms of humour used by teachers, it is necessary to consider the types of humour they use (Deiter, 2000; Jeder, 2015; Weisi & Mohammadi, 2023). Several studies have investigated and classified various forms of humour teachers use (Bryant et al., 1979; Torok et al., 2004). Studies conducted relatively recently (Frymier et al., 2008; Wanzer et al., 2006) divided humour into five categories: Other- or self-disparaging, related, unrelated, and crude humour. Related and unrelated humour relate to how the material covered in class relates or not. Crude or sexual humour is offensive. Other disparaging humour is when someone makes fun of others, whereas self-disparaging humour makes fun of the speaker.

Martin and his colleagues (2003) put forth a more comprehensive and significant theory that distinguished between four humour categories about modern forms of humour: Self-enhancing, self-defeating, affiliative, and aggressive humour. Self-enhancing humour aims to maintain a lighthearted attitude in life, even in adversity, whereas self-defeating humour aims to win people over the person who is making the humour. Affiliative humour amuses others and promotes relationships. Conversely, aggressive humour is used to ridicule or manipulate others. Self-enhancing and affiliative humour are thought to have potential health benefits. Yet, self-defeating and aggressive humour are considered harmful.

Tsukawaki and his colleagues (2009) classified humour into three types by focusing on the interpersonal function of humour: Playful, self-victimising, and aggressive. First of all, playful humour, which includes puns and friendly jokes, is a type of humour that rarely uses aggression. This is consistent with the affiliative humour found in Martin et al. (2003). Self-defeating humour turns one's shortcomings and failings into a humourous narrative and is self-victimising. In contrast, sarcasm, mockery, and hostile teasing are all various types of aggressive humour. Aggressive humour is an offensive type of humour that incorporates sarcasm, derision, and hostile teasing - this lines up with the humour types of the same name as Martin et al. (2003). None of the humour types described by Tsukawaki et al. (2009), which emphasise interpersonal communication, correspond with self-enhancing humour because it is a phenomenon within an individual. As a result, there are several ways to classify teachers' humour based on its style, content, and relevance to the subject matter. This can have varying impacts on the classroom environment.

Humour Frequency and Appropriacy

Humour plays a big part in the classroom environment, which is crucial for learning a new language (Cornett, 1986; Fisher, 1997). Students talk more, learn more, contribute more, and are less afraid to make mistakes when they have a laid-back, upbeat attitude. However, too much humour or self-disclosure in a learning environment is seen as inappropriate (Downs et al., 1988). As a result, humour appropriateness is crucial (Bryant & Zillmann, 1988). Pomerantz and Bell (2011) emphasise that humour must be appropriate for the target audience's age to be valid. Sarcastic humour, in particular, according to Zillman (1983), can confuse learners who are not paying close attention, or they can misinterpret nonverbal cues. The research by Downs, Javidi, and Nussbaum (1988) revealed evidence of the potential adverse effects of excessive humour. Several studies have proved that excessive humour or self-disclosure is inappropriate because it can have unfavourable consequences (Forman, 2011; Nussbaum, 1988; Zillman, 1983). Thus, it is best to use it in moderate amounts. Forman (2011) also warns that using too much humour directed towards a specific individual may lead to misunderstanding and annoyance depending on the type of humour used. Therefore, many researchers caution against the potential drawbacks of using humour in the classroom. Thus, further investigation is necessary into the detrimental aspects of educational humour. To sum up, teachers should always refrain from using crude or derogatory humour, which involves ridiculing students,

disparaging their families or their ethnicity, and dehumanising them. Teachers must understand the importance of the respectful and prestigious teaching profession and their own status in it.

Research Gap and Research Questions

Drawing from the literature above, using humour in L2 classes has been associated with many positive outcomes. However, there is a dearth of research on humour in Turkish EFL contexts. For some reason, humour studies have gained popularity again. First, despite ELT being a significant part of the Turkish educational system, several problems occur at the instructional level, most likely due to how English is taught (Kirkgoz, 2009). Although the ELT policy has undergone a number of revisions to conform to European Union (EU) standards in light of Turkey's attempts to join (Kirkgoz 2007, 2009). The implementation of the European Language Portfolio (ELP), which aligns with the components of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Littlewood, 1981; Spada, 2007), is one of the most recent modifications to the ELT policy and still poses as a present challenge for English teachers (Alptekin & Tatar, 2011; Ozsevik, 2010). It is difficult to move from a traditional classroom environment, where the teacher is the primary authority and spends a lot of speaking time, to one that is more student-centred. According to Ozsevik (2010), students exhibit a certain amount of reluctance to engage in communicative activities, most likely as a result of becoming accustomed to teacher-centred and lecture-based classrooms.

The use of humour may have different purposes in the Turkish context given that it "has been seen as contributing to a broadening of the parameters of communicative approaches" (Forman, 2011, p. 562). For example, using humour can help to improve one-sided communication in traditional teacher-centered classrooms and facilitate the shift to more student-centered language instruction. Therefore, the aim of this study was to investigate how Turkish EFL learners perceive functions of humour in the university context. Thus, this study will focus on four significant issues:

1. Is there a relationship between humour and learning in the English language class?
2. What are the medical students' attitudes towards humour used by the teacher?
3. What are the medical students' language preferences in humour used in the English language class?
4. If used, what is the function of humour in English language classes?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In this study, quantitative and qualitative data were gathered simultaneously to compare the findings and provide a more comprehensive picture. To fully explore the depth of participants' perceptions and practices, the qualitative data were given a higher weight than the quantitative data. These characteristics combined to make this study fall under the concurrent triangulation design category (Creswell, 2008; Creswell et al., 2003; Punch, 2009). The most popular mixed methods research design allows the researcher to examine the similarities and differences between the results from two or more methods (Cohen et al., 2011; Creswell, 2008; Thurmond, 2001).

Participants

Table 1 shows that two hundred and sixty-four freshman students from a Turkish state university participated in the survey. These students were of both genders, enrolled in all bachelor's degrees, and had varying backgrounds and English proficiency. Most of these students had lower-intermediate or beginner English proficiency. Learners' exposure to and production of English was highly restricted because they were primarily restricted to their English classes. Before the researchers conducted the study, participants were informed about the research aims.

Table 1. A Sampling of the Study

Programme	Surveyed students	Interviewed students
First and Emergency Aid	47	6
Medicine	37	5
Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation	22	3
Medical Laboratory	48	3
Nursing	58	5
Midwifery	52	6
Total	264	28

The information about the participants' background is collected via three questions positioned at the beginning of the questionnaire. They aim to collect data about their gender, age and grade.

Table 2. Demographic Information on Participants

Programme		F	%
Gender	Male	95	35,9
	Female	169	64,1
Age	18-24	235	89,0
	25-32	24	9,0
	33+	5	2,0
Grade	1	221	83,8
	2	43	16,2

Table 2 presents the background information on participants who study various medical programmes at a Turkish state university. While the majority of the group is female (64,1%), only 35,9% is male. Therefore, it can be inferred that female students are more likely to select these programmes in Türkiye. The majority of the students are between 18 and 24 (89,9%). The participants are primarily freshman students (83,8).

Table 3. Demographic Information on Interviewees

Department	Student & Gender (F: Female, M: Male)
First and Emergency Aid	S1 (F), S2 (M), S3 (F), S4 (F), S5(M), S6 (F)
Medical Laboratory	S7 (F,) S8(F), S9(F)
Medicine	S10 (M), S11 (M), S12(F), S13 (M), S14 (M)
Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation	S15 (F), S16 (F), S17 (F)
Nursing	S18 (M), S19 (F), S20 (F), S21 (M), S22 (F)
Midwifery	S23 (F), S24 (F), S25 (F), S26 (F), S27 (F), S28 (F)
Total	20 female and 8 male interviewees

Table 3 illustrates that about 10% of the group, or twenty-eight students, from each programme, contributed to the study by participating in the interviews. The table displays the

attributes of the interviewees. By providing their contact details in the survey's final section, these students offered to participate in the interviews. Male and female students from all six programmes in the study attended the interviews. However, there was an uneven distribution of interviewees among these groups (71% female and 29% male students) because the number of interviewees depended on the number of volunteers, some female-dominant departments, and the availability of students at the time of the interviews. The researcher's office served as the venue for the interviews.

Context

The study was conducted in various medical undergraduate programs at a state university in Türkiye. One of the main reasons the university was chosen for this kind of study was that the researcher had direct access to the research environment, which aided the study by offering a thorough data collection process.

Data Collection Tools

The study used a scale and interviews as data collection tools. Before the researcher began the project, the faculty and students provided their ethical consent. Participants were well-informed before giving their written consent. Data were handled discreetly, stored safely, and anonymized. This required renaming institutions and appointing pseudonyms.

The research scale was modified from Askildson (2005) and Morrison (2008). To check reliability, the scale was analysed using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient ($\alpha = 0.855$), which indicated a good level of reliability. It had two parts. The first part consisted of 33 statements regarding students' opinions on using humour and its effects in English classrooms for medical students (See Table 4 for the scale's item analysis).

Table 4. Item Analysis of the Scale

The Distribution of the Items	Items	Research Questions
a. The relationship between humour and learning	1, 4, 5, 6, 9, 16, 19, 26, 31	RQ1
b. Students' perceptions of teachers' humour	3, 8, 14, 17, 21-24, 28, 29, 32, 33	RQ2
c. L1 and L2 humour	11, 12, 13, 15	RQ3
d. The function of humour in English classroom	2, 7, 10, 18, 20, 25-27, 30	RQ4

The second part had ten qualities of a teacher, and students were asked to rank the importance of each trait (from 1 to 10). The validity of the study's conclusions was enhanced by the use of a scale that had already been used in earlier research. In the first part, a Likert-scale survey with four points, and four options was preferred to encourage participants to agree or disagree with the statements. Four options, "Strongly disagree", "Disagree", "Agree", and "Strongly Agree", were more practical in stopping participants from hiding their genuine opinions; thus, the middle point was eliminated. If not, participants frequently choose the "neutral" middle ground, which obscures their opinions. By choosing a point on this scale, the respondents indicated whether they (dis)agreed with a statement. This was referred to as an "attitudinal measure" by Creswell (2008, p. 161). No private information was requested. At the end of the scale, the students who consented to participate in follow-up interviews with the researcher could provide their email addresses. In the second part, students in the classes were given rating scales and had ten to fifteen minutes to complete them at the end of the class. Due to the researcher's presence during the students' scale completion, questions could be answered, and clarifications could be given immediately, ensuring a high response rate (Walliman, 2011). The

most frequently required explanations concerned the concept of humour and its varieties. It was made sure the researcher had no bearing on the answers.

The researcher got responses from students with a semi-structured interview to gather their perspectives on humour and its functions (See Appendix 1 for interview questions). Following the guidelines for coding qualitative data and category construction (Creswell, 2007; Geisler, 2018; Merriam et al., 2016), the interview data were manually transcribed and coded. The research objectives guided the multiple analysis rounds to code and classify the data. Both instruments aimed to ascertain the respondents' opinions regarding humour and how it affects learning generally and learning English in particular.

Data Analysis

The study had a concurrent triangulation design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Guest, 2013). Initially, data analyses were conducted independently for the qualitative and quantitative databases to create "a complete picture" from both datasets; the researcher combined the two datasets in a later stage (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p.136). Various methods (Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis) were used to analyse quantitative and qualitative data. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (Version 22.0) was used to enter and calculate the quantitative data, producing a distribution of percentages representing the students' answers to each item on the scale. Thematic analysis was utilised to analyse the interview data. Following the guidelines for coding qualitative data and category construction (Creswell, 2007; Geisler, 2018; Merriam et al., 2016), the interview data were manually transcribed and coded. First, themes and categories used by the interviewees were identified through thematic analysis (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Talmy, 2011). The analysis was carried out by identifying themes and their coding (Creswell, 2008). To represent the diversity of humour-related themes, both "prefigured" and "emergent" codes (Crabtree & Miller, 1992) were used during this process. After that, similar and overlapping codes were found to lower the total number of codes. The codes were finally grouped into themes. Additionally, the themes were tallied and arranged according to how frequently they occurred (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The researchers coded and categorised transcripts separately, discussing any differences until a fair agreement on suitable categories was reached.

In this study, while quantitative data provide descriptive information such as the percentages of students' opinions who (dis)agreed with the statements regarding teachers' use of humour in the classroom, the qualitative data functions for comparing and cross-checking these two separate datasets for reliability to see if they are parallel with each other. In this way, the quantitative and qualitative findings were compared to confirm students' perceptions of humour in the classroom - a technique known as "merging the two databases" and usually carried out in concurrent mixed methods designs (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 221). Thus, the study aimed to determine whether the information gathered from the student interviews supported the general pattern found in the descriptive results. It also sought to understand the underlying reasons for the students' (dis)agreement with the data results obtained through different methods.

RESULTS

This section presents the data results from the scale (Tables 5 and 6) and semi-structured interview (Table 7).

Scale Results

The findings demonstrate that students generally hold positive attitudes toward using humour in learning, highlighting its effectiveness as a pedagogical tool. Responses to items such as item 2 (M=3.45), item 16 (M= 3.40), item 18 (M= 3,40), item 20 (M= 3,38), and item 25 (M= 3,37) indicate

strong agreement with the belief that humour enhances their learning experience. In contrast, students strongly disagreed with statements reflecting negative perceptions of humour (e.g., item 5- If we are laughing and joking, we are not learning and item 6- I think a student initiating humour in class disrupts learning), as evidenced by the low mean scores on some statements (item 5, M= 1.36; item 6, M= 1,75; item 8, M= 1.73; item 9, M= 1,76 and item 19, M= 1,54). These scores demonstrate that students do not associate humour with unprofessionalism, distraction, or a lack of focus on learning. However, the responses to specific items, such as item 22 (SD= 0.94), item 27 (SD= 0.88), and item 33 (SD= 0.85), reveal more varied opinions, suggesting a lack of consensus on specific aspects of humour in the learning environment. Overall, the data indicate that students view humour as both compatible with and beneficial to effective learning, particularly in language-learning contexts. These findings support the idea that language teachers can confidently incorporate humour into their classes as students perceive it as enhancing engagement and learning without compromising professionalism or academic outcomes (For statistical analysis of the quantitative data, please see Appendix 2).

Table 5. Scale Results

Statements	Average	Value
1. "Humour is important to foreign language learning."	3,32	Agree
2. "I can learn better when my foreign language teacher uses humour."	3,45	Agree
3. "Humour is an important characteristic of a lecturer."	3,11	Agree
4. "While humour is important, learning requires a serious work environment with little time for humour."	2,20	Disagree
5. "If we are laughing and joking, we are not learning."	1,36	Strongly Disagree
6. "I think a student initiating humour in class disrupts learning."	1,75	Disagree
7. "Humour in the language class increases my interest in learning that language."	3,29	Agree
8. "If a teacher uses humour often, I will think he/ she is unprofessional."	1,73	Disagree
9. "The use of humour during a lesson is distracting."	1,70	Disagree
10. "Humour is not a measurable characteristic and, therefore, has a questionable role in language learning."	1,91	Disagree
11. "I find it difficult to understand English humour in the classroom."	2,49	Disagree
12. "I would like my lecturer to use humour only in my mother tongue."	2,25	Disagree
13. "I would like my lecturer to use humour only in English."	1,87	Disagree
14. "My teacher's use of humour makes me feel closer to him/her.	3,33	Agree
15. "I learn more about the culture of the foreign language by being exposed to the native humour of that language and culture."	3,28	Agree
16. "Humour generally improves my ability to learn a foreign language by creating a more comfortable and conducive learning environment overall."	3,40	Agree
17. "I can tell better jokes than my lecturer."	2,42	Disagree
18. "I am more likely to remember lesson content if it is presented with humour."	3,40	Agree
19. "The use of humour by a lecturer is typically a waste of classroom time."	1,54	Disagree
20. "I feel more comfortable asking a lecturer if s/he uses humour in the classroom."	3,38	Agree
21. "A lecturer's job is to teach, not entertain."	1,85	Disagree
22. "I would rather have a lecturer try to be humourous and fail rather than not try to be humourous at all."	2,45	Disagree
23. "I am sometimes offended by the use of humour by a lecturer."	1,88	Disagree
24. "A lecturer does not have to use humour to be an excellent lecturer."	2,94	Agree
25. "I am more likely to attend a class where the lecturer uses humour."	3,37	Agree
26. "I am more likely to pay attention to a lecturer if s/he uses humour in a lecture."	3,34	Agree
27. "I am more likely to skip a class where the lectures are boring."	3,27	Agree
28. "The only type of humour in the classroom that I am familiar with is the anecdotes	2,06	Disagree

told by the lecturer."		
29. "The lecturer's humour should be related or relevant to the subject matter."	2,99	Agree
30. "I feel more relaxed (less anxious) when the lecturer uses humour in the class."	3,24	Agree
31." I think using humour in the class is important to learning the subject matter overall."	3,26	Agree
32. "I can also use humour in class discussions during lectures."	2,39	Disagree
33. "I think overusing humour (more than 7-8 times) during the lectures can be counter-effective."	2,72	Agree

Adapted from Askildson (2005) and Morrison (2008).

Table 6. Ranking of Teacher Qualifications

Order	Teacher Qualifications	Item
1	"is enthusiastic about teaching."	5
2	"speaks in a clear, understandable manner."	7
3	"informs in advance as to what to expect in lectures and exams."	3
4	"writes in a clear, understandable manner (e.g. on board, handouts, etc.)."	10
5	"can explain difficult concepts."	6
6	"is readily available before and after the class to answer questions."	1
7	"uses humour to make classes more fun or interesting."	4
8	"is fair in grading."	2
9	"makes efficient use of class time."	9
10	"can relate class material to the real world."	8

Adapted from Askildson (2005) and Morrison (2008).

Here, the data presented in Tables 5 and 6 will be organised and discussed under four subtitles to answer the research questions.

a. The relationship between humour and learning (RQ1)

This section presents the findings from the statements asking students to consider the general relationship between humour and learning. Item 1 demonstrates students' general views regarding humour in English class. The majority of the students agreed that humour is crucial for learning foreign languages (M=3,32). According to item 4, most students disagreed that "learning requires a serious work environment with little time for humour" (M=2,20). However, the findings prove that they take learning a language seriously by expecting a teacher to inform them what to expect in lessons and exams (Ranked 3) (Table 6), using the lesson materials efficiently (e.g. board, handouts) (Ranked 4), answering the questions effectively (Ranked 6) and assesses exams fairly (Ranked 8). The seriousness is about the attitude teachers hold and the enthusiasm and commitment they show; language learning does not lose its seriousness when humour is included, as supported in several statements in Table 5.

In item 5, the students were questioned about the assertion, "If my class is laughing and joking, we are not learning." Most students strongly disagreed with the idea that jokes and laughter were signs that learning was lacking (M=1,36) and ranked the inclusion of humour as the seventh important trait (See Table 6). Item 6 displays students' thoughts on the statement, "A student initiating humour in class is a disruption to learning." The purpose of including this statement was to investigate how students in Türkiye perceived humour within the context of their learning. Most of the students rejected statement 9, "The use of humour during a lesson is distracting." (M=1,70). This outcome is consistent with the other statements discussed earlier.

Statement 16, "Humour generally improves my ability to learn a foreign language by creating a more comfortable and conducive learning environment overall," sought students' opinions about the learning environment. Many students agreed that a class where humour has a place is a positive learning environment (M=3,40), as humour breaks the boundaries between participants and learning. In item 19, students disagreed with the statement "Humour is a waste of precious learning time" (M=1,54), which aligns with many other statements, such as items 4 and 6. Most students disagreed that humour had no place in a serious learning environment (item 4, M=2,20) and that students' humour was not a disruption to learning (item 6, M=1,75). These students believed in the importance of using precious class time (ranked 9) but did not feel that using humour during class was a waste of time, which shows that they thought humour might be useful for learning.

With statement 26, "I am more likely to pay attention to a lecturer if s/he uses humour in a lecture", students' opinions about the potential value of humour in education were sought. It is clear that these students not only disagreed with the notion that using humour in the classroom distracts students, but they also vehemently supported the completely opposite suggestion. Most students thought that humour improved their ability to focus during class (M=3,34). The distribution of opinions is just a logical continuation of the findings in the results of other statements. In line with previous statements, in item 31, students confirmed that humour helps them learn the subject matter (M=3,26). Students value the teacher's enthusiasm about what s/he is teaching, and a teacher who strategically uses humour to get or hold students' attention can be considered enthusiastic (Ranked 1). In conclusion, students positively assessed the benefits of humour in the section discussing the interaction between learning and humour.

b. Students' perceptions of teachers' humour (RQ2)

The findings of statements ask students to score how they view their teachers' humour. Medical students' opinions on statement 3, "Humour is an important characteristic in a teacher," are displayed (M=3,11). This distribution clearly shows how much students preferred a teacher with a sense of humour. Although some teachers may have a deep-seated, unspoken fear of looking unprofessional (Morrison, 2008), in item 8, more than half of the students disagreed totally (M=1,73) with the statement, "If a teacher uses humour often, I will think he/ she is unprofessional." through their opinions. The findings imply that they appreciate the use of humour in class. They also stated clearly that they feel closer to the teacher who uses humour in the class in statement 14 (M=3,33). In statement 17, students' opinions about who makes better jokes were also investigated. Students disagreed that they make better jokes than teachers (M=2,42).

When we polled students, they did not state that they felt offended by humour (item 23, M=1,88). However, it is still a big issue that teachers must be sensitive about humiliating students. For that reason, students do not expect teachers to be comedians or class clowns (item 21, M=1,85). They expect the teacher to be an educator first, so "a lecturer does not have to use humour to be an excellent lecturer", students confirmed (item 24, M=2,94). For Turkish medical students that we surveyed, being an entertainer by using humour to make classes more interesting comes in behind six other qualities or traits of instructors in terms of importance (Table 6). However, half of the students preferred their teacher to be funny in item 22 (M=2,45). While many students prioritise professional competence, others prefer it with a humour touch.

In item 28, the students were also asked their opinions about what type of humour the teacher uses in class. Students clarified in the interviews that humour in the class is generally spontaneous, unrehearsed and unexpected. Thus, they disagreed that anecdotes are the only type of humour used by the lecturers (M=2,06). In item 29, the question of whether or not humour used in the classroom should be related to the subject matter was posed to the students. Most preferred the in-class humour to be lesson-related (M=2,99). Students were asked whether they could use humour in class discussions (in item 32 and the interview). The ones who use jokes stated that teachers never embarrassed them, and most of the time, they played along. The ones who said they do not use it

stated that they do not have a chance to use humour in traditional, lecturing-style classes. In the last statement, students were asked to express their opinions on the overuse of humour. Most of the students agreed with this item (item 33, M=2,72). Too much humour can seriously endanger what they are learning, students' attention on the lesson can go away, and they can lose the sacred space of the classroom. In conclusion, it is possible to argue that humourous teachers are more relatable to their students, but this does not damage the instructors' prestige and professionalism.

c. L1 and L2 Humour (RQ3)

The answers to the questions concerning students' perceptions of humour in two languages - their mother tongue, Turkish, and the foreign language they were studying, English - are shown in this section. Even though the students enjoy English humour, some may still find it difficult to understand. Even though they do not see any problems in understanding humour in English (item 11, M=2,49), it is clear that they do not have a sharp position in their language preference. In ranking teacher qualities, students see speaking clearly in a language class as an important teacher trait (Ranked 2 in Table 6). Most of the students responded negatively when asked if they had trouble understanding English humour. This result is not surprising, given that most respondents embrace humour in their English classes.

Items 12 and 13 display students' preferences for humour production in L1 or L2. Most of the students disagreed that they would enjoy humour only in their mother tongue (item 12, M=2,25) or in the target language (item 13, M=1,87). Students' statements can imply that neither English nor Turkish humour is more welcome than one another, as they stated in previous items that humour is welcome as long as it is integrated into learning. Statement 15 presents students' views on how exposure to the native language and culture increases students' understanding of that language's culture. Even though English humour may be difficult for some students, it makes sense that so many would like to see it in their English classes since studying the culture of a language is an integral part of learning that language (M=3,28).

d. The function of humour in language learning (RQ4)

The results of the statements that asked students to rank the functions and significance of humour in learning a foreign language are shown in this section. Both of these points of view substantially impact how students respond to humour used by their foreign language teachers in the classroom, significantly influencing the outcomes. Students valued their teachers' use of humour in addition to humour in general (Item 2, M=3,45). Students who thought they "could learn better when FL teachers used humour" included those who agreed as they did in other items. For example, item 7 displays students' opinions regarding the statement, "Humour in the language class increases my interest in learning that language." These opinions may explain why students believe humour is essential to learning foreign languages. Most students agreed that humour encouraged them to learn another language (M=3,29).

Students may find humour enjoyable when learning a foreign language and think humour has a function in learning (Statement 10); thus, they disagree that humour has a questionable role in language learning (M=1,91). In item 18, students were asked their opinions on humour's effect on retaining subject matter. Most agreed that humour reinforces learning the lesson content (M=3,4). The main reason for this can be that students pay more attention when humour is used in the class (item 26, M=3,34). Berk (1998) states that it is impossible to sleep while laughing in the lesson. In line with this, students ranked the trait of explaining complex concepts as fifth place (Table 5). In item 20, students were asked about the relationship between a teacher who uses humour and students' question-asking habits. Students agreed that they feel more comfortable asking questions to a humourous teacher (item 20, M=3,38). Teachers and students connect and get along through humour. As a result,

learners do not feel threatened and will be more comfortable posing questions or participating, which is also mentioned as important in the ranking of teacher qualifications (See Table 6).

There was found to be a positive relationship between student performance and attendance in class (Devadoss & Foltz, 1996; Romer, 1993; White, 1992). A lesson in which humour is used may be more promising for students as this can positively affect attention rates (item 25, M=3,37). Students revealed that they are more likely to skip boring classes (item 27, M=3,27). Humour has the potential to create a positive environment that promotes class attendance and student participation; according to the results, the classroom environment and students' psychological states appear to be the areas where humour has the most significant impact. Most students agreed that humour use lowers negative affective filters (M=3,24).

Interview Results

The data results obtained from semi-structured interviews are presented in this section. S is used to refer to students to present their quotations in the text.

Table 7. Themes Retrieved from the Interview Data

Themes	Frequency	Research Question
a. Humour should be included in language classes.	28	(RQ1 & RQ2)
b. Humour builds rapport between lecturer and students.	25	(RQ4)
c. Humour creates a positive learning environment.	25	(RQ4)
d. Humour should be used in moderation.	25	(RQ2)
e. Humour should be relevant to the lesson content in one way or anotl	20	(RQ2)
f. Humour should be appropriate to the class context.	28	(RQ2)
g. Humour can be in L1 or L2.	21	(RQ3)

Students' opinions regarding teachers' use of humour were questioned during the interview. Not one of these students objected to a teacher using humour. Every student raised the potential advantages of humour in the classroom or lesson, from the general advantages such as "support the lesson" (S10) to the more focused ones, including "create a more comfortable environment" (S5, S2, and S4), ("hold students' attention by making students feel excited and interested in the lesson" (S9), reduce anxiety and fatigue in the classroom (S17), "enhance the lesson's interest" (S19), and "make students feel more at ease" (S3, S8, S19). These students most frequently reported that humour helped them feel more at ease in a "friendly and supportive" classroom (Littlewood, 2000, p. 34). The students added that they could learn more effectively in such an atmosphere:

> "When humour is used in the classroom, my worries about my language level or the classroom environment are reduced. It contributes to my self-development and self-confidence." (S19)
> "As Turkish students, we have prejudices against learning English. Using humour in class normalises the process and helps us overcome our fear and anxiety." (S17)

Another benefit of teachers' use of humour was its positive impact on the relationship between teachers and students. "It is undeniable that teachers' sense of humour brings them closer to students," stated S4. The interview questions' responses supported the survey's findings that humoured instruction improved student learning and bonded teachers to their students. Some students did, however, caution against using humour in specific ways. According to S20, teachers should use

"better things than boring stories" to support the lesson. S21, meanwhile, stated that humour should "be appropriate." Several students (f=20) claimed that humour about politics and religion was inappropriate to use in class because they are "personal matters and divide people" (S19). These included making light of a student's appearance and ineptitude (S12 and S21) or amusing remarks that could be interpreted as offensive (S17). "That person may feel embarrassed and psychologically hurt, and they do not want to study anymore," S17 explained in elaborating on their viewpoint. Some students stressed that reactions to humour can differ and are highly related to the person's character. Thus, the teacher should know her/his students and evaluate whether or not to use such remarks. Exposing her viewpoint, some students offered a noteworthy suggestion:

> "The teacher should be the one to decide what kind of jokes are made and who is responsible for making them. It's important to have a clear line of authority in this situation. Students are all teenagers at some point, and they don't always think about the consequences of their actions" (S25)

> "There should be a sense of humour that is not mocking or bullying toward either the teacher or the student. It should be done in a way that is not disruptive to anyone. Humour is good as long as it is not offensive to anyone." (S2)

Most students indicated that they felt "comfortable and more relaxed" (S4, S5, and S7) when "the environment was not serious" (S23) and thus they "feel free to contribute to the lesson" (S5), which supports their stated perception in the scale. S11 claimed that he felt closer to the teacher and could "learn better" when asked about the impact of humour on English lesson. S24 explained that this was because "it is easier to focus on the lesson and the teacher" when they were at ease and relaxed. S10 also mentioned that humour in the classroom could "soften" teachers' criticism and help it be more convenient to students:

> "For example, when the teacher approaches the student politely or with humour, the student does not hesitate to ask questions or participate in the lesson. Even if the student's answer is wrong, I think the teacher can correct the student by softening it. No one is offended or upset." (S10)

Furthermore, S24 believed overusing humour could counteract its beneficial effects: "Playing around too much makes us feel worn, not entertained". Even more so, S13 viewed the teacher's excessive use of humour as "a waste of time" and a distraction. As a result, most students issued a warning against using humour excessively. This was consistent with the survey results. Students also raised a potential argument that might limit the benefits of teachers' use of humour: Either the humour had nothing to do with the lesson, or they struggled to find things funny effortlessly. These concepts served as a helpful reminder that humour must be relatable and transparent to be effective (Steele, 1998).

> "Humour is not a waste of time as long as we do not overuse it. When it is exceeded, students may be disengaged from the lesson or get distracted." (S20)

Students also discussed how humour might affect their understanding of the lesson content and retention of it. S19 says humour is calming and could help introduce a new topic.

> "During the lesson, the teacher can use humour related to the new topic, for example, vocabulary. It helps us learn the topic better and remember the vocabulary." (S19)

The students (S4, S8, and S18) stated that "we laughed, the lesson was fun, and we learned quicker" in an English lesson where the lecturer used humour. S19 said it was "relaxing and easier to learn and remember the words." Most students surveyed also stated that humour played a role in learning

foreign languages. The ideas that they held were that humour "supports the teaching and learning" (S6), "it is necessary" (S3), and "you can use humour in every topic" (S7).

In addition to creating a more relaxed atmosphere, teachers who used humour well may have helped their students understand the material better. Every interviewee mentioned that the humour was somewhat connected to their study lesson. This demonstrates unequivocally the necessity for humour utilised in the classroom to be relevant or to highlight the lessons. S5 confirmed that her teacher's sense of humour inspired her students, drew them in, and piqued their interest in the material. S16 and S25 provided similar accounts of teachers employing humour to make the material more accessible for students to comprehend and retain. These students favoured lesson-related humour because they stated, "When we think of the story, we will also think of the lesson." These students preferred humour that was relevant to the material (S22). During a lesson, an instructor may improvise at certain moments and catch students' attention quickly.

> "For example, 'that moment' comes to my mind during the day. Then I say yes, my teacher mentioned this subject. I remember the lesson's content. It is effective in making associations." (S20)

> "I think the use of humour in class is important in attracting attention. It pushes us to research to understand what is said in jokes. 'What did he say?' we ask, and this arouses curiosity in us. We look at the meanings of the words; if it is a phrase or something cultural, we learn it." (S5)

Most students opposed teachers making fun of any particular student in the class by critiquing them, mimicking their accent, or making remarks about their appearance or lack of skill. For example, S3 contends that "the teacher's humour is absurd and excessive, causing discomfort or confusion." More significantly, S14's experience demonstrated a fine line between being humourous and criticising students when teachers made light-hearted remarks. In short, students considered teachers' humour ineffective, or even counterproductive, when it was used to hurt somebody, overused, and about topics that students did not find appropriate.

> "It would be more appropriate if the humour is moderate, related to the course or social environment, without offending or upsetting anybody." (S14)

The students' responses to this question were diverse. Among the students surveyed, the two most common forms of humour were amusing anecdotes and clever remarks. The selections included jokes, amusing anecdotes, humourous gestures, and lighthearted remarks. Students (S3, S4, S5) also mentioned that teachers might use Turkish when telling "quite complicated stories," but in other situations, "like with synonyms and antonyms, the teacher can tell us in English." They state that English humour is preferable if the teacher provides more explanations to help students understand.

> "Having a sense of humour is important for learning about different cultures. Using humour in the classroom helps us become more aware of the language we are learning, as language learning involves understanding the culture." (S1)

In summary, students' answers showed that humour used by teachers could have both beneficial and adverse effects on a lesson. The most common comments were that it helped students relax and made the environment less stressful. The other beneficial outcomes were increasing students' sense of closeness to their teachers and improving their memory or recall of lessons. The adverse effects included the possibility that too much humour would divert students from the lesson or lose its appeal and the possibility that teachers might not find appropriate humour. However, students recommended that teachers try to comprehend their pupils, learn about their areas of interest, develop their sense of humour, and try to include humour in language classes.

DISCUSSION

This study's findings support many positive effects of pedagogical humour in language classrooms. Even impromptu or "unintentional" humour can play a significant role in fostering a favourable learning atmosphere. In particular, participants say that teachers' humour can lead to lower stress or anxiety levels, better approachability, and higher interest levels. The results of this study are parallel with several studies on many points, such as humour's positive psychological effects on language learning (Bilokcuoglu & Debreli, 2018; Cornett, 1986; Duffy & Jones, 1995; Fisher, 1997; Heidari-Shahreza, 2024; Graham & Christophel, 1990; Kher et al., 1999; Powell, 1985; Salmee & Arif, 2019; Tong & Tsung, 2020; Weisi & Mohammadi, 2023), fostering a positive attitude for better learning (Al-Duleimi, Aziz, 2016; Gonulal, 2018; Salmee & Arif, 2019; Weisi & Mohammadi, 2023), reducing anxiety (Bilokcuoglu & Debreli, 2018; Weisi & Mohammadi, 2023), promotes dialogue between educators and students (Al-Duleimi & Aziz, 2016; Gonulal, 2018; Tong & Tsung, 2020; Gonulal, 2018) and makes the classroom more interactive and open to communication (Bilokcuoglu & Debreli, 2018; Heidari-Shahreza, 2024; Weisi & Mohammadi, 2023). Similar to the previous studies (Al-Dulaimi & Aziz, 2016; Gonulal, 2018; Heidari-Shahreza, 2024; Weisi & Mohammadi, 2023), this study also revealed that humour has a positive effect on student comprehension and retention. The medical students in the present study agreed that humour used in the classroom is a good asset in sparking students' interest and making the content more straightforward and manageable for students to understand and remember. Another positive effect of humour is on the relationship between teachers and students. Humour use can connect teachers with their students by giving them opportunities to establish their real-life identities, not only the "teacher," "authority," or "knowledgeable" person roles, which strengthens the bonds between teachers and students. This study revealed that Turkish medical students prefer a teacher with a sense of humour and do not consider that humour disturbs the seriousness of the lesson. However, if not used moderately and purposefully, students' attention can be lost instead of gained, which damages the instructors' prestige and professionalism and makes classroom management highly challenging for the teacher. Regarding language preferences, Turkish medical students did not have a clearly defined choice of language that would be used for humour. They preferred both their mother tongue and the target language acceptable as long as the humour was incorporated into the lesson.

To summarise, the study demonstrated that teachers' use of humour could impact a lesson in both positive and negative ways. The most frequent remarks were that it reduced stress in the classroom and assisted students in unwinding. The other positive results were enhanced students' memory or recall of lessons and their sense of intimacy with their teachers. Among the negative consequences were the potential for teachers to not find suitable humour and the potential for excessive humour to distract students from the lesson or make it less engaging. Nonetheless, students suggested that teachers try to understand their students, discover their interests, cultivate their sense of humour, and incorporate humour into language lessons.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study aimed to investigate medical students' perceptions of teachers' humour in English language classes, focusing on the relationship between humour and learning, the function of humour in the classroom, and learners' language preferences for humour. The study revealed that humour is crucial for learning foreign languages by holding learners' attention and creating a more comfortable and conducive learning environment. It highlighted that Turkish medical students find a good sense of humour as a key teacher trait and favour their teacher's use of it moderately. Humour should be seen as a pedagogical tool that needs no preparation since it is often spontaneous, unrehearsed, and emerges unexpectedly from comments, misunderstandings, or relevant content. Students feel valued when they have the right to joke, and the teacher plays along. Medical students do not have a sharp position in their language preference for humour as long as they feel included. Also, they know that humour is an integral part of a culture, and learning a language means learning the culture. Turkish medical students stress that humour serves various pedagogical functions, such as raising student interest, reinforcing

learning the lesson content, explaining complex concepts, and encouraging students to ask more questions.

Several suggestions for successfully incorporating humour into language instruction can be derived from the study's findings. These suggestions should be discussed in the Turkish context, but they can also be used in other situations with similar conditions. The results of this study make the following suggestions: First, a good rapport between learners and language teachers should be secured. Teachers who still use an authoritarian teaching style in traditional, teacher-centred language classrooms cultivate a passive learner profile with little to no interaction between the teacher and the students. As a result, there is less communication and rapport between the teachers and students, which lowers the students' willingness and motivation (Bell, 2009; Kocaoluk & Kocaoluk, 2001; Ustunoglu, 2007). Second, humour can be considered a potential strategy in language classrooms to help build the connection between teachers and learners. In this fashion, pre-and in-service teachers should be educated about the significance of affective factors and humour used to ease this tension in language learning, which can significantly contribute to the teaching and learning foreign and second languages in the Turkish language educational system. In line with this, foreign language teachers should remember the significance of humour in foreign language learning and consider utilising it strategically and individually in their lessons. Incorporating a humour component into teacher training courses could teach pre-service and in-service teachers the techniques and strategies for using humour in English language classrooms. English teachers may also participate in workshops that cover the different approaches to using humour in the classroom. Thus, they should take note of their student profiles, interests, and needs more attentively to take advantage of opportunities to use humour more effectively in their classrooms.

In conclusion, this study significantly enhances our understanding of humour as a pedagogical tool, its association with language learning, language learners' perceptions of teacher humour, and its pedagogical roles. However, it should be noted that there are certain limitations to the current study and some suggestions for further research. This study only examines a group of medical students' perception and appreciation of classroom humour. Thus, further generalisation of the study's findings should be made with caution since the findings might not apply to other language education contexts. Future research on humour in language instruction could include other EFL students with different majors (i.e. engineering, law, tourism). A longitudinal study to examine how teachers' use of humour has changed over time and in various educational settings, such as private or high schools, or the affective and cognitive effects of humour on students over an extended period can also contribute to the field. Another study can investigate how teachers and students from various backgrounds (urban, suburban, and rural contexts in Türkiye) perceive humour in teaching practices. Finally, humour training for pre- and in-service teachers can be explored in terms of the viability of the training and its effectiveness.

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Appendix 1. Humour Interview Questions

Humour Interview Questions
1. What do you think about the use of humour in the classroom?
2. Is having the ability to humour an important faculty member characteristic? Why?
3. Do you think only the lecturer should be joking? Why?
4. Should the student be allowed to make jokes too? Why?
5. Should humour be used in foreign language teaching? Why?
6. Is the use of humour in the classroom confusing?
7. What kind of jokes are suitable for the classroom setting?
8. Does humour affect your emotional state while learning English? How?
9. What effect does having a lot of jokes in class have on learning? Why?
10. How do you think a good language teacher should be?

Appendix 2. Statistical Analysis of the Scale

Statements	Mean	Std. dev	Min	Max
1. Humour is important to foreign language learning.	3,28	0,68	1	4
2. I can learn better when my foreign language teacher uses humour.	3,45	0,60	1	4
3. Humour is an important characteristic of a lecturer.	3,09	0,77	1	4
4. While humour is important, learning requires a serious work environment with little time for humour.	2,20	0,71	1	4
5. If we are laughing and joking, we are not learning.	1,37	0,59	1	4
6. I think a student initiating humour in class disrupts learning.	1,76	0,64	1	4
7. Humour in the language class increases my interest in learning that language.	3,26	0,64	1	4
8. If a teacher uses humour often, I will think he/ she is unprofessional.	1,70	0,73	1	4
9. The use of humour during a lesson is distracting.	1,71	0,54	1	4
10. Humour is not a measurable characteristic and, therefore, has a questionable role in language learning.	1,94	0,65	1	4
11. I find it difficult to understand English humour in the classroom.	2,51	0,84	1	4
12. I would like my lecturer to use humour only in my mother tongue.	2,21	0,80	1	4

13. I would like my lecturer to use humour only in English.	1,85	0,60	1	4
14. My teacher's use of humour makes me feel closer to him/her.	3,28	0,64	1	4
15. I learn more about the culture of the foreign language by being exposed to the native humour of that language and culture.	3,28	0,64	1	4
16. Humour generally improves my ability to learn a foreign language by creating a more comfortable and conducive learning environment overall.	3,36	0,56	1	4
17. I can tell better jokes than my lecturer.	2,38	0,83	1	4
18. I am more likely to remember lesson content if it is presented with humour.	3,39	0,62	1	4
19. The use of humour by a lecturer is typically a waste of classroom time.	1,54	0,65	1	4
20. I feel more comfortable asking a lecturer if s/he uses humour in the classroom.	3,37	0,60	1	4
21. A lecturer's job is to teach, not entertain.	1,84	0,69	1	4
22. I would rather have a lecturer try to be humorous and fail rather than not try to be humorous at all.	2,41	0,94	1	4
23. I am sometimes offended by the use of humour by a lecturer.	1,92	0,68	1	4
24. A lecturer does not have to use humour to be an excellent lecturer.	2,97	0,66	1	4
25. I am more likely to attend a class where the lecturer uses humour.	3,32	0,65	1	4
26. I am more likely to pay attention to a lecturer if s/he uses humour in a lecture.	3,29	0,66	1	4
27. I am more likely to skip a class where the lectures are boring.	3,26	0,88	1	4
28. The only type of humour in the classroom that I am familiar with is the anecdotes told by the lecturer.	2,08	0,64	1	4
29. The lecturer's humour should be related or relevant to the subject matter.	3,00	0,83	1	4
30. I feel more relaxed (less anxious) when the lecturer uses humour in the class.	3,23	0,64	1	4
31. I think using humour in the class is important to learning the subject matter overall.	3,24	0,63	1	4
32. I can also use humour in class discussions during lectures.	2,40	0,84	1	4
33. I think overusing humour (more than 7-8 times) during the lectures can be counter-effective.	2,74	0,85	1	4