UNIVERZITA PALACKÉHO OLOMOUCI
PEDAGOGICKÁ FAKULTA

Ústav cizích jazyků

Diplomová práce

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Using humour in the EFL classroom

Olomouc 2024   Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Blanka Babická, Ph.D.

Prohlašuji, že jsem závěrečnou práci vypracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedené prameny a literaturu.

V Olomouci 2024

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vlastnoruční podpis

Anotace

Jméno a příjmení:	Bc. Michaela Homolová
Katedra nebo ústav:	Ústav cizích jazyků
Vedoucí práce:	Mgr. Blanka Babická, Ph.D.
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Název závěrečné práce:	Using English humour in the classroom.
Název závěrečné práce v angličtině:	Použití humoru ve výuce anglického jazyka.
Zvolený typ práce	Kombinace: Aplikační práce a Výzkumná práce – zpracování primárních dat
Anotace závěrečné práce:	Tato diplomová práce se zaměřuje na humor ve výuce anglického jazyka. Hlavním cílem této práce bylo prozkoumat roli humoru při zlepšování mluvních dovedností studentů a zvyšování jejich motivace k mluvení v cizím jazyce a zjistit názory učitelů na používání humoru ve výuce. Teoretická část se zabývá výukou mluvních dovedností, motivací a humorem z pedagogického hlediska. Zkoumá také názory a postoje týkající se používání humoru ve výuce a identifikuje možné problémy. Praktická část se nejprve zaměřuje na analýzu dat získaných z dotazníků, které se zabývaly postoji a vnímáním studentů k používání humoru ve třídě. Za druhé analyzuje výsledky rozhovorů s učiteli základních škol a nižšího stupně gymnázia. Dále se zaměřuje na analýzu konkrétních účinků humoru na chování a motivaci žáků. V závěru práce je potvrzena motivační úloha humoru ve výuce Anglického jazyka a doporučení pro učitel
Anotace v anglickém jazyce	This thesis focuses on humour in English language teaching. The main objective of this thesis was to investigate the role of humour in improving students' speaking skills and enhancing their motivation to speak in a foreign language and to explore teachers' opinions on using humour in their lessons. The theoretical section examines teaching speaking skills,

	motivation and humour from an educational perspective. It also explores opinions and perceptions regarding using humour in the classroom and identifies potential issues. The practical part firstly focuses on the analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaires which dealt with students´ attitudes and perceptions of the use of humour in a classroom. Secondly, it analyses the results of the interviews with teachers from primary and lower secondary schools. It also aims to analyse the specific effects of humour on the student´s behaviour and motivation. The thesis concludes with acknowledging the motivational role of humour in English language teaching and recommendations for teachers.
Klíčová slova:	Humour, motivation, teaching speaking skills, effects of humour in ESL classroom, teacher´s role.
Přílohy vázané v práci:	Výzkumné aktivity (Experimental activities) – příloha strana 87–100 Dotazníky (Questionnaires) – příloha strana 101–102 Grafy (Figures) – příloha strana 103 - 116 Rozhovory s učiteli (Interviews) – příloha strana 117–124
Rozsah práce:	124 stran
Jazyk práce:	Anglický jazyk

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List of abbreviations

CLT   Communicative language teaching

D   Dotazující (v příloze)

ELF   English as a Lingua Franca

EPOSTL The European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages

T   Teacher

L1   Native language

L2   Second language

List of tables and figures

Abstract:

This thesis examines the use of humour as an educational and motivational tool in English language teaching, with a specific focus on its potential to enhance students' speaking skills and overall motivation to speak a foreign language. This research aims to investigate teachers' perspectives on the function and use of humour in the ESL classroom. It also aims to explore the effects of humour on students' motivation, gather learners' opinions on their teachers' use of humour, identify the most enjoyable humorous activities, and assess the extent to which learners feel motivated to speak during humorous activities compared to unhumorous ones.

The thesis' theoretical section explores essential terminology related to teaching speaking skills, motivation, and humour in education. It emphasizes the importance of motivation in language learning and how humour can engage and motivate students while improving their speaking abilities.

The thesis' empirical section outlines the research methodology and analyses the results of questionnaires administered to learners. The study suggests that using humour in the ESL classroom enhances teacher-student relationships, alleviates anxiety, and creates a pleasant classroom atmosphere. These factors ultimately enhance students' proficiency and motivation in language learning. Additional research is necessary to develop speaking skills through the use of humour in EFL teaching.

Introduction

This thesis is focused on humour as an educational and motivational tool in English language teaching. It also investigates whether this teaching strategy can maximize students´ learning outcomes and examines its benefits in improving speaking language skills.

It is a well-known fact that laughter has a positive impact on our well-being, it influences both mental and physical health.

Significant shifts have been made in educational trends which led to streamlining the teaching strategies into becoming more relaxed and making learning more enjoyable. Structured and organised humour approaches are rather a new concept in the learning environment.

Despite questioning the use of humour, the studies that have been done so far show that humour can improve teacher-student relationships, reduce anxiety, and increase the enjoyment and atmosphere in a classroom environment. Many writers agree on its contribution to students´ proficiency (Faharani 2018) or motivation (Martin 2007). Šeďová (2013) and Medgyes (2002) claim, that humour brings students together and improves their relationships. However, as Farahani (2018) and several other authors claim, there is a lack of research findings which would particularly focus on developing speaking skills via using humour as an EFL teaching strategy. Therefore, it caught my attention to start research in this field.

The main aim of this thesis is to identify whether humour contributes to the development of student´s speaking skills and the overall motivation of the student to speak in a foreign language.

Based on these general aims, five research questions were constructed:

1. *What are the teachers´ views on the function/use of humour in English language teaching?*
2. *What effects on students´ motivation do they see after using humour as a teaching strategy in their lessons?*
3. *What are learners' opinions on their teacher's usage of humour in lessons?*
4. *What applied humorous activities do learners enjoy the most?*
5. *To what extent do learners feel more motivated to speak during humorous activities compared to unhumorous ones?*

The diploma thesis is divided into theoretical and practical parts. It consists of three main chapters and is focused mainly on the description of key terms based on literature review, and strategic documents.

The first section defines teaching speaking skills, key terms, and significant areas related to them.

The second section discusses the concept of motivation. Based on the literature review, it commences by defining motivation and identifying its possible sources and types. It then describes the signs of motivated and unmotivated behaviour and outlines specific motivational strategies utilized in the EFL classroom. Additionally, the text highlights the teacher's role in motivating students and their motivation to speak a foreign language. Finally, it suggests utilizing humour as a tool to motivate students to learn and improve their speaking skills. The third chapter focuses on humour in the educational context. It defines humour, analyses its effects on learners, outlines specific forms of using humour in the classroom, reviews perceptions of humour in the classroom, and identifies the teacher's role in motivating learners to learn English. Additionally, it discusses the role of humour in promoting speaking skills for better interconnectivity.

The fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of the thesis present empirical research. Chapter four describes the research methodology and samples, as well as the preparatory and implementation phases, including data processing. Chapter five focuses on evaluating the results of all questionnaires. Chapter six analyses the perceptions of teachers on using humour in the ESL classroom. Investigating how teachers perceive the importance and value of humour in the classroom can help dispel misconceptions and outdated ideas that humour has no place in education or is only suited for certain individuals. Chapter seven provides a summary of the research and a discussion of the outcomes.

The author of this thesis utilised the application Grammarly to identify and rectify spelling errors and stylistic inconsistencies. Additionally, Grammarly was employed to generate insights into the stylistic tendencies of a larger corpus of text, although this was subsequently verified and refined by the author of the thesis.

Theoretical part

1 Teaching speaking skills

Many authors share the view that speaking involves the ability to engage in meaningful conversations and to convey ideas in real communication with skills and effectiveness (Metruk 2018, p.19, Scrivener 2005, p.217, Harmer 1998, p. 87). These skills include pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, and grammar. Teachers should provide good models and expose learners to a variety of speakers through multimedia or speaking activities. Finally, teachers should give their students enough time to practice, ensuring that each learner can apply newly learned material.

Ur (2012, p. 117) emphasizes the fact that speaking is the most urgent and complex language skill. Cahyono (2016, as cited in Metruk, 2018, p. 19) shares the same view adding that the students themselves see speaking as the most difficult. It is imperative to allocate adequate space and resources for students to cultivate and proficiently master a given skill, within the confines of their capabilities (Metruk 2018, p.28). To develop age-appropriate speaking skills, educators must be aware of and demonstrate respect towards the unique characteristics of young learners.

To help the students develop communication skills in speaking, teachers might draw on an approach which combines language, structured and communicative output (Richard 2008, cited in Pratama and Awaliyah 2016, pp.20-21). First, students receive input in the form of teacher´s talk, listening exercises, reading passages, and the language they encounter outside the classroom. Second, they engage in structured output, which uses correct grammar and form. In this type of activity, students are given options for their responses, but all the options require them to use the specific structure or form that the teacher has just introduced. As a result, learners feel more comfortable producing newly learned language items, sometimes in combination with previously learned ones. Teachers often use these exercises to transition from the presentation stage to the practice stage of a lesson plan. Third, students engage in communicative output activities where their main goal is to complete a task, such as obtaining information, creating a travel plan, or making a video. In communicative output activities, the learner's success is measured by whether they can convey the message effectively (Pratama and Awaliyah 2016, p. 21).

According to Harmer (2007), learners must be prepared to manage various speaking events such as interactive or non-interactive, planned, or spontaneous, focused on information exchange or maintaining social relationships. They also need to acquire conversational strategies such as taking turns in a conversation, initiating a change of subject, asking for clarification, etc. Additionally, learners should learn fixed phrases like 'See you later', as well as functional language skills, which involve following the logical pattern of exchanges and providing expected responses to fixed phrases (known as "adjacency pairs") such as 'How are you?' - 'Fine, thanks, and you? (Harmer 2007, pp. 343-345).

1.1   Communicative language teaching [CLT]

In CLT language is perceived mainly as a social communication tool through which students convey something to someone with a purpose. This can be expressed orally or in a written way, of representation, interpretation, or reality comprehension (Cervik, 2014 p.187). This opinion is also shared by Celce-Maria (1991, p.8) who adds that apart from the social functions the content of language learning should also cover semantic notions and linguistic structures.

CLT is not represented by a single method, it consists of several principles applied according to various methods. One of the crucial building blocks of the communicative approach is the functional concept of language which means it is rather perceived by its functions which are provided in the communication. The communicative approach emphasizes the use of real-life language in authentic contexts, and it aims to develop learners' ability to use language effectively in everyday situations.

Macaro (1997, as cited in Dr Salek, p. 104) referred to four popular beliefs among language teachers that promote the level of 'communicative competence'. These beliefs involve focusing on speaking and listening skills rather than reading and writing, practising more in communicating new information rather than 'already known' information, enhancing students' active learning and focusing on practising the language in meaningful situations rather than on producing well-formed sentences or in individual words.

As Ekwelibe and Chinwe (2014, p.78) conclude CLT was aimed to deepen L2´s knowledge through communicative tasks and fluency has the dominant role in learning. Similarly, Cervik (2014, p.187) claims learner´s competence is relative and closely related to an interactional ability which appears in real-life situations, and skills building, and it should include fluency and accuracy in communication as well.

The authors outline several strategies for developing communicative competence such as oral discussions, storytelling, drama, composition writing, dialogues, using videos or other audio-visual aids or consistent reading and language games (2014, p. 77). Celce-Murcia (1991, p. 8) also recommends using authentic reflecting real situations.

Scrivener (2011, p. 32) mentions two different types of CLT, namely strong and weak. The strong would deal with communication tasks and omit traditional practice learning. The weak version contains a variety of diverse activities mainly focused on speaking and listening. In addition, the author points out that contemporary coursebooks are mainly weak type orientated.

Communicative language competence

There have been various terms defined regarding communicative competence. For instance, according to Häuslerová and Nováková (2008), it includes both linguistic competencies as well as the ability to use the language effectively. Similarly, Yule (as cited in Ekwelibe and Chinwe 2014, p. 74) states it should represent the ability to express accurately as well as adaptably. In this vein, Harmer (2001, p. 123) also states that when we communicate, we use language to accomplish some functions, such as arguing, persuading, and promising. Therefore, when a speaker wants to talk about something, he needs to consider not only based on his intention of his expressions but also to whom he talks so he can speak not only correctly but also appropriately.

Canale and Swain (1980, as cited in Teaching English.org.uk,) describe composing competence in four areas: words and rules, appropriacy, cohesion, coherence, and use of communication strategies. Furthermore, the authors specify the competence as a mixture of four competencies such as linguistics, sociolinguistics, strategic, discursive, intercultural, and plurilingual (as cited in Mayo and Barrioluengo, 2017, p.58).

CEFR (Common Framework of Reference for Languages, 2001, p.129) identifies aspects which have been shared by competence models since 1980. These form strategic competence, linguistic competence, pragmatic competence (including both discourse and functional competence) and sociocultural competence (including sociolinguistic competence). For better understanding, a schema is provided below covering three headings: "Linguistic competence", "Pragmatic competence" and "Sociolinguistic competence". These aspects are always interconnected in any language use and cannot stay separate.
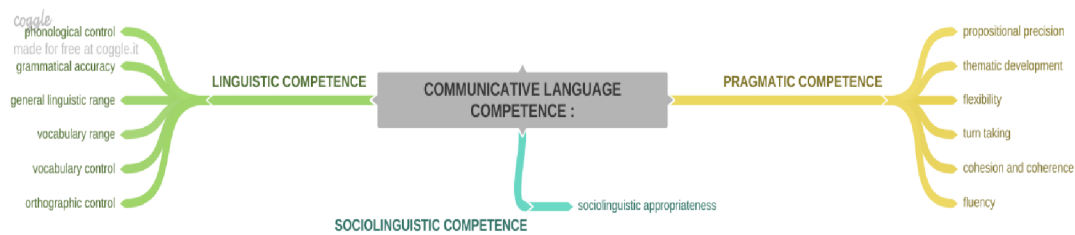
(adapted from CEFR, 2020, p.129)

Figure 1: Communicative language competence

To sum up, it can be stated that communicative competence is the ability of someone to pass on a message using a language.

1.2 Conducting speaking activities

According to Scrivener (2005, p. 146-147) and Nunan (2003, p. 56), there is no point in learning a language that we cannot use. Simply knowing the grammatical rules is not enough if we cannot answer simple questions.

Practical tips for conducting speaking activities

Based on the information provided by Scrivener (2005, p. 150) and Harmer (2007, p. 143) for quality discussions, as well as Penny Ur (1996, p. 120) and Metruk (2018, p. 31) regarding successful speaking activities, several tendencies can be identified:

1) *Structured approach* - both Scrivener (2005) and Harmer (2007) emphasize the importance of opening and closing discussions, indicating a structured methodology.
2) *Preparation time* – Scrivener (2005) and Harmer (2007) highlight the need for allowing students sufficient time to organise their thoughts before engaging in discussions.
3) *Task-based learning* - focusing on addressing specific problems instead of general issues aligns with task-based learning approaches.
4) *Role-playing* - using role cards is mentioned by both Scrivener (2005) and Metruk (2018).
5) *Buzz group technique* - if discussions seem stagnant, dividing students into smaller groups and encouraging summary sharing followed by feedback from the entire class is recommended.

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Furthermore, more tendencies have been mentioned by Penny Ur (1996, p.) and Metruk (2018, p.35):

6) *Engagement* - encouraging students to engage in conversations actively is highlighted. The significance of keeping track of student participation throughout discussions is recommended.

7) *Equality* - ensuring everyone has an equal chance to participate in discussions promotes fairness.

8) *Motivation* - high levels of motivation keep students interested and willing to contribute to the conversation.

9) *Language proficiency* - considering students' language proficiency ensures that discussions remain accessible and beneficial.

10) *A group leader* - during group discussions, it is important to have a designated group leader. The leader should keep track of time and ensure that everyone can speak and that no one dominates the discussion.

11)   *A mother tongue monitor observer* - each group should appoint a "Mother Tongue Monitor". This student will observe and report to the teacher if the group is using their native language (L1) during the activity. During group discussions, it is important to have a designated group leader. The leader should keep track of time and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to speak and that no one person dominates the discussion.

12)   Correcting errors - it is generally not recommended to interrupt the student during oral fluency work by providing correcting feedback. They might get distracted or even discouraged from expressing themselves, in other words, they can become unmotivated to cooperate in the future.

13)   *Giving feedback* - there may be situations in which corrections can be beneficial, such as when a student requires confirmation of appropriate speaking conventions. Alternatively, we can provide correction feedback once the activity is over.

1.3 Spoken interaction and strategies

Interaction is fundamental in learning. The CEFR (2001, p.70) scales for interaction strategies reflect this with scales for turn-taking *(also called taking the floor)*, *co-operating* (= *collaborative strategies*) and *asking for clarification*. These basic interaction strategies are as important in collaborative learning as they are in real-world communication, most of the scales for interaction concern oral interaction.

Turn-taking in conversations involves starting, continuing, and concluding discussions, interrupting conversations, and using pre-made phrases to gain time to think. Young learners should be able to start, maintain, or end short conversations, initiate, and conclude face-to-face conversations, and request attention (CEFR 2001, p.88).

Collaborative discourse moves represent deals that aim to facilitate the development of a discussion through cooperation. These moves include confirming comprehension at lower levels, the ability to give feedback and relate one's contribution to that of previous speakers, summarizing the point reached in the discussion to take stock at B levels, and inviting others to contribute (CEFR 2001, p.88).

Asking for clarification concerns intervening in an interaction to indicate whether one is following or not, and to ask follow-up questions on certain points, to check comprehension. At the A1 level, individuals can simply request repetition when they do not comprehend. They can also ask for clarification regarding unfamiliar keywords, signs, or phrases using standard phrases. Additionally, they can indicate that they did not follow and request for a word or sign to be spelt out. Learners can communicate their lack of understanding through simple words, signs, intonation, and gestures alternatively straightforwardly express their confusion (CEFR 2001, p.89).

1.4 Accuracy-based activities

According to Metruk (2018, p.29), Accuracy-oriented activities provide ample speaking practice opportunities. These controlled exercises enable learners to repeatedly use the newly acquired language. Activities can include drills, repetitions, and memorizations, with emphasis on grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation. They can be highly motivational as the learners become more confident once they see their progress (Metruk, 2018, p. 29). In the same vein, Ur (1996, p.84) outlines several stages that learners should go through before achieving fluency

in their speaking skills. These stages include Type 2, which involves controlled drills; Type 3, which involves meaningful drills; and Type 4, which involves guided, meaningful practice. Each of these types differs in the level of control and the limited choice of vocabulary, with the most predetermined by the teacher in Type 2 and the freedom to create sentences on one's own with a set pattern always present.

Thornbury (1999, p.92) argues that a learner needs to pay attention to *form* to achieve accuracy. This means focusing on getting things right rather than dwelling too much on the *meaning*. Since learners have a limited attention span, it is recommended to not spend too much time on the meaning. This allows them to concentrate on getting the form right. To make tasks more meaningful for students, Thornbury (1999, p. 92) suggests using tasks that are already familiar to them. However, it needs time and having students value accuracy. It is not worth rushing through all the processes and at the same time, learners should understand that without getting the words right they will not be intelligible to others. Therefore, it is crucial to provide immediate and straight feedback while correcting errors. In addition, knowing they are being closely observed can increase their level of focus and attentiveness.

1.5 Fluency-based activities

Fluency and confidence are two critical aspects when it comes to teaching speaking (Scrivener, 2005, p. 213; Metruk 2018, p.29). Similarly, Brumfit's (1984, p.52) and Metruk's (2018, p. 29) research suggests that language learners can significantly improve both fluency and accuracy by adopting a balanced approach that includes both. Fluency is developed by encouraging learners to express themselves naturally spontaneously and accurately by providing learners with feedback on their language use. This enables them to identify and correct errors in real-time.

Scrivener (2005, p.148) suggests that fluency and confidence can be developed by putting students in situations where they are not afraid to make mistakes and can apply their passive knowledge actively. The author also recommends some activities to improve fluency and confidence, as well as offering useful tips for having productive discussions.

Fluency enables individuals to express themselves confidently and interact with others in different social and professional situations. It refers to the ability to communicate in a language smoothly and effortlessly, without hesitation or pauses, while maintaining a coherent flow of ideas and words (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 31).

Ur (1996, pp. 123-126) mentions some types of fluency activities:

Role play – in language learning, role play is often done in pairs or groups. Sometimes, volunteers may perform in front of the class. This is a great way for students to practice improvising real-life conversations in a classroom setting. However, some students may find role-play difficult due to shyness or anxiety. To ensure the success of a role-play activity, teachers can help by making sure that students have the necessary language skills, by being enthusiastic themselves, and by giving clear and careful instructions (Ur 2012, p.126). According to Harmer (1998, p. 87), role-play provides a secure environment for learners to practice real-life scenarios. Scrivener (2005, p. 222) emphasises the term of real play where situations and the characters are taken from a participant's own life.

Discussions – students are allowed to interact spontaneously, developing arguments to defend their position or opinion. Students are allowed to interact spontaneously, developing arguments to defend their positions or opinions. These might include describing pictures, comparing pictures, finding things in common or solving a problem (Ur 1996, p.125-126). Harmer (2007, p. 128) recommends three steps to be carried out before starting the task such as putting learners into groups, giving learners time to prepare, and giving students a task as part of the discussion process. The author divides discussion activities into three groups; debates, the buzz group (already mentioned in Chapter 1.2 Conducting speaking activities) and debates based on controversial topics.

Topic and task-based activities – the main difference between these two activities is that the first one requires learners to discuss a controversial topic, with the objective being the discussion process itself. Scott and Ytreberg (1990, p. 84) explain that focusing on specific topics can enhance the learning process by enabling children to connect words, functions, structures, and situations to a particular theme. Associating these elements with a topic aids memory retention while learning language in context promotes better understanding and improved memory recall. On the other hand, the second activity requires learners to perform a task where the discussion is simply a means to achieve the goal. The task-centred activity received a higher score due to increased discussion, more even participation, and greater motivation and enjoyment from speaking with a purpose (Ur 1996, p.123, Scrivener 2005, p. 184).

Interactive activities are less structured exercises that prioritize fluency over accuracy. One such activity is called "information gap," where learners work in pairs or groups to exchange different sets of pictures or information. The objective is for each participant to

discover what the other person or group knows or can see (Lindsay and Knight 2006, pp. 65-67, Harmer 2001, p. 271).

Games – play is an activity that serves a definite purpose, and games are an integral part of play. Games are widely used as a teaching technique, as they combine the benefits of both the Audio-Linguistic Method (ALM) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). They can be designed to suit either accuracy or fluency-based tasks and can be structured in a way that maximizes the use of the English language (Pratama and Awaliyah 2016, pp.25-26). According to Nunnan (2006, p. 66), teachers can use games to enhance language learning among students.

Information gap activity -the primary objective of this activity is for two individuals to collaborate and piece together their respective parts, which have missing information, to create a whole. For information-gap activities to be effective, it is crucial that students have a clear understanding of the task requirements, such as refraining from showing their pictures to others. To ensure that everyone comprehends the activity, it can be helpful for educators to demonstrate it in front of the class by selecting a student and performing the activity (or a comparable one) with them (Harmer 1998, p. 88).

1.6 Importance of pair work and group work

Pair and group work have several advantages in the classroom. Students need to remain active and have ample opportunities to practice their oral fluency (Ur, 1996, p. 232). They give learners more speaking time, change the pace of the lesson, and allow them to mix with everyone in the group (Bertrand 2020; Celce-Murcia 1991, p.8; Haycraft 1986, p. 82).
Ur (1996, p.232) highlights the benefits of group work, which includes promoting learners' sense of responsibility and independence while increasing motivation and cooperation with peers. Ur (2012, p.117) explains that these interactional patterns might increase the student talking time.

This view is supported by Baker with Westup (2003, as cited in Metruk, 2018, p.28) stating that this approach can also offer a comfortable environment for students who struggle with public speaking, enabling them to participate and contribute to the group. Similarly, Celce-Murcia (1991, p.8) focuses on students´ interactional patterns, namely working in groups and alternatively in pairs who try to negotiate the meaning of the situation between one another.

According to Scrivener (2011) noisiness or unwillingness might appear during the lessons however despite these downsides, the advantages still prevail.

1.7 Assessing speaking skills

Assessing a student's progress is a crucial aspect of learning. It is a broad term that encompasses all methods used to gather information about children's knowledge, abilities, understanding, attitudes, and motivation. (Georgiou and Pavlou, 2003, p.4, Nunan 1999, p.138).

According to Richards (2008, p. 39), the issue involved in planning speaking activities is determining the expected level of performance in a speaking task and the criteria that will be used to assess students' performance. For any activity we use in class, whether it aims to develop proficiency in the use of speaking as interaction, transaction, or performance, we need to consider what successful completion of the activity involves.

Assessment criteria

Richards (2008, p. 39) declares the types of criteria we use to assess a speaker's oral performance during a classroom activity depend on what kind of talk we are talking about and what kind of classroom activity we are using.

Ioannou-Georgiou and Pavlou (2003, p. 45) suggest that speaking assessments should be both realistic and contextualized in familiar and interesting contexts. Conversely, Ur (1996, p. 134) argues that there are no obvious criteria for fluency assessment as some teachers may be more rigorous, which may affect the reliability of such a test.

Thornbury (2005, p. 127), Nunan (1999, pp.148-149), as well as Metruk (2018, p.48), introduce holistic (single score for overall impression) and analytic (separate score for various aspects of the task) scoring which can be applied during the assessment. The criteria are based on;

Grammar and vocabulary – learners will be graded based on their accurate use of syntax and vocabulary.

Discourse management – assessment of the ability to express ideas and opinions in coherent speech. Learners are required to form sentences and justify their opinions.

Pronunciation – production of individual sounds, correct linking of the words and the use of stress and intonation. L1 speech is considered acceptable if it is comprehensible.

Interactive communication – the ability to interact with the interlocutor and other candidate(s) by responding appropriately according to task requirements.

1.8   The Teacher´s role in supporting speaking skills

Tosta (2001, p.27; as cited in Basols, 2005) defines the role by saying the teacher should be focused, determined and passionate, someone who believes in the usefulness of having fun in classrooms.

Paul (2003, p. 77) outlines key principles for teachers to consider when preparing students to communicate in English. These include introducing and practising patterns in meaningful ways, practising new patterns in combination with others learned, providing opportunities for flexible use of patterns in novel situations, building confidence in speaking out, and focusing on question forms.

According to Harmer (2007, p.25) and Terry (2008) in a classroom setting, teachers can take on multiple roles during a single teaching activity. For example, they may act as *a prompter* by providing discrete suggestions and giving students chunks of information without disrupting the discussion. At the same time, they can *participate in the conversation* by introducing new information and ensuring students remain engaged, without monopolizing the conversation. Additionally, teachers can act *as feedback providers* by giving gentle corrections and informing students about their performance, while avoiding over-correction that may discourage further dialogue. *As assessors*, teachers can take note of students' language production and provide feedback accordingly. They can also *observe* the class speaking activity to identify any breakdowns and *provide resources* to improve students' oral competence. Finally, teachers can act *as organizers* by managing the classroom, setting activities, and engaging students. It is common for teachers to play multiple roles in a single teaching activity, such as being a prompter during the speaking activity and a feedback provider at the end of the class.

Teachers should participate at an appropriate level during speaking activities and avoid dominating. If the activity is not going smoothly, teachers may need to intervene to decide whether to stop it or prompt it. Sometimes, teachers may need to make a point or take on a role to push a roleplay forward. It is worth mentioning that constant interruptions from the teacher might destroy the purpose of the speaking activity (Harmer 1998, p. 94).

As per the self-assessment from EPOSTL (2007, p. 21), the role of a teacher in speaking interaction is to create a supportive atmosphere, select and evaluate meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners to participate, develop fluency, use various text

types, stimulate speaking activities with visual aids or authentic materials, and support learners in responding to utterances appropriately.

1.9   The teaching speaking barriers

According to Pratama and Awaliyah (2016, pp. 28-29) based on the data observation sheet and interview the teachers found some barriers to teaching speaking, as follows:

Reluctant Students - according to Harmer (2007, as cited in Pratama and Awaliyah, 2016, p.28), some students may resist participating in classroom activities due to shyness and a lack of confidence in speaking. Factors such as fear of making mistakes, disinterest in the topics being discussed, an unsupportive classroom environment, and unhelpful feedback from peers can also contribute to their lack of involvement (Jianing 2007, as cited in Pratama and Awaliyah, 2016, p. 28). Likewise, Ur states students may feel anxious about speaking in real-time to an audience due to being criticized or drawing attention to themselves (Ur 2012, p. 118).

Pronunciation obstacles- students learning English as a second language may struggle with pronouncing specific phonemes like /th/, /r/, and /or/ as noted by Linse (2005, as cited in Pratama and Awaliyah, 2016, p. 28).

Lack of vocabulary - effective communication in English relies on a strong vocabulary foundation (Cameron, 2001; Diyanti, 2008). However, many students encounter difficulties in acquiring new vocabulary, hindering their ability to engage in meaningful conversations. To address this issue, teaching strategies should prioritize teaching useful words and empowering learners to independently decipher word meanings (Nation, 2003, as cited in Pratama and Awaliyah, 2016, p. 29). Besides, some learners might have problems recalling the right words in the right situations (Kamal 2019, p. 6).

Lack of grammar - although some students may have theoretical knowledge of grammar, they might not be able to apply it in practical situations (Kamal 2019, p. 7).

Finding things to say - students should feel that their contributions to the discussion are relevant and original to encourage them to speak up (Ur 2012, p. 118).

Low participation - it is important to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to speak during a discussion.

Mother tongue language use – occasional use of L1 (mother tongue language) is inevitable and can be helpful however, if students spend most of the time speaking their own language, they will not get the opportunity to improve their speaking skills in English (Ur 2012, p. 118).

The way the teacher overcomes the barriers

Teachers can support student learning by assisting with challenging pronunciations and sentence construction (Terry 2008). Utilizing resources like videos, songs, and images can further aid in student learning and reinforce difficult vocabulary (Harmer, 2007, as cited in Pratama and Awaliyah, 2016, p. 29). These strategies have been proven effective in enhancing student engagement and fostering language development in the classroom.

To solve problems with reluctant learners, teachers should take the role of organiser and make sure that learners are engaged in the activity, giving them opportunities to concentrate properly. Multimedia can also be very useful in motivating learners (Pratama and Awaliyah, 2016, p. 29).

2 Motivation of learners of English as a foreign language

In literature, there are various concepts of motivation, making it a challenging aspect to analyse. The purpose of this chapter is to explain the role of motivation in students´ learning English and its impact on foreign language acquisition. Motivation is crucial for both teachers and students to enjoy lessons and increase productivity.

2.1 Defining motivation and its role

Numerous studies have indicated that motivation plays a significant role in achieving academic success and is linked to learners' learning attitudes (Dörney 2001, Pham 2021, William and Burden 1997). The literature offers varying definitions of motivation, making it challenging to comprehend. Overall, it could be stated it is characterised by a human´s internal drive to accomplish some goal (Harmer 2001, p.51). Brown (2000, pp. 160-166) maintains that motivation also contains necessary factors such as exploration, acting, stimulation, acquiring new knowledge, and enhancing one's ego. Several researchers have reported that motivation is a crucial factor in achieving academic excellence, and it is closely related to learners' attitudes towards learning (Robbins et al. 2004, Johnson, 2017, Pham2021, Gardner 1985).

It should be noted, that L2 (second language learning) cannot be perceived as a stable or constant quality of learning but something that develops and fluctuates through the period (Dörney 2001, p. 19).

2.2 Types and sources of motivation

Some authors have been interested in questions concerning motivation (Nakonečný 2014, p. 46; Ur 1996, pp. 281), claiming it represents an intrapsychic process that is influenced by both internal (intrinsic) and external (extrinsic) factors.

Soňa Rýdl (2016) holds the assumption that an intrinsically motivated and engaged child can be recognized by the fact that he or she is immersed in the task, is focused, and shows emotions and feelings. These are the children who ask questions about a topic and are comfortable admitting that they don't know something and need to learn it. They see an error as an impulse to look for another solution and take on more challenging work. They do not need praise or rewards.

Historically, studies on the motivation of foreign language learners focused primarily on the reasons behind their decision to learn a new language. Gardner (1985) identified two distinct motivational orientations for foreign language learning: *integrative and instrumental. Integrative motivation* involves a desire to communicate with and get closer to others, while *instrumental motivation* is related to a desire to learn a language for pragmatic reasons, such as applying for a job.

Kašparková (2003) is also convinced that the foundation of a child's motivational attitudes towards school learning is laid in the family. Children with a supportive background that fosters self-esteem, a sense of competence in meeting school requirements, and independence are likely to engage more actively in their learning and be more open to taking risks. Research indicates that a positive self-concept is both a contributor to and a result of academic achievement (Kalhous, Obst 2002, as cited in Kašpárková 2003).

According to Dörney (2001), L2 learning motivation refers to an L2 learner's understanding of the personal value of engaging in activities related to acquiring a second language. This concept suggests that a learner's initial motivation to learn an L2 can evolve into true motivation when it is aligned with specific goals and actively involves the learner in either tangible or imaginative ways.

As the study of motivation is extensive, this text will focus on students' motivation to speak English and whether humour can motivate and support speaking skills in English.

2.3 Characteristics of Motivated and Unmotivated Behaviour

Kašparková (2003) highlights that while external stimuli can have an impact, it is important to note that they do not solely determine an individual's behaviour. The primary source of motivation comes from within; however, it can also be triggered by external motivating situations. On the other hand, it is possible that external stimuli may not necessarily always motivate specific behaviour. The author adds the motivation to learn is not as easily observable as the behaviour during learning. For instance, a student might lack confidence at that moment and be hesitant to take on his/her task. Generally speaking, a student who is motivated by external factors might be driven either by rewards, success, failure and its penalties, authoritative demands, tests or competitions (Ur 1996, p. 279).

According to Ur (1996, p.274), instead of defining motivation, it would be more beneficial to identify the characteristics of a well-motivated student who is eager to make progress. These are:

1. *Focus on completing tasks positively* – the learner possesses the willingness and confidence to take on tasks.

2. *Ego involvement*: This refers to the importance a learner places on succeeding in their learning to maintain and promote their positive self-image.

3. *Need for achievement*: This describes the learner's desire to overcome difficulties and succeed in whatever they set out to do.

4. *Goal orientation*: The learner is aware of the goals of their learning and directs their efforts towards achieving them.

5. *Tolerance of ambiguity*: This trait describes a learner who is not disturbed or frustrated by a temporary lack of understanding or confusion. They believe that understanding will come later.

6. *High aspirations*: The learner is ambitious and enjoys taking on demanding challenges.

7. *Perseverance:* This trait describes a learner who consistently invests a high level of effort in their learning and is not discouraged by setbacks.

As mentioned by Scrivener (2011, p.326) Learners are more likely to be engaged and successful in a task when they have some level of choice in selecting it, as it increases their interest and motivation.

2.4 Motivational Approaches in ELT

Motivational approaches involve utilizing techniques and methods to stimulate, inspire, and guide individuals towards achieving their objectives in the field of English language teaching. Effective teaching practices can be used to motivate learners by improving the quality of instruction and selecting appropriate teaching methods.

As stated by Dörnyei (2001, p. 29), key units are presented within the process-oriented arrangement:

1. Establishing the foundational elements for motivation

2. Creating the initial drive

3. Sustaining and safeguarding motivation

4. Promoting a reflection on past experiences with a focus on highlighting the positives
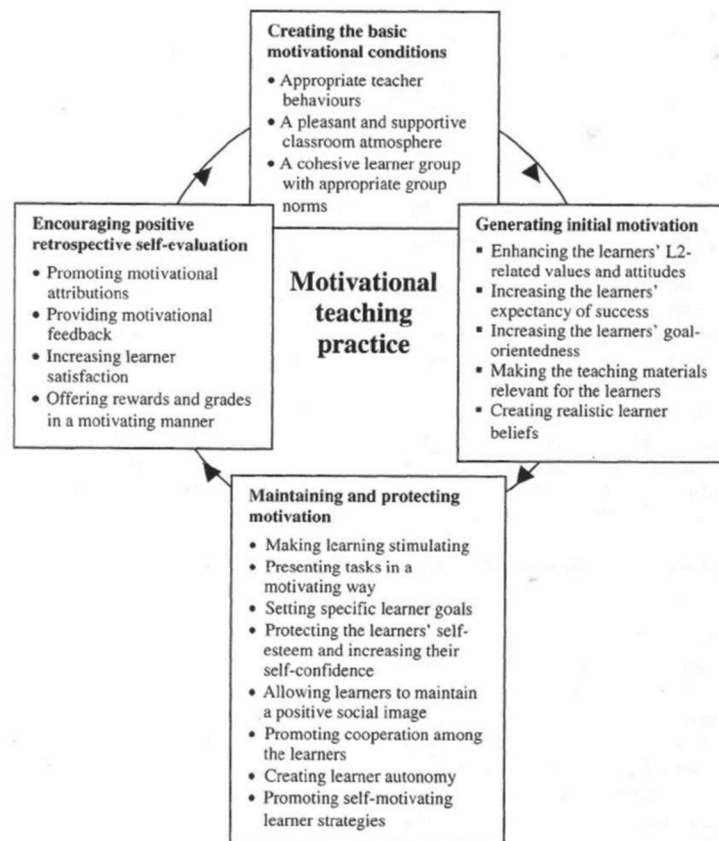
Figure 2: The components of motivational teaching practice in the L2 classroom.

(Dörnyei 2001, p. 29)

Assessment as a motivational tool

One effective technique for motivating children is using assessments, which provide them with a tangible measure of their progress. Short-term goals, such as mastering basic concepts like numbers or colours, can serve as a powerful source of motivation for children. Furthermore, by setting clear expectations for progress within a defined timeframe, children are more likely to be motivated as they see themselves making tangible progress towards their goals. The resulting feeling of accomplishment can encourage them to continue striving towards higher levels of achievement. It is important to note that assessments should be pitched at an appropriate level for each child, as this can help to encourage weaker students and build their confidence. In some cases, providing a simpler test may be beneficial in motivating these children to reach higher levels of achievement (Georgiou and Pavlou, 2003, p. 5-6).

2.5 The role of the teacher in motivating students to learn

As demonstrated by Johnson (2017, p. 46; Dörnyei 2001, p. 41), teachers play a crucial role in fostering a supportive and pleasant learning environment for students. As stated in Chapter 2.4, a safe and supportive environment serves as a motivational tool where students feel comfortable taking risks without fear of criticism or ridicule for their mistakes (Dörnyei 2001, p. 41).

Dörney (2001, p.31) is even convinced that teachers' own behaviour is the most significant motivational tool They achieve this by promoting students' autonomy and allowing them to make choices based on their interests and values. By encouraging students to take ownership of their work and create their own goals, teachers help cultivate personal interest, engagement, and motivation.

Research has shown a strong connection between students' perception of their teachers' support for autonomy and their self-regulated learning and achievement. When teachers empower students to be leaders of their own learning journey, it enhances motivation and drives their desire to learn (Ferlazzo 2015; Theobald 2006; Schuitema et al. Stearns 2013; as cited in Johnson 2017, p.46).

Last but not least, teachers should encourage learners to illustrate the classroom environment according to their preferences and tastes (Dörney 2001, p. 42).

Not only does the subject matter affect students' motivation, but the teacher and their communication style also play a significant role. According to Krejčová (2011, p. 47), the

communication and presentation of subject matter significantly influence students' interest and motivation, as well as the relationship between the teacher, the class, and the material. Therefore, teachers need to present the subject matter engagingly and innovatively. They should consider the students' preferences regarding teaching style. An additional method of enhancing student motivation to learn is by bridging educational content with their personal lives, thus making learning tasks more meaningful by aligning them with students' experiences ((Ferlazzo, 2015; Thoonen et al., 2011; as cited in Johnson 2017, p.47).

Developing positive relationships with students is another key factor in influencing their learning. However, this process requires time, so teachers should invest time in getting to know their students and their interests. To accomplish this, teachers should maintain an open-minded approach and periodically share their own anecdotes or challenges. Students are more likely to be motivated to learn when what they are learning has relevance and significance to their lives. Scrivener (2011, p. 327) recommends certain techniques how to impress teenagers, for instance, a willingness to listen, not just leading roles but following the class as well as sharing their responsibility for key decisions.

Teachers motivate students to learn by providing positive feedback and developing their competence. Feedback helps students take control of their learning and believe in their abilities. Providing feedback about their efforts helps students understand the importance of hard work. Strategies for developing competence include praising, identifying fewer errors, recognizing strengths, and focusing on the positive aspects of their work (Bain 2004; Ferlazzo, 2015; Theobald, 2006; as cited in Johnson 2017, p.47).

Finally, Teachers' enthusiasm and energy while teaching can enhance student motivation to learn. (Johnson 2017, p.47; Dörney 2001, p. 32).

2.6 Student´s motivation for speaking English

To begin with, in the age of globalization, being able to speak a foreign language fluently and using it for various oral purposes is commonly viewed as crucial. Speaking is a primary and widespread method for individuals to convey their thoughts and emotions. Given the significance of motivation in learning a foreign language, this chapter explores the connections between EFL learners' motivation to engage in English conversation and the factors driving their active participation in speaking activities.

One of the main characteristics of successful speaking activity is high motivation. Spoken language is primarily associated with linguistic skills and secondarily with how well

one speaks (Chomsky, 2001, as cited in Ihsan 2016, p.3). Language competence is influenced by an individual's motivation to effectively communicate, which determines their inclination or reluctance to communicate competently in specific situations. In the realm of language acquisition, motivation is widely recognized as a key factor that can determine the success or failure of a learner in mastering a foreign language, according to Dörnyei (2001).

Fowler (2022) advises that to help improve student willingness to speak, educators should understand what intrinsically and extrinsically motivates learners. This view is supported by Dincer and Yesilyurt (2017) who state several factors can impact a student's motivation to speak English, including their enthusiasm for the language, the perceived importance of English in their daily life or future plans, positive experiences in learning, a supportive learning environment, as well as internal factors like personal ambitions, self-confidence, and a desire for cross-cultural communication.

Harmer (1991, pp. 46-47) has provided a comprehensive analysis of the motivations behind conversational engagement, drawing on broad observations about communicative events. Specifically, the author posits that learners participate in conversations for a variety of reasons, including a desire to express themselves, a recognition of the communicative value of the situation, a conscious effort to select the appropriate language, an interest in understanding the message being conveyed, and a willingness to challenge themselves to comprehend complex grammatical structures and vocabulary.

Harmer (1991, p.25-26) follows the *Engage-Activate-Study* pattern which is a combination of three elements which should be present in a language classroom. The *Engage phase* aims to spark students' interest in the lesson topic through activities that engage them in a meaningful way. Harmer is convinced that if we wish students to start using their productive skills in English they must be interested in the topic, especially those students who possess language limitations. Such activities involve games, discussions, and stimulating ideas such as dramatic stories or anecdotes. Teachers can motivate learners by conducting pre-reading activity which involves asking questions about the topic or they can guess before listening activity. The *study phase* involves structured language practice activities that help students grasp and internalise new language concepts in different styles. It is important to note that the primary function of this stage is language construction. These activities might represent pronunciation activities practising vowel sounds or the third person singular of the present simple, inviting patterns. Finally, the *activate phase* focuses on giving students opportunities to use the language in realistic and communicative tasks to consolidate their learning. Representative activities include role-play, debates or discussions or *describing and drawing*

pictures. Each phase plays a crucial role in creating a dynamic and effective language-learning environment.

Finally, according to Fowler (2022, p. 101), pedagogy that empowers students to control their learning tends to motivate them to speak up. Instructors can use various methods such as providing options for speaking topics, making speaking resources easily accessible, and guiding students through metacognitive tasks. These student-centred strategies can help engage students in discourse and prepare them to speak better. By giving students opportunities to discuss familiar topics, practice, and receive feedback, anxiety can be reduced, and speech fluency can be increased.

3 Humour in the classroom

This chapter focuses on the humour found in language learning and analyses it as one of the potential motivational tools. To specify and narrow the span of research, this work will concentrate only on the positive aspects of humour in language learning.

Firstly, it will be defined how humour is perceived by experts and afterwards, it will be demonstrated the effects of humour on humans and learning a language.

3.1 What is humour

It can be rather difficult to state what humour is as we do not always laugh when experiencing something funny (Medgyes, 2002, p. 1). We can only smile a bit or not even when we feel anxious or shy. We all differ so what seems funny to us does not to the other (Šeďová, 2013, p.11, p. 20-21). It would be too difficult to settle only on one basic definition. Medgyes (2002, p. 1) also defines humour from a dictionary point of view and states that we cannot survive without it and the world would be miserable without fun.

Martin (2007, p.7-8) perceives humour from a psychological viewpoint and states that humour is anything people consider to be funny or makes them laugh as well as the way people are affected during amusement. Educational humour, which is a teaching style and "an instructional tool is something teachers can use in the classroom to increase their effectiveness" (Wanzer 2002, p.116; as cited in Elkhayma 2021, p.443)

Lastly, being funny does not mean one possesses a sense of humour. Having a sense of humour means we do not need anyone laughing at us, it is purely an internal matter (Dunker, 2020).

3.2 Effects and functions of humour in learning language

This chapter discusses the effects and functions humour possesses in connection to language learning and teaching. Many authors studying humour in the classroom share the view that humour strategy represents an effective teaching tool with its numerous benefits, transforming classrooms into warm and inviting learning environments.

Social functions of humour

One of the most important functions humour represents is social interaction, in other words, humour has the power to bring people together. This view is supported by Martin (2007, p.353; Salmee and Arif 2019, p.8) who also mentions the educational concept of immediacy which means the teacher´s sense of getting close to the students.

Humour can be contagious as it evokes emotional excitement which then results in laughter (Šeďová, 2013, p.25; Martin 2007, p. 114). According to Hay (2000, as cited in Šeďová, p.27), humour can induce mutual sympathy within relationships or fulfil an individual´s psychological needs.

McGhee (1988, as cited in Šeďová, p.27) presents social functions such as easier sharing among people, favouring funny people since they can make us laugh, the possibility to hide easily behind humour when having hostile intentions, getting information from others through humour and self-disclosure as pre-testing within social interaction. Additionally, Martin (2007, p.5, p.18, p. 114) reports that humour helps establish and maintain interpersonal relationships within an in-group, thus making them more attractive too. On the other hand, the author notes that humour can also exclude individuals from an out-group.

Šedová (2013, p. 20) and Medgyes (2002, p. 5) agree on the importance of the *playful frame* which means that it is clear to all involved in activity that it is not serious but fun. This frame is called a *liminal state,* a shared space, where due to outbursts of laughter the sociocultural borders are erased. As a result, students can step out together for a moment from their common roles and create a community based on a deeper human basis (Chlup, 2005, as cited in Širl, 2022, p.85, p.88).

Promoting academic excellence through humour

Both teachers and parents wish their children to enjoy their learning and succeed in an academic environment. One of the elements which encourage academic excellence is humour and laughter (Lovorn, 2008). Fahrani (2018) and Lovorn (2008) share the opinion that humour in language courses can improve learners' proficiency. It is also recommended by experts that teachers should be fond of using funny jokes, and illustrations (Martin, 2007, p. 350) or playing humorous activities to promote language skills.

Cognitive effects of humour

Medgyes (2002, p. 7), Šeďová (2013, p. 51-52) and Martin (2007, p. 354) see the usefulness of humour in developing creativity, enhancing motivation, reinforcement, or consolidation of learnt language items.

Martin (2007, p.101, p. 238, p.114, p. 270, p.309) describes the humour effects from a broad perspective dealing with cognitive, social, mental, physical, or developmental traits. Furthermore, the author analyses whether material learnt humorously is better remembered than in a traditional way (Martin, 2007, p. 103).

Based on his experiment with his students, Basols (2005) is also convinced humour helps to recall the learnt information more easily as well and it can hold the knowledge in students′ minds for a longer period (Lundberg and Miller, 2002, as cited in Lovorn, 2008; Salmee and Arif 2019, p.8). In addition, it improves visual memory and enhances problem-solving skills.

To specify what can be taught within language learning, Tranter (2012) recommends using humour as it can improve vocabulary learning, extend lexical repertoire, practise grammatical structures, train reading comprehension and enhance language awareness. Overall, incorporating humour in the classroom can have a significant positive impact on the learning experience (Salmee and Arif 2019, p.8).

Šeďová (2012, p. 439) acknowledges the challenges in obtaining reliable results, particularly in terms of cognitive learning. Banas et al. (2011, as cited in Šeďová) attribute the variability in results to factors such as the type of humour used, its integration into the classroom, and the duration of the study. The diversity in approaches, ranging from verbal humour to comic strips or audio recordings, further complicates the issue of incorporating humour effectively in educational settings.

Mental and behavioural effects of humour

Incorporating humour into teaching can help to develop students′ positive emotions which influences the relationship with the subject and learning itself (Šeďová, 2013, p 45). Berg, Brockern and Burgess (1995; 2000, as cited in Lovorn, 2008) share an opinion that a structured use of humour activities can help to rid of children′s disruptive and disrespectful behaviour, furthermore, it helps improve a self-image among troubled pupils, especially when dealing with conflict situations. Similarly, Borecký (2000, p.39), Banas et al. (2011) with

Martin (2007, p. 102, 282) and Powell with Andresen (2006, p. 82) agree on a statement that humour possesses a calming effect against possible aggression among students. Lovorn (2008) adds that incorporating humorous strategies can reduce anxiety caused by boring or too difficult homework and points out that humour can also greatly contribute to a child´s self-esteem improvement.

3.3   The Role of Humour in promoting speaking skills

There is no doubt that every passionate English teacher wishes to promote students´ speaking skills as much as possible during the L2 acquisition. This can be promoted through fun activities to make the process more exciting, interesting, and motivational for both students and teachers. Through sharing the laugh and enjoyment students who would normally be shy and quiet will forget about their worries from talking and eventually become more confident to speak up (Harutyunyan, Mikayelyan, 2019 p. 565, Syafiq and Saleh 2012, p.49).

Despite the vast literature on humour techniques and their impact on learning, there is a noticeable lack of research investigating the incorporation of humour techniques within the classroom to foster the speaking ability of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners and their willingness to communicate.

Humorous activities can fit into various phases of the lesson. They can serve as an icebreaker to relax students' minds and create a positive atmosphere. Short jokes or anecdotes would be appropriate as warm-ups or as transitions whereas longer activities fit better at the end of the lesson (Harutyunyan, Mikayelyan, 2019, p. 565). The authors investigated whether students´ speaking skills can be promoted using funny stories and jokes. The lesson aimed to implement two activities while one of them used the language of the story as a main source to develop students´ speaking skills. To assess these two speaking activities, pre-test and post-test were always applied. Their experiments confirmed that was is a significant enhancement of students´ speaking skills using funny stories. An important issue emerging from their finding is that students did their best to participate in discussions and the crucial factor for learning a foreign language was the factor of interest and motivation (Harutyunyan, Mikayelyan, 2019, pp. 565-573).

3.4 Teacher´s role in using humour effectively in the classroom

When a teacher incorporates humour into normal, formal communication, it can help to create a more relaxed atmosphere for pupils.

The presence of humour in the teacher's communication with students can have a profound effect not only on each individual but on the complete atmosphere of the whole class. Generally speaking, teachers who are observed to use more humour in the classroom are rated more positively by their students (Martin 2007, p.352).

According to Stroud (2013, p.80), there are ten steps for teachers (T afterwards) to use humour effectively:

1. To make interactions with learners more engaging, teachers can include jokes, humorous gestures, and noises.

2. Using pictures and videos that elicit laughter is recommended to create a fun classroom atmosphere.

3. Encouraging learners to form their groups and use humour can foster collaboration and creativity.

4. Teachers should give students the freedom to use humour and motivate them.

5. Teachers should communicate their expectations of student behaviour when using humour and address any discipline issues that may arise.

6. Teachers should recognize when learners are not comfortable with using humour and offer alternative learning methods.

7. Learners should practice using language necessary for humour with their teacher and receive feedback before presenting their work to the class.

8. Students should be praised for their use of humour to boost their confidence and motivation.

9. Regular feedback from classes through tests and interviews can help determine if humour is having a positive impact on learning.

10. Teachers should lead by example and actively participate in using humour themselves.

Teachers should be aware of possible problems with students´ understanding of humour in foreign languages. Gonulal (2018) and Martin (2007, p. 359) highlighted challenges in understanding humour in foreign language classrooms, noting that humour may not always resonate with learners and may not elicit a smile or laugh. The delivery of humour and lack of background information can contribute to this issue. For instance, native language teachers using humour unfamiliar to L2 learners may struggle due to a lack of context. Strong (2013b)

suggested that students' age, prior experience, knowledge, and background can impact their understanding of humour. Teachers should recognize the uniqueness of each class and tailor humour to fit the student's interests and backgrounds accordingly.

3.5 Humour in motivating learners to learn English

Previous studies have demonstrated that students taught by teachers or lecturers who incorporated humour in their lessons were more engaged and motivated in class (Chee, 2006; Golchi & Jamali, 2011, as cited in Salmee and Arif 2018). This suggests that using humour in language learning can have a positive impact on both the emotional and cognitive aspects of the learning process, as well as contribute to a supportive classroom environment.

Positive humour can increase motivation and self-confidence. Humour can be a useful tool for helping shy students feel included in the class and participate without feeling embarrassed or vulnerable, as noted by Chiasso (2002). This can help motivate students to learn English and aid in their recall of information, as noted by Vadillo (1998, Salmee and Arif 2019, p.8). As demonstrated by Tunçel (1988, as cited in Abbas 2023, p. 56), researchers agree that students who possess strong self-esteem are more likely to excel in English as a foreign language (EFL) than those with low self-esteem. This is because self-esteem helps learners feel more prepared to speak a second language, even if they lack proficiency, and to learn from their mistakes. On the other hand, students with low self-esteem tend to avoid situations that require them to speak or expose their limited language skills.

Another research was conducted on increasing EFL student's motivation by Professor Abbas (2023). A survey was conducted with 100 students using a 30-item questionnaire to investigate their views on the use of humour in the classroom. The study discovered that a significant number of students prefer their teachers to use humour during classes as they find it helpful and motivating, which improves their language learning experience. The majority of students have reported that the use of humour by EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers creates a relaxed and encouraging atmosphere, which enhances the motivation of EFL students throughout the entire English language class. They found out the use of humour effectively motivates students, increases class attendance, and helps them feel relaxed in class. Specifically, when asked whether humour motivates learners, 65% of students agreed, 11% disagreed, and 23% responded neutrally (Abbas 2023, p. 60). According to Dörnyei (2001, p. 41), humour is a powerful motivator that is often overlooked in theoretical discussions about motivation.

3.6 Teachers´ and learners´ perceptions of humour in teaching

The research discussed indicates several key tendencies regarding teachers' and learners' perceptions of humour in teaching (Deepai.org/chat):

1. *Teachers' hesitance*: Some teachers avoid using humour in the classroom due to concerns about losing control over students, scepticism about the benefits of humour, and a perception of teaching as a serious task (Garner, 2006, as cited in Chaniotakis, 2010, p.1).

2. *Student preference*: Contrary to teachers, students generally prefer educators who incorporate humour in their teaching practices (Garner, 2006, as cited in Chaniotakis, 2010, p.1).

3. *Benefits of humour*: Research suggests that humour in the classroom can capture students' attention, reduce teaching stress, enhance social dynamics, improve relationships, and foster comfort and relaxation for both teachers and students (Stroud, 2013, p. 76). Additionally, humour can address challenging situations, increase participation, and improve learning outcomes (Šeďová, 2012, p. 430).

4. *Impact on classroom atmosphere*: Humourous actions by teachers can significantly impact the classroom atmosphere, with a majority of students agreeing that humour improves the class environment (Stroud, 2013, p. 76).

5. *Teacher perceptions*: In Chaniotakis' (2010) study, Greek school teachers valued attributes such as fairness towards students, subject mastery, friendliness, patience, honesty, and setting clear rules more than humour-related qualities. However, humour was acknowledged to create a positive classroom atmosphere and enhance relationships (Chaniotakis, 2010).

6. *Effects on EFL learning*: Research by Pham (2014) highlighted positive perceptions of humour's role in EFL teaching among university students and teachers, with humour enhancing cognitive benefits, interest, motivation, and the teacher-student relationship in English learning classrooms.

7. *Student benefits*: Student feedback indicated that humour in the classroom helped them feel calmer, more relaxed, and less anxious, leading to improved engagement, motivation, and performance (Abbas, 2023). Additionally, humour contributed to a pleasant classroom atmosphere, encouraging punctuality and making learning more enjoyable for students. During the experiment, learners shared that they became more willing to talk and share their ideas as they became relaxed (Elkhayma, 2021, p. 448).

8. Impact of teacher humour: Elkhayma's (2021) study suggested that teacher humour in EFL learning can reduce anxiety, increase motivation, encourage participation, improve concentration, and enhance information retention among students.

9. General attitude towards humour in English classrooms: the general attitude towards humour in ESL appears to be positive based on the research and studies discussed. Both teachers and students perceive humour as a valuable tool that can improve various aspects of the learning experience.

These tendencies underscore the potential benefits of incorporating humour in educational settings and highlight the positive impact humour can have on student engagement, motivation, and overall learning outcomes.

3.7   The specific forms of using humour in ELT

Humour serves a wide range of functions and can provide an opportunity for a light-hearted approach to learning in the classroom. In this chapter, the topic of discussion will be the various humorous techniques used by teachers in their lessons. The author of this thesis would like to focus on those kinds of constructive activities which can make curricular connections and enhance the rapport between the teachers and the students. Educators can utilize a variety of methods such as humour-infused activities, comedic videos, wordplay, humorous drawings, TV shows, brain teasers, or puzzles within their instructional approach.

3.7.1 Sitcoms

Sitcoms are an ideal choice for authentic material as they can highlight relatable humorous elements to young adult learners, enabling them to engage with the target language and culture through common situations and characters. Sitcoms are episodic in nature and can motivate students to regularly watch them at home, thereby enhancing their language skills beyond the classroom. Humour in sitcoms is presented and practised in natural humorous every-day situations. However, non-native teachers may feel anxious about incorporating sitcoms due to fears of not understanding the jokes and appearing incompetent to their learners. It is important to note that a teacher's occasional inability to explain a joke does not equate to general incompetence (Banitz 2018, p. 4).

In the classroom, there are lots of different ways that you can exploit sitcoms in the classroom from simply pre-teaching any relevant vocabulary, watching a clip and then having a follow-up discussion to using prepared worksheets for consolidating grammar structures or

lexis. www.youtube.com can be a useful platform for discovering British sitcom videos. By using the search box, you can find clips from every episode of the show, which are usually divided into shorter clips and numbered. This allows fans to watch their favourite episodes in the correct sequence (teachingenglish.org.uk 2024).

3.7.2 Riddles

A riddle is a cleverly crafted question that requires unexpected or creative thinking to solve. It is a type of brain teaser that challenges the listener to come up with a unique answer. Riddles are usually presented playfully, with the asker knowing that the listener will need to think creatively to guess the correct response. Riddles often employ various techniques to make them tricky, such as double meanings or wordplay. By using these techniques, riddles aim to surprise and entertain while encouraging the listener to think outside the box (Giorgadze 2012, p. 99). The author suggests that riddles offer multiple meanings, metaphors and idioms; they reveal ambiguity and double entendres.

3.7.3 Puns

Puns, a distinct form of humour reliant on double engenders, are often characterized as "the lowest form of humour" and typically elicit groans from audiences. However, it should be noted that the comprehension of puns necessitates a high level of language proficiency and cognitive agility, as individuals must process the sound and meaning of words twice to derive humour from them (Pollack, 2011, as cited in Lems 2013, p. 26). The pun, also known as paronomasia, is a form of wordplay that exploits multiple meanings of words or similar-sounding words for a humorous or rhetorical effect. (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2024)

Unlike humour derived from visual stimuli such as sight gags or facial expressions, puns derive their comedic effect from linguistic wordplay. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that puns are inherently tied to specific languages, with each language possessing its unique set of puns and wordplay, even in non-alphabetic writing systems (Lems 2013, pp. 26-27).

In the realm of English humour, puns can generally be classified into four distinct categories, with three of them being long-established and rooted in homophones, polysemous

words, and similar-sounding words (Lems, 2011, as cited in Lems 2013). A more recent addition to this classification is the emergence of a fourth category of puns, facilitated by texting and instant messaging, which is characterized by the use of alphabetic, numeric, or simplified spellings. However, it is important to acknowledge that there exist various other forms of jokes and wordplay that do not fit neatly into the pun category. Despite this, the sheer abundance of puns falling within these four categories reinforces their value as instructional tools within the classroom (Lems 2013, pp. 27-28).

1. *Soundlike puns (homophones)* - Soundalike puns rely on homophones, which are words that sound alike but have different spellings and meanings (e.g., hair/hare; to/too/two). These puns capitalize on words that share a similar sound but possess distinct interpretations. For instance, a classic example of a soundalike pun can be seen in the signage of a daycare facility that cleverly reads "Wee Care Day Care."

2. *Lookalike puns (polysemous words)* - these are spelled and pronounced the same and have related meanings (e.g., "ruler" as a measuring stick or a king; "mole" as a burrowing mammal or a spy). Polysemous words create lookalike puns. An example of a lookalike pun can be found in a sign for a small business. "Blind Man—Window Blinds of Every Kind." This pun plays on the word "blind" which can have two different meanings. The first meaning refers to someone who cannot see, and the pun implies that a blind person is living nearby, urging drivers to be more cautious. However, the second meaning of "blind" refers to window blinds, and when combined with "man", it creates a compound noun referring to a person who sells window blinds. This second meaning clarifies the nature of the small business.

3. *Close-sounding puns in English* - humour often stems from the use of words that sound similar. When one word is swapped for another that sounds alike, whether it is a single word or part of a phrase, a close-sounding pun is formed. An example of this type of pun can be seen in a van sign spotted in Chicago: 'Ex-stink Sewer and Drainage.' This playful name for a plumbing company plays on the near pronunciation of 'Ex-stink' and the word 'extinct.'

4. Puns can be created in *text messages* using alphabetic, numeric, and simplified spelling techniques. This involves using the sound and/or spelling of alphabet letters, numbers, or symbols, or simplified versions of words to create puns. For example, 'cre8' for 'create' or '@mosphere' for 'atmosphere'.

3.7.4 Jokes

Jokes can be a valuable way to learn and improve your English language skills. According to Harutyunyan (p. 564), funny stories and jokes are commonly used in classrooms to create a positive and engaging learning environment and to help students improve their speaking skills. Furthermore, they are often used to teach new vocabulary. It is recommended to pre-teach vocabulary before telling a joke to ensure learners understand the punchline. Short and simple jokes are more suitable for the introduction and transitions, while longer pieces work best at the end of the lesson. Haycraft (1986, p. 87) proposes to make telling the joke more engaging, teachers should ask questions.
Studies have shown that humour is most effective when it is relevant to the situation, especially when the jokes or anecdotes used directly relate to the subject being taught (Harutyunyan, pp. 564-565).

Jokes often start with an interesting story or an amusing anecdote that ends with a clever and unexpected punchline. Humour and wordplay can also be used effectively to teach vocabulary and grammar. By practising deciphering jokes and puns, language learners can sharpen their skills in understanding the nuances of the English language. However, Souza (2008) suggests that teachers should provide explanations after telling a joke to ensure that all learners comprehend it, thus preserving its humorous and motivational impact. Teachers can encourage their students to create their own jokes and puns in English, which can help foster creativity and improve their language proficiency.

According to Medgyes (2002, p.8), a joke can be seen as a mental challenge. Before the punchline, individuals with high intellectual agility and ambiguity tolerance will begin to tap into their creative energies and may even try to guess what the punchline might be. The punchline then delivers the twist, and if it's clever and concise, a laugh is guaranteed. In other words, the effectiveness of a joke is heavily dependent on the interplay between the joke itself, the person telling it, and the person receiving it.

One of the most favourite jokes are "*Knock-knock jokes"these* are puns (Merriam-webster.com 2024). These jokes are based on a kind of verbal humour, comparing the same sounding words or phrases that unexpectedly arise during the second answer. Example:
Knock Knock.
Who is there?

Marry.

Marry who ?

Marry Christmas!

Undoubtedly, jokes and puns are an optimal way to enliven a class (Harutyunyan p.565, Haycraft 1986, p. 87).

One-Liner

A one-liner is a concise sentence that aims to evoke humour through clever use of language and rhetorical devices, such as alliteration and rhyme. Unlike longer jokes with intricate narratives, a one-liner delivers its comedic punch quickly and succinctly. These short jokes engage readers with creative language choices and wordplay, challenging them to balance contradictory yet interconnected ideas while often incorporating familiar stereotypes (Giorgadze 2012, p. 100). In one-line jokes, the humour arises from the unexpected relationship between the setup (the connector) and the punchline (the disjunctor), typically delivered at the end. These jokes amuse by initially defying the listener's expectations, prompting a shift from their initial understanding to a completely new perspective. The humour is found in the recognition of these unexpected twists and the subsequent switch in frames of reference by the audience (Giorgadze 2012, p. 100). Examples are "As I said before, I never repeat myself ", "Marriage is not a word, it is a sentence" or, "I told him to be himself; that was pretty mean, I guess "(Tranter 2011, p. 48).

Some practical tips for teachers and students to incorporate humour into the language learning process are presented (5 minuteenglish 2024):

1. Teachers can use visual aids like cartoons, memes, or funny videos to engage visual learners and create humorous scenarios for role-play activities to make them more enjoyable and relatable.

2. Also, teachers encourage creative writing by asking students to write funny stories or dialogues using new language skills or share personal anecdotes or funny stories to make lessons more engaging and relatable.

3. Infuse humour into assessments to reduce stress and make the evaluation process more enjoyable.

4 Practical part

4.1 Definition of empirical research methodology

This thesis is focused on humour as an educational, motivational, and powerful tool in English language teaching. It also investigates whether this teaching strategy can maximise students´ learning outcomes and examines its benefits in improving language skills.

The main aim of this thesis is to identify whether humour contributes to the development of student´s speaking skills and the overall motivation of students to learn a foreign language.

Based on these general aims, five research questions were constructed:

1. *What are the teachers´ views on the function/use of humour in English language teaching?*
2. *What effects on students´ motivation do they see after using humour as a teaching strategy in their lessons?*
3. *What are learners' opinions on their teacher's usage of humour in lessons?*
4. *What applied humorous activities do learners enjoy the most?*
5. *To what extent do learners feel more motivated to speak during humorous activities compared to unhumorous ones?*

4.2 Research design

The research methodology employed for this study utilized a form of triangulation as outlined by Gavora (2000, p.146). The triangulation involved three methods: conducting interviews with six primary school teachers, administering student-centred questionnaires, and implementing experiment lessons. The teachers were forthcoming in sharing their perspectives on the use of humour in teaching English, while the questionnaires yielded both qualitative and quantitative data. Gavora (2000, p.99) notes that the questionnaire is the most utilized form of information gathering and provides guidance on constructing effective questions (2000, p.100-104). In addition, Horák and Chráska (1989, p.120) outline the essential rules that should be followed when developing questionnaires. The research methodology employed for this study utilized a form of triangulation as outlined by Gavora (2000, p.146). The triangulation involved

three methods: conducting interviews with six primary school teachers, administering student-centred questionnaires, and implementing experiment lessons. The teachers were forthcoming in sharing their perspectives on the use of humour in teaching English, while the questionnaires yielded both qualitative and quantitative data. Gavora (2000, p.99) notes that the questionnaire is the most utilized form of information gathering and provides guidance on constructing effective questions (2000, p.100-104). In addition, Horák and Chráska (1989, p.120) outline the essential rules that should be followed when developing questionnaires.

The preparatory phase involved selecting the research samples by approaching the headteacher and informing teachers about the implementation of experiment lessons focusing on the research questions and objectives. The implementation phase of the research consisted of data collection using the questionnaire data processing and subsequent analysis and evaluation.

Finally, the analysis and evaluation of the research will be provided together with the recommendations for further teaching practices.

4.3 The research samples

The research samples were chosen allowing detailed investigation and an overall understanding of the topic covered by the research (Ritchie, Lewis and Elam, 2003, p.81 in Maruster and Gijsenberg, 2013). In other words, the author of this thesis intentionally chose specific participants who could provide relevant and useful data to answer the research questions. It should be considered that results from one research sample cannot be automatically transferred to another one due to the different characteristics (Gavora, 2000, p. 59).

The target group of this research consisted of one hundred and twenty-one pupils of two primary schools and lower secondary schools with mixed abilities who were asked to fill in three types of questionnaires. In addition, six interviews were conducted by the author and English teachers from various primary and lower secondary schools in Karviná. The numbers of participants in the groups are displayed in Table 1 below.

Fifth grade	20
Seventh grade	27
Eighth grade	29
Ninth grade	45

Table 1: Numbers of learners

4.4 The preparatory phase

A basic prerequisite for the implementation of the research investigation was the willingness of the principal and teachers in the selected classes to conduct the lesson and then have the students complete the questionnaires.

In the initial stage of the process, humorous and standard speaking activities having the same functional purpose were planned. After activities, the author of this thesis studied the literature on the correct procedures for constructing a questionnaire for pupils.

All the experts´ recommendations, mentioned in the previous chapter, were taken into consideration which means all the questions were prepared carefully formulated and thoughtfully put together. The questionnaire includes both closed, semi-open questions and open questions.

To increase the reliability of the measures, three types of questionnaires were constructed to ease the whole process of the research with its objectives. These will be described in more detail in the chapter Evaluation of results.

4.5 The implementation phase and data processing

The experiment lessons were conducted in fifth, seventh, eighth and ninth grades consisting of one hundred and twenty-one learners altogether (See Table 1).

To find out and understand students´ attitudes toward using humour in the classroom, a humorous and standard speaking activity having the same functional purpose was taught. Almost immediately, a questionnaire was handed over to students to fill in to obtain their very fresh perceptions and to identify specific changes in students´ motivation during the experiment activities.

Experimental lessons

As already mentioned in chapter 1.1 by Medgyes (2002), Šeďová (2013) or Martin (2007) humour is a subjective concept that varies from person to person. The presence or absence of humour distinguishes between amusing activities and those that are not. Generally, something that is amusing is enjoyable and often involves unexpected or clever elements that provoke laughter. A widely accepted definition of humour involves the act of making people laugh through the creation of amusing statements or situations. However, Schnurr (2010) argues that humour can also arise unintentionally, prompting a need for a more comprehensive definition.

In teenage classes, they can be either very motivated if the topics are relevant to them or may appear to be low motivated if they feel have been forced into something they do not wish to take part in. They are generally outspoken and can be very honest about their views, however, discipline can be a problem, as they can seem averse, and look fed up.

The experimental lessons aimed to present two activities, each with the same functional/topic purpose, however, one of these activities should be considered or expected to be a humorous one for teenagers. The lessons aimed to use the language of the activities as a vehicle to develop speaking skills while practising grammar at the same time. The goal was to intentionally incorporate humour into tasks to enhance learners' motivation by making them more enjoyable. In addition, great attention was paid to ensuring that only positive humour was used. Harmer (2008), Scrivener (2005) and Ur (1991) claim the main goal of teaching grammar is not for children to learn forms and abstract rules but to effectively convey their intended meaning. Effective communication relies on the use of precise language, while the assessment of grammar should be carried out independently of communicative skills evaluation. The author of the thesis concentrated on the learners' internal and external motivation and how it could be supported by using humour. Focusing on grammatical structures also helped the author to get feedback on how well learners cope with the learned material. These errors often led back to the presentation of a structure.

The teacher's role in teaching these lessons included that of an observer, organizer, feedback provider, promoter, and assessor to facilitate students´ learning. For young pupils it is worth changing the roles of involver and enabler, to be able to explain the grammar rules, to involve pupils in the lesson as much as possible and to give them some space to work on their own.

In the first step, the author of this thesis arranged the classroom to suit the activity. The next step was explaining the activity to students including the expected outcome, instructions, and rules. As soon as these steps were carried out, the activity was demonstrated to students with an open pair modelling the expected behaviour or response. The teacher monitored and observed as they participated in the activity and among each other, assisting as necessary. Finally, the teacher reflected on how successful the activity was in achieving the learning objectives.

The fifth grade

Humorous activity (accuracy- orientated)

The aims of the lesson are:

Learners will be able to *ask and reply* where things are and cite examples of appropriate questioning and replying *Where's/ Where are my..?*

Learners will be able to use place prepositions.

Learners will use the useful lexical areas such as furniture, common household objects and personal possessions.

The first game's objective is for each player to discover from their partner where the objects are located and draw them in their picture. Additionally, the focus is on responding and asking questions. This task's organizational pattern was group work. Refer to Appendix 1 for more information.

To begin the game, the teacher asked the children what vocabulary they already knew and introduced any new lexical items by writing them on the board. The teacher then instructed the children to copy these words into their worksheets.

The subsequent step was practising prepositions and the key vocabulary. Each group received one set of cards. The teacher explained the story behind this task, saying, *"You belong to a very disorganized family, and you are always losing things. The large picture in front of you shows your family's living room. The small things under the picture represent things that you have lost."*

One of the learners began the game by asking, "Where is/are my..." and naming one of the lost objects. The first player to answer got the next turn.

There were some obstacles during the lesson, such as students not following the teacher's instructions even though they were repeated several times. As a result, the pace of the

lesson was slow. In addition, it would have been helpful to provide a separate sheet of paper with key vocabulary ahead of time, as this would have sped up the process. Some students struggled to speak in front of others due to shyness or making mistakes.

The teacher supported these learners by encouraging them and making sure that everyone was involved in the activity, as well as creating a supportive and inclusive classroom environment where learners felt comfortable. In addition, the teacher participated in the conversation without necessarily dominating and provided gentle corrections to the learners' performance. Generally, these findings support the idea of the authors mentioned in chapters 1.9 The teaching barriers and 1.8 Teacher´s role in supporting speaking skills. In hindsight, the teacher considered the level of success achieved in meeting the learning objectives through the activity.

The activity can be classified as a controlled drill according to Ur (1996) Furthermore, since the students were already familiar with the grammatical structure "Where is/are my...?", it kept them motivated throughout the task which helped weaker students to build their confidence, as recommended in chapter 2 on Motivation. Referring to Chapter 1 Teaching speaking skills, the learners´ success is measured by whether they can convey the message effectively (Pratama and Awaliyah 2016, p. 21). In this case, learners did not meet these requirements.

Traditional speaking activity (accuracy - orientated)

The aims of the lesson are:

Learners will be able to ask and reply where the things are.

Learners will be able to use place prepositions.

Learners will use the useful lexical areas such as furniture, and common household objects.

Learners will cite examples of appropriate questioning and replying Where's/ Where are...? Is there...?/ Are there..?

The purpose of the second activity lies in students being given worksheets with three pictures of house rooms (kitchen, living room, bathroom, and toilet). They are supposed to draw pictures of selected vocabulary anywhere within these pictures. After they finish, they ask each other about various items they have just drawn. It is crucial for children to develop abstract thinking to understand certain grammar structures, as they may not have the prior knowledge of Czech grammar for comparison. Playing games can be a valuable tool in this process.

Although the first activity was considered to have a humorous emphasis, the second activity was probably more successful as the children themselves created the humorous element. This suggests that humour is relative and subjectively perceived, as was mentioned in Chapter 3.1 by Šeďová (2013). It was obvious children were entertained by the last activity; they even were persistent in making efforts to take part in the conversation which is considered a sign of a successful speaking activity mentioned in Chapter 1.2 Practical tips for conducting speaking activities. 48 learners reported feeling to be more entertained compared to the first activity, and 23 learners appreciated collaborating with their classmates.

Seventh grade

Humorous speaking activity (accuracy-orientated)

The aims of this activity are:

Learners will be able to use comparatives with both monosyllabic and multi-syllabic adjectives.

Learners will be able to acquire knowledge of different geographical areas or historical facts.

Learners will be able to pronounce new vocabulary.

Regarding the first activity, the children worked in groups (See Appendix 1). The teacher pre-taught the key vocabulary they did not know and revised the grammar rules of Comparatives on the board. Learners already had some fundamental knowledge about Comparatives. This kind of assessment compares the student´s knowledge against a standard through fun activities.

The approach adopted for the organization involved pairing children to work together, while also ensuring that the interactions were contextualized in a way that would capture their interest as recommended by Georgiou and Pavlou (2003) – see chapter 2.4. The activity can be classified as a controlled drill according to Ur (1996).

Each group received a pile of cards with a question and answer. Learners were taking turns in taking the cards from a pile face down. They were asking the question to the player next to them using the comparative form of the adjective in brackets. If the student did not ask the question correctly, they missed their turn and had to put the card to the back of the pile. If the card was correct, the student who answered it received the card. The winner was the one who had the most cards when no cards were remaining.

Once they were finished, they turned the cards over. They were supposed to take turns in saying as many as possible statements they remember including the comparatives used in the

sentences. The teacher made sure pupils were using the language correctly while they were playing.

The students showed a high level of interest in the topic, which helped to keep them motivated and engaged in the conversation. This is in line with what Penny Ur (1996) mentioned in chapter 2.3. It can also be suggested that learners gained confidence when they saw their progress in mastering grammatical structures.

When asked why they found the activity more humorous, students cited several reasons, including better entertainment value, the opportunity to collaborate with a classmate, the competitive aspect of the activity, interesting questions, improved vocabulary retention and recall, a better understanding of comparatives, and stronger friendships. These findings are consistent with those of other experts, particularly Basols (2005), as discussed in Chapter 3.2 Effects and functions of humour in learning language.

Traditional speaking activity (Accuracy - orientated)

The aims of this activity are:

Learners will be able to use comparatives with both monosyllabic and multi-syllabic adjectives. Learners will be able to identify an adjective that is missing from the sentence and modify it into a comparative form.

During the second activity, the students began working on their own. Firstly, each student filled in the blanks on their paper. After completing their part, the students worked in pairs, divided into A and B. Their task was to modify the adjective into a comparative form, making sure it made sense. The guessing game started with Student B suggesting an adjective. If it matched what was on Student A's card, then Student A would say "That's right". But if it was different, Student A would say "Try again", and they would keep guessing until Student B got it right. Similarly, Student A would read out their second sentence while Student B guessed with their options. The aim was accuracy, thus the author tried to prevent mistakes as much as possible.

The activity seemed fun to them which increased their ability and desire to learn. Pair work was dynamic and active. However, during the class, some students were passive listeners. The teacher mentioned these students still possess considerable listening skills and generally understand when spoken in English. However, they lacked the confidence to successfully form sentences themselves.

Throughout the two activities, the teacher promptly provided corrective feedback, following Thornbury's (1999) guidelines – see Chapter 1.4. Learners' increased attentiveness

was observed under scrutiny. Everyone was given an equal opportunity to participate in discussions. Those learners who would feel uncomfortable speaking in front of others could take advantage of this opportunity. In addition, students had the opportunity to acquire conversational strategies such as taking turns in a conversation, initiating a change of subject, or asking for clarification. Overall, the lesson proceeded smoothly in terms of pace and task transitions.

Eighth grade (Sport class and 8. A) (Fluency-orientated)

The humorous speaking activity

The aims are:

Learners will be able to describe the rules and conditions of some sports.

Learners will be able to express obligation and prohibition.

Learners will cite some modal verbs of obligation and prohibition and name various types of sports.

This class was characterized as probably a class with slower learners in lower secondary school. Concerning the first activity, the interactive pattern was working in groups. The board is based on the popular British game called Blockbusters. In this version, there are no buzzers and teams take turns to nominate sports and win hexes. Students responded willingly, even those with speaking skills were motivated to speak while using the Present Simple tense.

During the activity, each group was given a dice and three different coloured pencils. The objective of the game was to roll the dice and answer the question on the board that corresponds to the number on the dice for their particular sport. If the pupils answered the question correctly, they won the hexagon and had the privilege to colour it in. The next player then took their turn.

This activity was challenging due to students' limited language skills. The teacher assisted by providing relevant vocabulary and hints for expressing ideas. However, the dictionary had to be used multiple times for advanced vocabulary, including specific sports equipment such as rugby gear, pole vault or decathlon. Some learners were reluctant due to shyness and fear of making mistakes, and some of them made fun of others. Only a few students were at level A2 and were able to form grammatically correct sentences. Referring to chapter 1.9, students struggled with a lack of vocabulary, grammar, and low participation. The teacher made sure everyone had the opportunity to talk.

Another obstacle was the noise during the lesson. The teacher raised his hand as a sign to stop the conversation and let the learners know what was expected of them, and what behaviour was allowed and what was not. The students were encouraged to stay engaged in tasks to prevent them from misbehaving. The humorous activity offered more engaging entertainment during the learning process and fostered greater cooperation among peers, thus was chosen by learners to be funnier. However, our study was unsuccessful in proving that humour can prevent misbehaviour as stated in the subchapter Mental and behavioural effects of humour by Lovorn (2008). On the other hand, a deeper investigation and a larger research sample would be needed to draw a general conclusion.

Traditional activity (Fluency-orientated)

The aims are:

Learners will be able to express their preferences, views, and desires.

Learners will revise their already learned vocabulary and convey themselves coherently.

Learners will be encouraged to express themselves without being afraid of being assessed.

In this theme-based activity, the students were asked a clear question. The sport was chosen as a topic to motivate the students. However, the students showed poor communication skills and a lack of vocabulary to express fluently. The teacher asked other learners to help with some ideas so the interviewee would receive some hints. It was more of a debate at some points due to the students' inhibitions, either caused by a lack of confidence or fear of making mistakes. Although the level of language required for the discussion seemed low and should be easy for the learners to recall, it was rather a challenge for some of them. Fortunately, a few students were able to keep the conversation at an appropriate level.

Referring to chapter 1.2, concerning language proficiency, despite the awkwardness of the conversation, all the learners were attentive throughout which means that the learning time was not missed as was mentioned in the chapter (Ur, 1996, p. 220). Gentle and supportive intervention was offered when it was noticed that the learner was uncomfortable. To check learners´ attention, questions like *"What was your classmate speaking about? Can you repeat it to all of us?"* were used. Finally, students summarized the main ideas they've taken away from the discussion.

Overall, students had the opportunity to try something new outside of the typical teacher-student arrangement in a classroom. The teacher assessed the students' language learning progress, while the learners had the chance to practice using the language.

Ninth grade

Humorous activity (Fluency - orientated)

The aims are:

Learners will be able to practice the Present Perfect Simple in a conversation with *Have you ever* + past participle phrase.

The learners will review the vocabulary they have already learned and communicate their thoughts and ideas in a clear and organized manner.

During this activity, students were divided into groups of three to four. The goal of the game was to form questions and affirmative or negative sentences in the Present Perfect Simple tense. Short answers were also allowed. This activity has got communicative and competitive purpose.

Each group was provided with a playing board with a dice and counters. The learners took turns asking and replying to questions. Student A threw the dice and moved forward that number of squares. Afterwards, student B asked student A the question written on that square. If Student A's answer was correct and the rest of the group agreed, Student A's counter would remain where it was. If the answer was incorrect, the counter would return to its original square.

To develop fluency, the teacher encouraged the group to have a short conversation after each answer with follow-up questions. The students took turns, repeating the same process as between Students A and B, and moving around the board until one student reached the *finish* square. This student was declared the winner. The students were enthusiastic and engaged in the conversation, actively participating, and expressing themselves with motivation. They appeared to be enjoying the process of developing the discussion. It can be argued that the game allowed for relaxation and that the activity was more fun/humorous.

Beyond these two comparison activities, five different small humorous activities were presented and evaluated based on their popularity among the students. These activities included jokes, videos (See Appendix 1), riddles (See Appendix 1), body idioms (See Appendix 1), and tongue twisters (See Appendix 1).

During the implementation of these activities, it was found that there was low motivation. Class 9A performed better than 9S. The video shown during the session did not elicit any laughter, so it was replaced with another video that was ultimately more successful. The interaction pattern was mainly in working in pairs. The overall interaction was poor and for Body Idioms, a better procedure could have been designed. Commenting on jokes, the best jokes were the first, the fifth and the seventh.

5   Evaluation of research data

5.1   First questionnaire results

As it was already mentioned in Chapter 4.3, the purpose of the questionnaires was to explore the opinions, attitudes, and experiences of learners of primary and lower secondary schools.

The first questionnaire contains nine questions (See Appendix 2, p.72). These focus on the student's motivation to learn in general, humour in general and humour used in English classes by the teacher. Students are asked for their opinion on whether it is appropriate for humour to be included in English lessons and whether humour contributes to or promotes speaking the language. Questions one, six, and eight are open-ended questions where students express themselves in their own words. Questions six and eight are dependent on the previous question. The qualitative textual data obtained from the open questions were first categorized and then presented.

The number of the questionnaire was increased during the process at another primary and lower secondary school namely by fifteen pupils from the eighth grade and twenty-five pupils from the ninth grade. According to Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2003, p.87), this can happen, and it is perfectly possible. Additional sampling involves collecting more data by increasing the sample size of the original survey of the experiment. This is typically done when the original sample size is too small to provide accurate representative results (Lammers and Badia 2004, p.17).

Question 1: Please, state what motivates you to learn English.

Question 1. What motivates you in learning English ?

Legend:
- ■ Teacher
- ■ Games
- ■ Activities
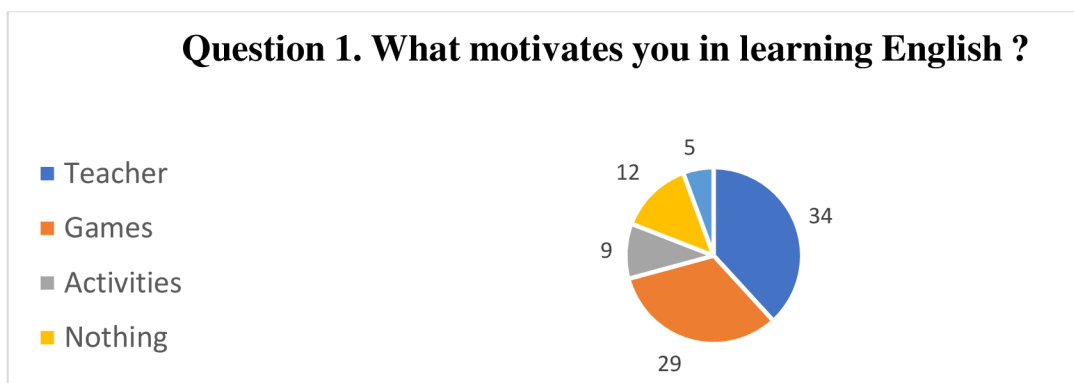- ■ Nothing

Pie chart values: 34, 29, 9, 12, 5

Figure 3: Question 1 - all classes

Based on the data presented in Figure 3, the survey disclosed that out of the total respondents, 34 learners considered their teacher as the most significant motivator for learning English. Games were the second most preferred choice by 29 learners. Surprisingly, 12 learners stated that nothing would inspire them to study English, while nine of them enjoyed engaging in some activities. Finally, five of them mentioned that they found motivation in learning new things.

After analysing the provided information, we can identify some common tendencies across different grade levels regarding the motivation of students to learn English (See Figures 11, 20, 29, and 38 in Appendix 4). These tendencies are as follows (Deepai.org/chat):

1. *Preference for games*: Both fifth and seventh-grade students showed a preference for games as a primary source of motivation for learning English. This suggests that interactive and engaging activities are more likely to motivate students in these grades.

2. *Teacher Influence*: The role of the teacher was consistently identified as a significant source of motivation in all grade levels. This highlights the importance of a teacher's influence in inspiring and motivating students to learn English.

3. *Lack of Motivation*: In the seventh grade, six respondents indicated that they were not motivated by anything to learn English. This suggests that there may be specific factors in this grade level that are impacting student motivation and need to be addressed by educators. In the eighth grade, it is suggested that the student's lack of motivation may be due to educational challenges and a preference for sports.

4. *Engagement in Activities*: In the eighth grade, four students felt like to be motivated by classroom activities.

Additionally, the data from the ninth grade reveals that students in this class have a wider range of motivation sources, including finding motivation to learn new things.

It has been found that students tend to be more inspired and motivated when their teacher exhibits **enthusiasm and fosters engagement**, while also **displaying a genuine interest in their students.** One could assume, that when a positive relationship is established between teacher and student, the latter feels valued and encouraged to strive for excellence. The findings of this research are consistent with what is mentioned in Chapter 2.5 by Johnson (2017, pp. 47-46). Nonetheless, some students may encounter challenges with motivation and self-confidence if they do not find English to be engaging or pertinent to their interests. Furthermore, negative past experiences may lead to feelings of fear or inadequacy.

Question 2: From your point of view, what is likely to influence your motivation?
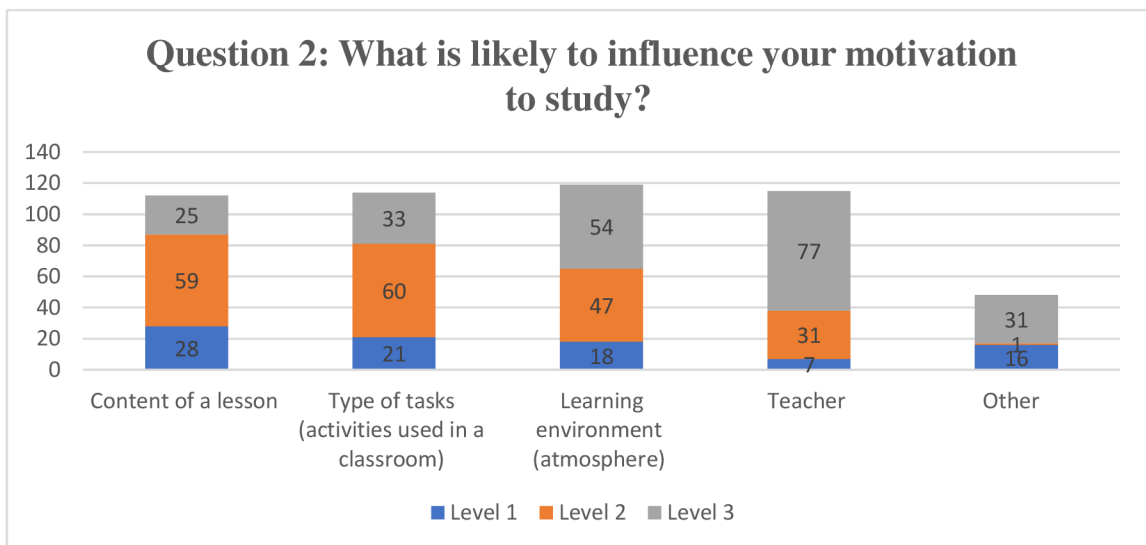
Figure 4: Question 2 - all classes

The inquiry concerning the second research question was addressed with the aid of a distinct graph that conveys categories with differing levels of significance, spanning from one to three, concurrently. The abscissa denotes the number of learners, while the ordinate conveys the respective categories and their corresponding levels.

A total of 121 participants were surveyed to rate the importance of various elements of lesson content, classroom tasks, learning environment, teachers, and other factors. See Figure 3 below.

Out of these, 101 pupils participated in the survey to rate the importance of lesson content. The survey results indicate that out of the total, 25 participants found the content to be very important, 59 rated it as neutral, and 28 considered it unimportant.

Similarly, 114 individuals were surveyed to rate the importance of various classroom tasks. Out of these, 33 participants rated the tasks as very important, 60 as neutral, and 21 as unimportant.

For the learning environment, 119 participants rated its importance, with 54 deeming it as very important, 47 as neutral, and 18 as unimportant. These results match those observed in earlier studies a safe and supportive environment serves as a motivational tool where students feel comfortable taking risks without fear of criticism or ridicule for their mistakes (Dörnyei 2001, p. 41).

As for teachers, out of 115 responses, 77 participants considered them as very important, 31 as neutral, and only 7 as unimportant. The findings align with Johnson (2017, p. 46) and Dörney (2001, p. 31, p. 41), indicating that teachers have a vital role in motivating learners in chapter 2.5.

Finally, 31 respondents rated other factors such as family, fun, communication abroad, joy, career readiness or as very important, while 16 of them stayed neutral.

According to this survey, fifth-grade students (See Figure 12in Appendix 4) credited their teachers for their academic growth, while a considerable 16 also acknowledged the role of their family and the enjoyment factor. Moving on to seventh grade (See Figure 21 in Appendix 4), the curriculum was deemed influential by ten students, while thirteen emphasized the importance of task types.

As for eighth grade (See Figure 30 in Appendix 4), 19 students recognized the significance of their teachers. In the ninth grade (See Figure 39 in Appendix 4), 29 students rated the teacher as the most critical factor, followed by the lesson content and task types. Interestingly, the results indicate that the lesson's content and activity types are nearly on par in significance.

Based on the survey findings, there are several tendencies at different grade levels (Deepai.org/chat):

1. *Teacher influence*: Across all grade levels, teachers are consistently recognised as a significant factor in students' academic progress. This recognition increases as students move up in grade levels, with more students in higher grades attributing their academic success to their teachers. This value has been found to be in chapter 2.5 The role of the teacher in motivating students to learn. It also might be the case that Kašpárková (2011, p. 47), states the

teacher´s communicational style and presentation of subject matter significantly influence students' interest and motivation, as well as the relationship between the teacher, the class, and the material.

2. *Importance of lesson content and activities*: While the importance of lesson content and activities varies across grade levels, it remains a significant factor overall. In fifth grade, it was rated as neutral by twelve students, but in seventh and eighth grades, it was deemed influential and crucial by most students. This is in line with Dörney (2001) in chapter 2.2 who states that L2 learning motivation refers to an L2 learner´s understanding of the personal value of engaging in activities related to learning a second language.

3. *Emphasis on family, fun, joy, and job preparation:* In fifth grade, sixteen students expressed the importance of family, fun, joy, and job preparation in their academic journey. This suggests that students value a well-rounded education that includes not only academic content but also personal development and preparation for future careers.

4. *Learning environment*: The learning environment was chosen as an important factor by students in seventh and eighth grades. This indicates that students in these grade levels recognize the impact of their surroundings on their academic progress. Our research proves what is already mentioned in Chapter 2.5.

5. *Increase in teacher importance in higher grades:* As students progress to higher grade levels, the importance of teachers in the learning process increases. This is particularly evident in ninth grade, where almost all students rated the teacher as the most important factor.

Question 3: How would you describe your attitude to humour in general?
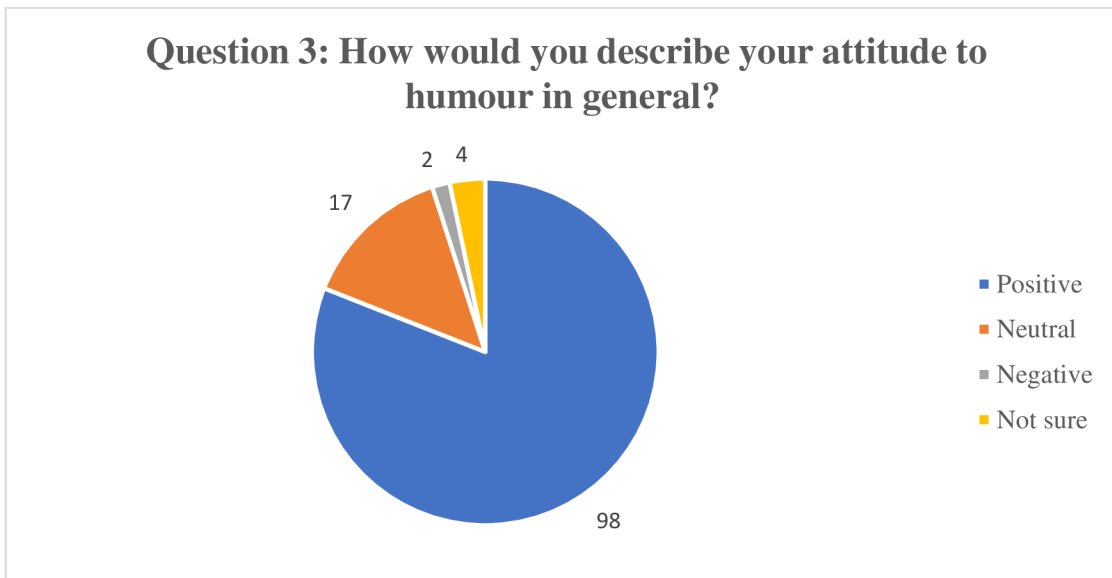
Figure 5: Question 3 - all classe

Concerning Figure 5, 98 learners expressed their views of humour in general as positive. In general, students across all grades have a positive attitude towards humour. Only a few holds a different view. Most students in the fifth, seventh, and eighth grades, as well as the ninth grade, have a positive opinion towards humour. There has been a decline in the number of students with a neutral viewpoint, with just a few remaining hesitant. Only two students across all grades have a negative opinion. See Figures 13, 22, 31 and 40 in Appendix 4.

The tendencies observed among students in different grades towards humour show a consistent trend of positivity. Most fifth-, seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-grade students exhibit a positive attitude towards humour, with only a small minority holding different views. This trend suggests that humour is generally well-received by students across different age groups. The findings of the study are consistent with the teachers' and students' perceptions of humour used in teaching English, particularly in the ninth tendency, as discussed in Chapter 3.6.

Additionally, there is a notable decrease in the number of students with a neutral viewpoint towards humour, indicating that most students either lean towards positivity or negativity regarding their opinion on humour. Overall, the tendencies point towards a strong preference for humour among students, with very few expressing negative feelings towards it.

Question 4: Do you think it is appropriate for a teacher to use humorous activities in English classes?

Question 4: Do you think it is appropriate for a teacher to use humorous activities in English classes?

- Yes, it is appropriate
- No, it is not appropriate
- Not sure

3 10 0

108
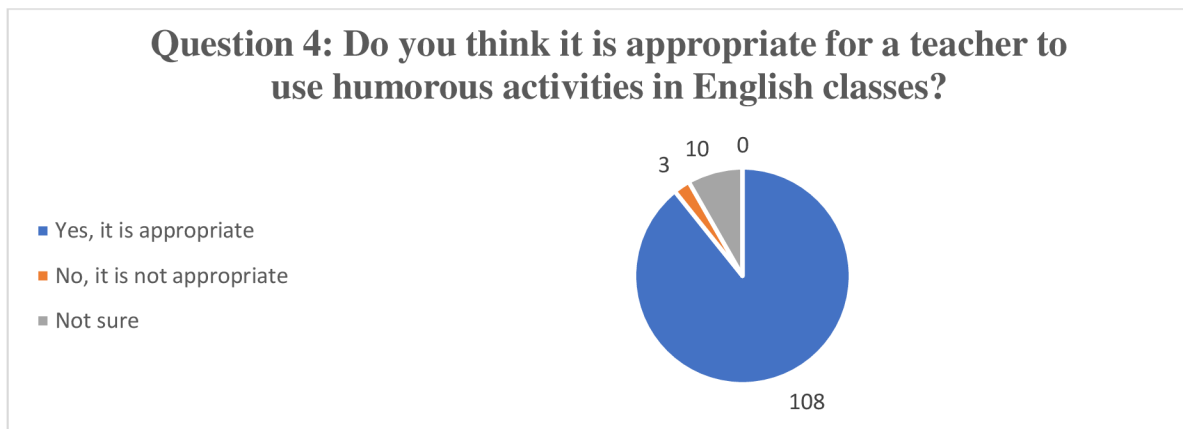
Figure 6: Question 4 - all classes

Based on the four presented figures (See Figures 14, 23, 32, and 41 in Appendix 4), it can be inferred that most students find it appropriate to incorporate humour in their lessons. Nonetheless, a small number of ten students were uncertain, and three students deemed it inappropriate. This inconsistency is not unexpected, given the overwhelming support for humour in educational activities. Individual preferences may influence students' differing views. It is essential to recognize that humour, when used appropriately and thoughtfully, can have several benefits, as long as teachers ensure that humour enhances the learning experience.

The findings suggest that the second tendency, namely the Student Preference in chapter 3.6, aligns with the notion that students tend to incline educators who integrate humour into their pedagogical approach. In addition, these findings align with the research carried out by Abbas in chapter 3.5. The study revealed that a considerable proportion of students favour humorous teaching in class, as they find it beneficial and encouraging. This, in turn, enhances their language learning experience.

Question 5: "I am more motivated to speak (talk myself out) in English classes when my teacher uses humour."
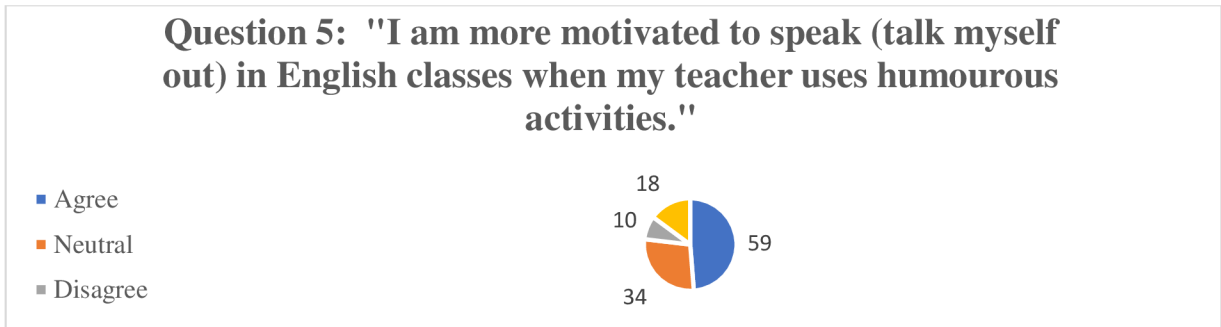
Figure 7: Question 5 - all classes

According to Figure 7, most of the respondents (59 learners) reported feeling more motivated to speak in English classes when using humour. 34 learners hold this perspective based on their own experience, while 18 are uncertain about its impact on their motivation. Only 10 learners do not believe that humour has any effect on their motivation to speak. These findings bear a close resemblance to what is discussed in chapter 3.3 The role of humour in promoting speaking skills. These findings corroborate the ideas of (Harutyunyan, and Mikayelyan, 2019, p. 565) who argue that sharing laughter and enjoyment can encourage even shy students to participate verbally. Furthermore, these findings align with the research conducted by other authors on the same topic, which validated a notable improvement in students' speaking abilities following the use of humour in lessons.

For a more detailed breakdown of the results for each class, see Figures 15, 24, 33 and 42 in Appendix 4.

Question 6: Please give a reason for question 5.
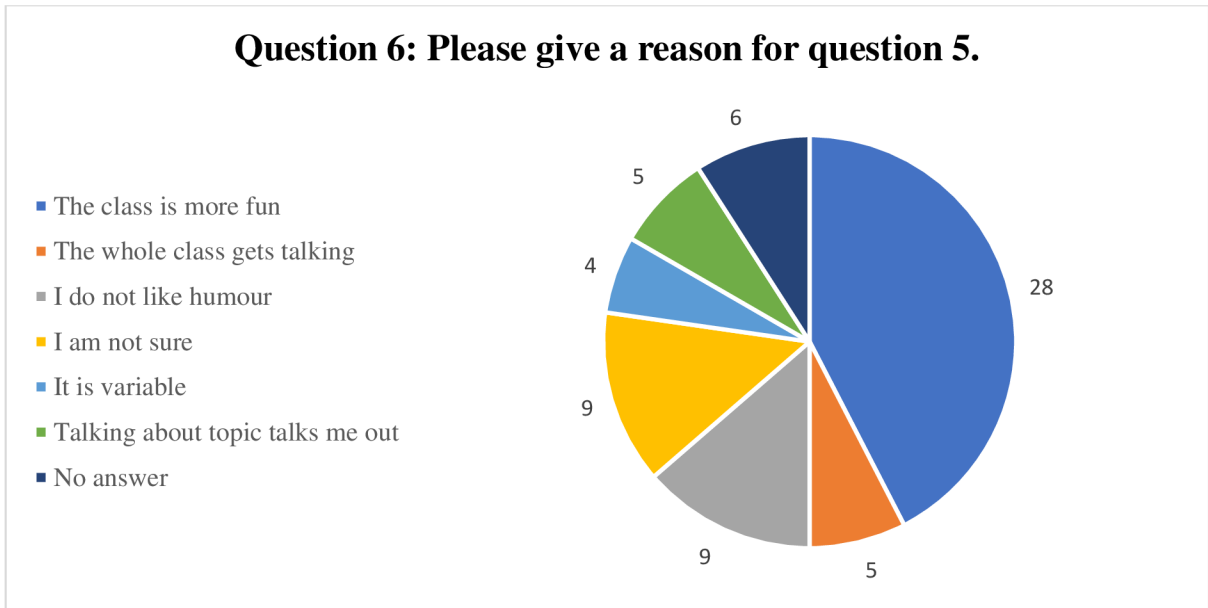
Figure 8: Question 6 - all classes

Referring to Figure 8, out of the 121 learners surveyed, only 66 responded to this question. However, only the highest rates from each class were considered. It was noted that most students (28 learners) found the class more enjoyable after incorporating humour into their learning. Additionally, five students acknowledged that discussing a topic helped them articulate their thoughts better. Nine students were unsure of their stance on Question 5, while six students did not respond, suggesting uncertainty on the matter. Five students expressed that humour in class encouraged more participation from the entire class. On the other hand, nine students (eight of whom were in the eighth grade) mentioned that they did not appreciate humour during class. Four students cited various reasons for their stance. Other reasons given included gratitude towards the teacher or a general positive feeling. Some students claimed that they hesitated to speak in English, while others claimed that it depended on the humour used during class. For a more detailed analysis of the results for each class, please refer to figures 16, 25, 34 and 43 in Appendix 4.

Unfortunately, ninth-grade students often misunderstood question 6. It was not perhaps specific enough. Question 6 means "Why do I get distorted thanks to the teacher". The author of this thesis should have made the question more specific.

There are several trends at different grade levels based on the survey results (Deepaiorg/chat):

1. *Incorporating humour in the classroom* was found to be *more enjoyable* by the majority of students expressing a positive response.

2. *Discussing topics* in class helped some students articulate their thoughts better.

3. *Sense of uncertainty* or neutrality: some students were unsure about their stance on the matter.

4. *Student engagement*: humour in the classroom encouraged more participation from the entire class, indicating a positive impact on student engagement.

5. Conversely, a smaller group of students stated that they *did not appreciate humour* in class, possibly due to personal preferences or other reasons.

These findings match those observed in earlier studies mentioned in chapter 3.2 Effects and functions, particularly in social functions of humour as well as in mental and behavioural effects of humour. The results demonstrate similarities with chapter 3.6, particularly in the seventh and eighth tendencies.

Question 7 "Humour used during English lessons increases my interest in learning".
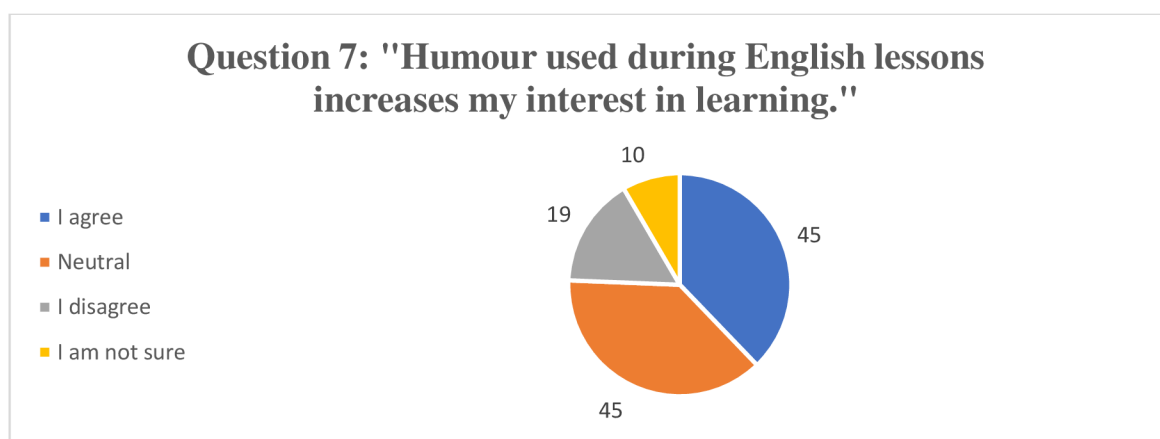
Figure 9: Question 7 - all classes

A total of 119 pupils have answered this question. As depicted in Figure 9, the number of students who agree that humour contributes to their motivation to learn is the same as those who took a neutral stance, comprising 45 pupils. A neutral stance refers to a state in which a

person or subject does not express any opinion, preference, or feelings about a topic or situation. Additionally, ten pupils reported being unsure about the topic.

These findings corroborated the ideas of Salmee and Arif (2018) who demonstrated that students taught by teachers or lecturers who incorporated humour in their lessons were more engaged and motivated in class According to the results of the study, the utilization of humour in language learning can yield positive outcomes in terms of enhancing both the emotional and cognitive aspects of the learning process.

Question 8: If you agree with question 7, please indicate in which area
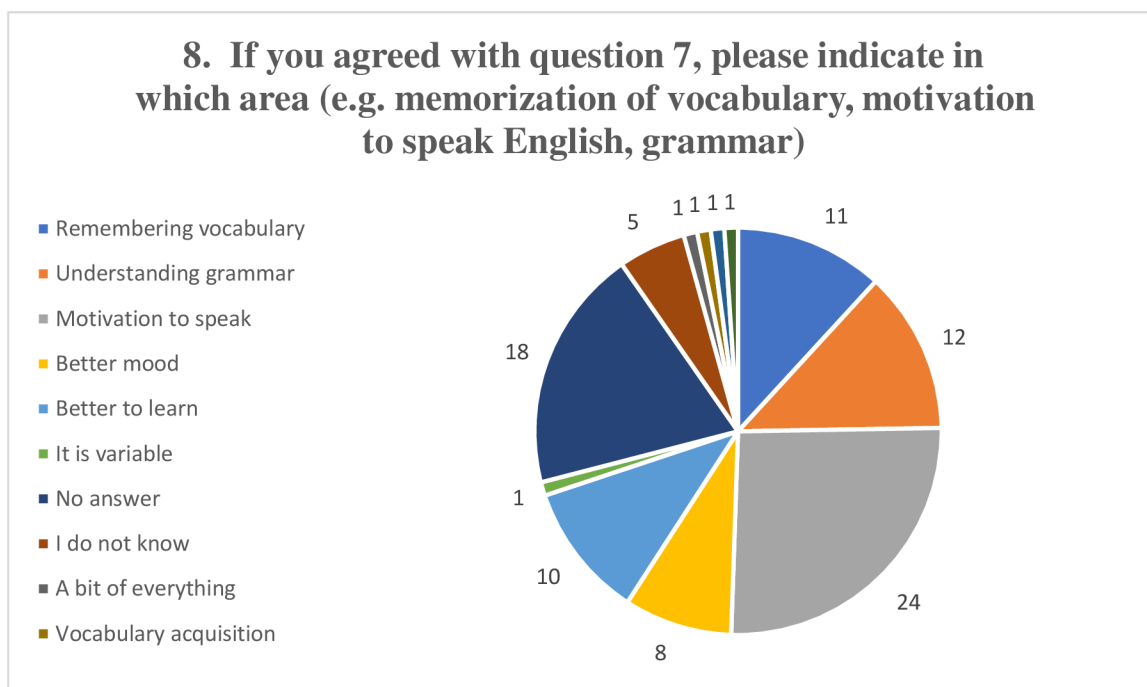
Figure 10: Question 8 - all classes

The eighth question in the questionnaire was added to explore the use of humour in lessons as a teaching tool. Out of 121 learners, 93 agreed to question 7, indicating a diverse range of factors that motivate them to learn English. The largest group of learners (24) reported that they felt motivated to speak in English and appreciated the use of humour as a means of developing their speaking skills. Unfortunately, 18 learners did not respond, indicating a lack of interest in this matter. Those with similar scores (groups of 12, 11, and 10) stated that humour can make grammar easier to comprehend and may help facilitate overall learning. Additionally,

humour can serve as a memory aid for vocabulary. Only a small number of eight learners indicated humour can bring a better mood, five of them did not know what to choose.

These results prove what has been declared by Basols (2005) in Chapter 3.2 Effects and functions. The author stated that using humour helps with information retention and improves students' ability to remember learned material for a longer period (Lundberg and Miller, 2002, as cited in Lovorn, 2008; Salmee and Arif 2019, p.8).

Furthermore, the results of this study agree with Tranter's (2012) in Chapter 3.3 The role of humour in promoting speaking skills which suggests using humour in the classroom to enhance vocabulary acquisition, reinforce grammar concepts, improve reading comprehension and promote language awareness. In addition, Salmee and Arif (2019, p.8) found that incorporating humour in teaching can positively impact the learning experience.

Question 9: "I am more willing to attend a lesson where humour is used".

Figure 11: Question 9 - all classes

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning, that in questions 1, 6 and 8, some answers had to be merged because of the similarity and frequency of responses. Furthermore, in question 8, learners who disagreed were not counted as 'no answer'. Interestingly, question eight has the highest number of no-answers.
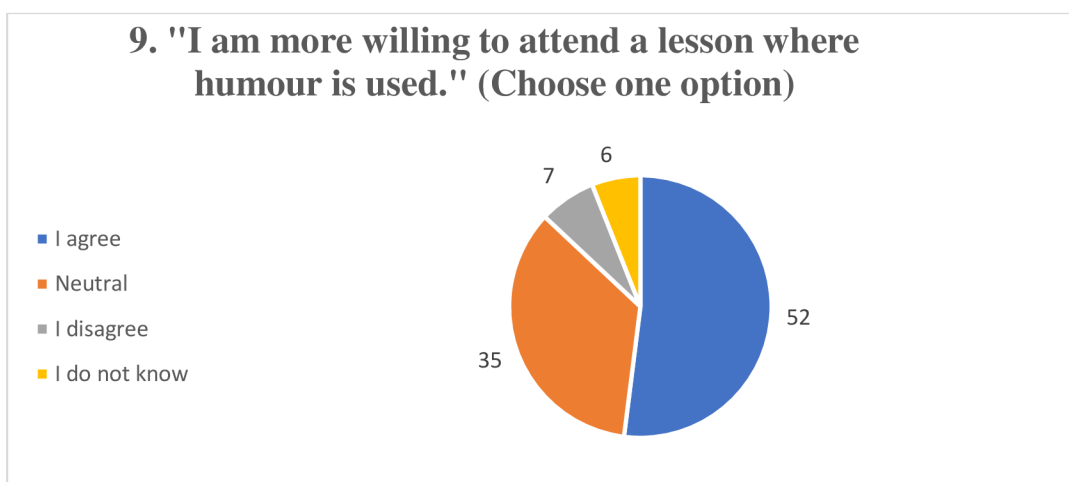
5.2   Second questionnaire results

This questionnaire comprises three questions, one of which is closed-ended and the other two are open-ended. The first question pertains to humour and asks the students to share which activity they found more amusing and explain why. The second question focuses on motivation and asks the student to specify which activity motivated them to participate more in the conversation. The third question explores the impact of humour on learning and asks the student to explain how the humorous activity helped them. See Appendix 3.

Some students did not give reasons for question 1, while some gave reasons for question 2.

Fifth class (See Appendix 1, page

Which activity did you find more humorous and why?

Concerning the fifth class, 13 students reported that the non-humorous activity was more amusing, while four students preferred the former. Three students did not participate in completing the questionnaire. The reasons provided by the students who found the non-humorous activity funnier included having more fun, collaborating with classmates, and the opportunity to create the humorous element on their own.

Which activity motivated you more to converse with your classmate(s)?

Once again, 10 students chose the traditional speaking activity for this question, likely due to the comedic aspect that students had previously mentioned.

The more humorous activity helped me to:

Out of the total number of pupils, five students reported successful acquisition of vocabulary, six students demonstrated a clear understanding of grammatical concepts, while eight students reported fostering and enhancing camaraderie amongst their peers.

These results confirm the findings in chapter 1.3.1 that humour strengthens relationships and excitement can lead to laughter, bringing learners together. Furthermore, as stated in section 1.3.3, these findings support the notion that humour aids in the retention or reinforcement of language items, or the practice of grammatical structures.

Seventh grade (See Appendix 1)

Which activity did you find more humorous and why?

In this grade, 27 students completed the second questionnaire. The majority of them (18 students) found the humorous activity more entertaining. The reasons they gave for this included better entertainment during the activity (mentioned by eight students), the opportunity to cooperate and socialize with classmates (mentioned by nine students), interesting questions (mentioned by four students), and the added element of competition that made the activity more enjoyable for one student.

Which activity motivated you more to converse with your classmate(s)?

Out of the total number of learners, 15 individuals reported higher levels of motivation and engagement in the humorous activity, whilst 12 individuals expressed a preference for the traditional activity.

The more humorous activity helped me to:

Out of the total number of students, 13 confirmed that the humorous activity helped them to better remember the vocabulary, while nine stated that they understood the grammatical principles, and five pointed out that the activity strengthened their friendships.

Eighth grade (See Appendix 1)

Which activity did you find more humorous and why?

There were two different schools of eighth-grade students. One of the schools had a sports class. Out of the total 29 learners, 20 students chose the humorous activity as the more fun activity. Additionally, 9 students out of the total chose the other traditional speaking activity. Their reasons for choosing the humorous activity were that it provided better entertainment during the learning process and allowed for more cooperation with peers.

Which activity motivated you more to converse with your classmate(s)?

Among the entire number of students, a noteworthy proportion of 22 individuals reported that the comical activity played a significant role in fostering their participation in conversations. Conversely, only nine students opted for the second alternative.

The more humorous activity helped me to:

Out of the total number of students, 17 students confirmed that the humorous activity helped them to better remember the vocabulary, while five learners stated that the humour helped them to understand the grammar more easily. Additionally, seven students confirmed that they were able to develop closer relationships with their classmates because of the activity.

Ninth grade (See Appendix 1)

Which activity did you find more humorous and why?

During the ninth-grade research stage, 36 students participated in this stage of research. 20 of them chose the humorous task as the funniest.

Which activity motivated you more to converse with your classmate(s)?

When asked about their preference for speaking activities, 20 learners stated that they found traditional activities to be more encouraging and inspirational. 11 learners chose humorous activities, while four learners stated that neither type of activity stimulated them to join the conversation. One learner did not respond.

The more humorous activity helped me to:

Of the total number of learners, 21 confirmed that their friendship relationships were strengthened through the learning process. A slightly lower score of 15 learners reported that humour helped them to memorize the vocabulary they learned, while 11 learners found it easier to comprehend the grammar. Additional attributes include having fun and reviewing the learnt material or even nothing.

5.3 Evaluation of all questionnaires for all classes

The research sample size is small, which limits the generalizability of the results to the broader educational landscape. However, these findings can be useful as a starting point for further research in the field.

Concerning the first questionnaire, the survey results indicate that games were the preferred primary source of motivation for learning English among students across different grade levels, closely followed by the influence of teachers. While some students lacked motivation, others found inspiration in engaging activities or learning new things. The data highlighted the consistent recognition of the importance of teachers in motivating students, with a growing emphasis on their role as grade levels increased. The survey revealed that engaging lesson content and activities were highly valued by students due to their positive impact on motivation and academic progress.

In terms of humour, most students expressed a positive attitude towards its use in the classroom, reporting increased enjoyment and motivation when it was incorporated into lessons. Furthermore, humour was found to increase students' motivation to speak in English and make classes more enjoyable. Despite some students expressing uncertainty or neutrality towards the use of humour, the overall trend was positive. Students acknowledged the benefits of humour in enhancing their learning experience, facilitating comprehension, and improving speaking skills.

In summary, the survey results illustrated the significant role of teachers, engaging lesson content, and the positive impact of humour on student motivation, learning experience, and speaking skills across different grade levels. The study highlights the significance of establishing a supportive and engaging learning environment to promote student engagement and academic achievement.

Humorous activity	Traditional activity
59 learners	50 learners

Table 2: Humorous versus traditional activity

For better clarity, the results from the second questionnaire are presented in the form of tables. 109 learners took part in this part of the research. Table 2 shows the count of learners who voted for the more humorous activity and those who chose the traditional one.

Better entertainment	48
Cooperation with classmates/socialisation	23
Insertion of a humorous element	4
Interesting questions	5
Competition	2
Better comprehension	1

Table 3: Reasons for Question 1

According to Table 3, children found certain activities more entertaining and had the opportunity to socialize with classmates, leading to them being defined as more humorous. This concurs well with the statement that humour can bring people together and evoke excitement as is mentioned in chapter 3.2 Social functions of humour by Šeďová (2013, p. 25 and Martin (2007, p. 114).

Memorising vocabulary	50
Grammatical structures	31
Strengthening friendship relationships	41
Having fun	2
No answer	3
Nothing	2
Reviewing material	1

Table 4: Benefits of the humorous activity

Table 4 provides a summary of all the positive impacts of the humorous activity on the learners. The results indicate that 50 learners were able to remember the taught vocabulary better and understand grammatical structures. The second most common benefit was strengthening the relationships between classmates. A small number of learners expressed different reasons for learning, such as having fun, consolidating the material, or having no specific idea in mind. These results confirm the usefulness of humour as mentioned in Chapter

3.2 Cognitive effects of humour by Basols (2005), Lovorn 2008; Salmee and Arif 2019, p. 8) who declare that humour can recall the vocabulary, thus learners are taught more effectively. Also, the data seems to be consistent with the findings of Tranter (2012) who recommends using humour to practise grammatical structures.

Furthermore, 55 learners found the humorous activity more motivational to engage in conversation, while 49 preferred the opposite option regarding the second question. There are similarities between the attitudes expressed by Harutyunyan and Mikayelyan (2019) in Chapter and these findings stating that students who participated in sharing funny stories and laughter showed significant improvement in their speaking skills. This highlights the importance of interest and motivation in language learning, as students were more eager to participate in discussions and overcome their shyness. In line with Syafiq and Saleh's (2012) research, creating a positive and enjoyable learning environment can greatly benefit students in developing their language skills.

Third questionnaire

This questionnaire was for ninth-grade students only although, it was originally intended to be carried out with all classes, unfortunately for time and organisational reasons, this was not possible. Nevertheless, students were asked to rank the presented humorous activities according to their preferences. See Appendix 3.

Humorous activities included tongue twisters, ghost riddles, jokes, funny videos and body fun expression idioms See Appendix 1.

Interestingly, tongue twisters proved to be the most favoured activity by those involved, followed by ghost riddles and physical comedy idioms in second and third position respectively. Humorous anecdotes ranked fourth, while videos were the least favoured activity.

6 Interviews with individual teachers

Qualitative research is about gaining a deeper understanding of a selected case, or a particular social or individual problem. In qualitative research, we do not seek a simple truth, but acknowledge the complexity of the case under study and seek to understand it in depth (Jan Hendl, p.1).

One of the basic methods of qualitative research is an interview. The interview was semi-structured, as the questions were prepared in advance and all respondents commented on all questions and was divided into several parts. Before the interview began, the respondents were introduced to the indicative research study, asked for their consent to participate in the interview and assured of anonymity during the interview process. The author of this thesis translated all the respondents' quotes.

As Gavora (2000, pp.110-111) recommends the author of this thesis established a friendly relationship and chose a calm environment to create a suitable atmosphere. Horák a Chráska (1989, pp.130–131) suggest creating sufficient time for the interview and motivating the respondent. They also state that the researcher should always be tactful and not put any pressure on the answers.

The recorded interviews were first transcribed, printed and then analysed. This is a process called open coding. J. Strauss and Corbin (1999 p.43) describe open coding as "The process of analysing data involves labelling and categorizing concepts through careful consideration. During open coding, the data is broken down into discrete parts and studied in detail. Comparisons are made to identify similarities and differences, and questions are asked about the phenomena represented by the data.

Teacher A

The teacher has five years of teaching experience and considers humour to be a valuable element in the learning process. They believe that humour can engage students, ease tension, and aid in overcoming language barriers. The teacher employs a range of humorous activities in her classes, including the game 'Shipwreck', to reinforce grammatical concepts, encourage communication between students, and develop speaking skills. Humour can positively influence pupils' motivation to learn and improve their performance. This statement is supported by research and is a widely accepted view in the field. This teacher values humour as a valuable element in the learning process, uses humour intentionally in various activities,

believes humour can positively influence motivation and performance, and incorporates humour to engage students and reinforce language concepts.

Teacher B

The teacher has extensive teaching experience and acknowledges the potential of humour to create a positive classroom atmosphere. Although not overused, the teacher recognises that pantomime is enjoyed by the children. The teacher believes that humour can enhance pupils' motivation to communicate in English and help them relax and work more effectively. Teacher B acknowledges the potential of humour to create a positive classroom atmosphere, uses pantomime sparingly, believes humour can enhance motivation and effectiveness in learning, and strives to establish a positive and amicable learning environment.

Teacher C

The teacher has 12 years of teaching experience and considers humour to be an essential element in the learning process. They use various forms of humorous activities, such as pantomime or reading funny texts, to enhance students' motivation and create a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom. The teacher believes that humour can help pupils to engage better, learn unfamiliar words effortlessly and improve their speaking skills. However, it is acknowledged that the use of humour requires a sensitive approach and appropriate use according to the characteristics of the class. Teacher C considers humour to be important in learning, uses various forms of humorous activities to enhance motivation and create a relaxed atmosphere, believes humour helps students engage better and improve speaking skills, and recognizes the need for a sensitive approach to humour based on class characteristics. Overall, the aim is to create positive relationships with pupils and encourage their activity and interest in learning.

Teacher D

This teacher appears to be experienced and dedicated to their profession, having taught for 18 years. They value the importance of humour in creating a positive classroom environment and recognize its benefits in reducing stress and improving mental well-being.

While the teacher acknowledges the challenges in motivating students to speak English, she actively seeks engaging activities, such as games and videos, to activate their interest. The teacher also understands the impact of her role in influencing student motivation.

Although she hasn't utilized humorous activities recently, she recognizes the potential benefits of using humour to enliven lessons and aid in language learning. Despite expressing some difficulties in teaching speaking skills without a strong vocabulary foundation, the teacher appreciates the positive impact of fun activities on student motivation and engagement. Overall, this teacher appears caring, adaptable, and invested in creating a supportive and enjoyable learning environment for their students.

Teacher E

The teacher has been teaching for approximately five years and occasionally uses humour in the classroom to create a relaxed atmosphere. They believe that humour can motivate students to speak English and engage in conversation. However, the teacher has only used humorous activities sparingly, such as funny videos or role-plays. They have observed that students become more active and engaged when humour is incorporated into the lesson. Teacher E: Occasionally uses humour to create a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom, believes humour can motivate students to speak English and engage in conversation, uses humorous activities sparingly, and views humour as a valuable instructional strategy to enhance speaking skills. Overall, the teacher views humour as a valuable instructional strategy to enhance speaking skills and create an enjoyable learning environment for students.

Comparison of teacher´s views

From the interviews, it can be observed that all the teachers value humour as an important element in the learning process. Teachers utilise humour to engage students and foster a positive classroom atmosphere. They achieve this using pantomime, competitions, and amusing texts.

Based on the descriptions provided, the tendencies of the teachers regarding the use of humour in the classroom are as follows (Deepai.org/chat):

1. *Humour in Education: Fostering Engagement, Language Learning, and Collaboration* - all teachers value humour as a valuable element in the learning process and recognise its potential to engage students, ease tension (Teachers B and C), create a positive classroom atmosphere (Teachers C and D) and understand grammatical structures (Teachers D and A). Teachers A and D noted that humour can also aid in the retention of vocabulary.

2. *The choice of humorous activities* – all the teachers incorporate various forms of humorous activities, such as pantomime (Teachers A, C and B share this choice), funny texts, games, competitions, and role-plays, to enhance students' motivation, improve speaking skills (Teachers A and C), and reinforce language concepts.

3. *The impact of humour on student motivation and performance* – teachers believe that humour can positively influence students' motivation to learn, enhance their performance, and engage more effectively in the learning process.

Concerning changes in students´ motivation after using humour, teachers A, B and C agree, that incorporating humour into these activities can help students to better experience and review what they are learning. Additionally, our research suggests that students may become more creative and cooperative when participating in such activities.

4. *Fostering positive relationships and engagement through humour*: Teachers' approach to creating a supportive Learning Environment - through humour, they strive to establish positive relationships with students, promote student engagement and interest in learning, and create a relaxed and amicable learning environment (Teachers B, C and D).

5. *Balancing humour and sensitivity: tailoring humour to students' needs and ESL classrooms* - the teachers acknowledge the importance of using humour in moderation and with sensitivity, adapting its use according to the characteristics and needs of the students in the classroom. Teachers A and C highlight that it should be kept in mind that only humour which is comprehensible for learners should be used. These findings are in line with Gonulal (2018) and Martin (2007, p. 35) in Chapter 3.4, the authors discuss the challenges of understanding humour in foreign language classrooms and note that humour may not always resonate with learners and may not elicit a smile or laugh.

6. *Enhancing speaking skills through humour* – regarding the use of humour as a teaching strategy to enhance students' speaking skills, teachers A, B, and C agree that it can improve students' mood, reduce shyness, and help them relax, which in turn can lead to the development of communication skills. As noted by Chiasson (2002) in 3.5, humour serves as a powerful tool to boost motivation and self-confidence, especially for shy students who feel uncomfortable participating in class. When students share laughter and enjoyment, those who are usually shy and quiet tend to forget their worries and become more confident to speak up.

This is supported by Harutyunyan and Mikayelyan (2019, p. 565), as well as Syafiq and Saleh (2012, p. 49) in Chapter 3.3.

Overall, humour is viewed as a valuable instructional strategy that can enhance speaking skills, improve communication, and create an enjoyable and effective learning environment for students.

7 Research summary and discussion

The main objective of this thesis was to examine the efficacy of using humour as a pedagogical tool to enhance students' speaking skills and motivation to communicate in a foreign language, as well as to explore teachers' attitudes towards the use of humour in their instructional practices. To achieve this goal, a mixed-methods approach was utilized, involving a questionnaire survey in the first phase of the research, followed by interviews with teachers in the second phase including implementing experimental lessons. Five research questions (RQs) were formulated to guide the study, and the findings of this investigation can contribute to the current literature on language teaching methodologies and practical implications for educators. The results of this study will now be compared to the findings of previous work.

RQ1. What are the teachers´ views on the function/use of humour in English language teaching?

The data from the research highlighted that teachers play a crucial role in creating a positive and engaging learning environment using humour. They understand its capacity to actively engage students, relieve anxiety, and promote a favourable classroom environment. Additionally, they acknowledge its potential to aid in the memorization of vocabulary and comprehension of grammatical concepts. These findings in the present study are consistent with the ideas of Tranter (2012) and other experts (Medgyes 2002, p. 7; Šeďová 2013, pp. 51-52 and Martin 2007, p. 354) who claim humour can be beneficial for improving vocabulary, expanding lexical repertoire, practising grammatical structures, boosting reading comprehension, and increasing language awareness. Similarly, Borecký (2000, p.39), Banas et al. (2011), Martin (2007, p. 102, 282), and Powell with Andresen (2006, p. 82) agree that humour can have a calming effect on students and prevent possible aggression. Educators' perspectives on the effectiveness of humour as a teaching tool can influence students' motivation and engagement in language learning.

Teachers recognize the significance of incorporating humour in a balanced and sensitive manner, adjusting its application based on the unique attributes and requirements of their students. Teachers A and C emphasize the importance of using only humour that is understandable to learners. These results are consistent with the research of Gonulal (2018) and Martin (2007, p. 35) as detailed in Chapter 3.4. In this section, the authors delve into the

complexities of comprehending humour in foreign language classrooms, underscoring that humour may not always connect with learners and may fail to evoke a smile or laughter.

Creating a supportive learning environment through humour, teachers aim to cultivate positive relationships with students, encourage engagement and enthusiasm for learning, and foster a comfortable and friendly atmosphere in the classroom (Teachers B, C, and D). This view is supported in Chapter 3.2 by Martin (2007, p.353) and Salmee and Arif (2019, p.8) teachers who aim for immediacy and prioritize building close relationships with their students. According to Hay (2000, as cited in Šeďová, p.27), humour has the ability to create a feeling of mutual sympathy within relationships. It can also fulfil an individual's psychological needs.

In conclusion, utilizing humour as a teaching tool to enhance speaking skills has been acknowledged by teachers A, B, and C as a beneficial strategy to improve students' mood, alleviate shyness, and create a relaxed learning environment conducive to communication skill development. As Chiasson (2002) emphasizes in section 3.5, humour plays a vital role in boosting motivation and self-assurance, particularly for reserved students who may feel hesitant to participate in class activities. Furthermore, research by Harutyunyan and Mikayelyan (2019, p. 565) and Syafiq and Saleh (2012, p. 49) in Chapter 3.3 reinforces the positive impact of humour in fostering student confidence and encouraging active participation in classroom discussions.

RQ2. What effects on students´ motivation do teachers see after using humour as a teaching strategy in their lessons?

According to interviews with the teachers, the survey results indicated that students felt more motivated to speak in English classes when humour was incorporated into lessons. Concerning shifts in students' motivation following the incorporation of humour, educators concur that learners can derive an advantage from participating in activities that are simultaneously engaging and instructive. These findings align with those of previous research cited in Chapter 3.5, such as Chee (2006) and Golchi & Jamali (2011, as referenced in Salmee and Arif, 2018).

Additionally, our research suggest that students may become more creative and cooperative when participating in such activities. Understanding the impact of humour on student motivation can help educators tailor their teaching methods to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

RQ3. What are learners' opinions on their teacher's usage of humour in lessons?

Firstly, the survey results consistently showed that **students** across different grade levels have a **positive attitude towards humour in the classroom.** The findings align with existing research that suggests humour can promote a positive classroom atmosphere and enhance student motivation (Basols, 2005; Salmee and Arif, 2019).

Secondly, humour was seen as a helpful tool for improving speaking skills, understanding grammar concepts, and facilitating vocabulary retention. These findings support the idea that humour can enhance the learning experience and contribute to better language acquisition (Tranter, 2012; Lovorn, 2008).

In addition, the significance of the teacher as a motivator and influencer in students' language learning journey was consistently highlighted across all grade levels. Students identified their teachers as a crucial source of motivation, emphasizing the impact of a teacher's enthusiasm, engagement, and genuine interest in students on their academic **progress.** A positive correlation was bound between these results and the research conducted by Chiniotakis (2010) who claims that learners generally prefer teachers who incorporate humour in teaching foreign language. Likewise, in agreement with Abbas´s (2023) research, the study found that many students appreciate teachers using humour in class, finding it helpful, motivating, and improving their language learning experience. As stated by Kašpárková (2011), this underscores the pivotal role that educators play in inspiring and guiding students towards language proficiency. Students' perspectives on their teacher's use of humour can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of humour as a teaching strategy. Moreover, understanding learners' opinions can help educators adapt their teaching approaches to better meet the needs and preferences of their students.

RQ4. What applied humorous activities do learners enjoy the most?

The survey results indicated that students valued interactive and engaging activities, such as games and humorous tasks, as a primary source of motivation for learning English. This suggests that incorporating humour and fun elements into lessons can help students stay interested and actively participate in the learning process. The findings highlight the importance of creating a stimulating and enjoyable classroom environment to foster student engagement and learning outcomes (Harutyunyan and Mikayelyan, 2019; Syafiq and Saleh, 2012).

Teachers A, C and hold an opinion that teachers can influence students´ motivation by careful choice of humorous activities as well as working in pairs or groups (Teacher A). As was mentioned in Chapter 3. 4, according to Stroud (2013, p.80), encouraging learners to form their groups and use humour can foster collaboration and creativity. Furthermore, these teachers' statements are supported by research conducted by Professor Abbas (2023) in Chapter 3.5. The research highlights the benefits of using humour in EFL classes, as it enhances the motivation of students and improves their language learning experience.

Identifying the specific humorous activities that students enjoy the most can help educators design engaging and effective lessons. Tongue twisters were the most popular activity, followed by ghost riddles and physical comedy idioms. Humorous anecdotes ranked fourth, while videos were the least favoured.

RQ5. To what extent do learners feel more motivated to speak during humorous activities compared to unhumorous ones?

The data revealed that students generally found humour to be motivating and beneficial for their language learning. The study's most significant finding was that some teachers use humour as a means of developing their students' speaking skills in foreign languages. This finding supports previous research of Harutyunyan and Mikayelyan (2019, p. 565), as well as Syafiq and Saleh (2012, p. 49) in Chapter 3.3.

As was mentioned in Chapter 5.1 in First questionnaire results, particularly in Question 6, there are several trends (reasons for motivation to speak) at different grade levels based on the survey results (Deepai.org/chat):

1. Most students responded positively to the incorporation of humour in the classroom, finding it to be a more enjoyable experience.

2. Participation in class discussions assisted certain students in effectively articulating their thoughts.

3. Some students exhibited a sense of uncertainty or neutrality regarding their stance on specific topics.

4. Student engagement was enhanced using humour in the classroom, leading to increased participation from the entire student body and a positive impact on overall engagement levels.

5. On the contrary, a smaller number of students expressed reservations about humour in the classroom, potentially influenced by personal preferences or other factors.

These observations align with previous studies outlined in Chapter 3.2 on the Effects and Functions of humour, particularly in the social functions of humour and its mental and behavioural effects. The results are also consistent with those noted in Chapter 3.6, specifically regarding the seventh and eighth tendencies. To compare the perspectives and achievements of teachers and students, we have identified several similarities and differences (Deep.org/chat).

Similarities:

1. Both students and teachers recognise the importance of teachers in motivating students and fostering a positive learning environment. Teachers are valued as sources of inspiration and guidance in the language learning process.

2. Both students and teachers have a positive attitude towards the use of humour in the classroom. The importance of humour in engaging students, creating a positive atmosphere, and enhancing motivation and learning outcomes is recognised.

Differences:

1. *Motivation sources:* it is important to note that while students primarily identified games as their main source of motivation for learning English, teachers value humour as a key element in engaging students, easing tension, and enhancing language learning. Students tend to focus on interactive and engaging activities, while teachers emphasise the importance of humour in creating a supportive learning environment.

2. *Impact on speaking skills*: The impact on speaking skills is perceived differently by students and teachers. Students view humour as a tool to improve their speaking skills and make classes more enjoyable, while teachers see it as a strategy to enhance communication, reduce shyness, and promote collaborative learning. Teachers place a greater emphasis on the role of humour in fostering positive relationships and engagement in the classroom.

Conclusion

The purpose of this present research was to identify whether humour contributes to the development of students´ speaking skills and the overall motivation of the student to speak in a foreign language. The study has explored the concepts of motivation and humour in the context of language learning, specifically focusing on the EFL classroom. Through a literature review, the research has defined motivation and humour, identified various sources and types of motivation, and outlined specific motivational strategies that can be utilized to enhance language learning. The role of the teacher in motivating students to speak a foreign language and the potential benefits of incorporating humour as a tool for motivation have also been discussed. Furthermore, surveys were introduced to gather perceptions from teachers and learners, which were then compared to the research findings.

The empirical research conducted in chapters four, five, and six of this thesis provided a detailed analysis of the perceptions of teachers on using humour in the ESL classroom. Chapter four outlined the research methodology, including sample selection and data collection processes, as well as the preparatory and implementation phases of the study. It also discussed the methods used for processing the gathered data. A mixed methods research design was chosen, combining qualitative and quantitative methods.

Chapter five delved into the evaluation of the results obtained from the administered questionnaires, shedding light on the learners´ perspectives and opinions regarding the use of humour in the ESL classroom. This analysis offered valuable insights into the effectiveness of incorporating humour as a motivational tool in language teaching and its impact on student engagement and learning outcomes. The findings of the research were compared with those of similar studies.

In Chapter six, the perceptions of teachers on using humour in the ESL classroom were critically examined and discussed. This section explored the various attitudes and approaches adopted by teachers towards incorporating humour in their teaching practices, highlighting the benefits and challenges associated with this pedagogical strategy. By synthesizing and interpreting the research findings, this chapter provided a comprehensive understanding of the role of humour in ESL classroom instruction from the perspective of teachers.

Firstly, it is evident that motivation and humour play crucial roles in creating a positive and engaging learning environment for students. By understanding the factors that influence motivation and implementing effective strategies, teachers can inspire and empower students to actively participate in language learning. Secondly, the use of humour can not only enhance

motivation but also foster a sense of enjoyment and connection among learners, ultimately contributing to the development of their speaking skills and overall language proficiency.

Overall, the majority of respondents acknowledged the positive effects of humour on their motivation and learning. The respondents agreed that humour made lessons more enjoyable and interesting. As a result, they became more focused and motivated to actively participate in a lesson. Concerning a learning environment, the respondents highlighted that humour could create a relaxed learning environment where they were not afraid to make mistakes. However, some of the respondents pointed out they did not perceive humour in a classroom as a necessity. Nevertheless, they noted they would enjoy the lesson with humour more. Although this thesis focused primarily on the use of planned humour rather than spontaneous humour, our data showed that spontaneous humour during non-humorous group activities can make them more enjoyable.

During the analysis of the interviews, it was discovered that some questions had similar content, resulting in overlapping answers. For instance, the responses to questions 2 and 4 were comparable. In some instances, answers even appeared in unrelated questions due to the teacher's deviation from the topic.

A teacher's sense of humour cannot be considered a reliable tool for evaluation. The answer is not a clear affirmative. Therefore, the idea that only teachers with an innate sense of humour can benefit from using humour in teaching and that only they can make students laugh, is inaccurate. In fact, all teachers can use external sources of humour without having to create their own jokes. Furthermore, every class is likely to have students with a good sense of humour whom educators can rely on for comedic support.

It should be noted that questionnaire research has limitations. From the outset, adding all the pupils together may seem like an easier approach, but it is important to consider potential discrepancies in the statements and deductions to ensure accuracy throughout the process. Besides, an issue with the questionnaire was that the questions may have been too difficult for the age group. Despite explanations of the questions' meanings, some students still did not comprehend them and either skipped, ignored, or provided irrelevant answers.

Exploring the teachers' perceptions on the importance and use of humour may help remove misconceptions and traditional approaches associated with the notion, that humour is not appropriate in teaching or that humour concerns only those who have it in them.

Humour is recognized as a valuable pedagogical approach that not only fosters enjoyment and engagement but also enhances students' learning outcomes. By using humour, educators can create a positive and motivating classroom environment, which can stimulate

students' cognitive and affective domains, leading to improved communication and speaking skills.

Overall, the findings from the research suggest that incorporating humour in language teaching can have positive effects on student motivation, engagement, and language learning outcomes. By creating a positive and enjoyable learning environment through humour, teachers can enhance students' interest in learning English, improve their speaking skills, and foster a sense of camaraderie among classmates.

Several suggestions for future research can be made based on this study. Further research is needed to better understand more systematic research examining the effects of humour on specific educational outcomes and replicating findings from previous research. While there is a significant amount of research on humour techniques and their effects on learning, there is a noticeable gap in research on how incorporating humour techniques in the classroom can enhance the speaking skills of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners and their motivation to communicate.

The paper's contribution is the information obtained through the questionnaire and interview survey, which can guide teachers on how to make the lesson interesting, constructive, and beneficial for both students and teachers. To improve the study, a larger sample size could be used in the future. Finally, future research may consider using a different research approach, such as the case study method, to investigate how students learn a second language using humour to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of humour on second language learning.

Humour is often overlooked in school life, but it deserves more attention in the literature. This approach should be incorporated into pedagogical practices to promote effective language instruction and learning. Additionally, teacher education programs should include the use of humour in capacity-building activities for educators teaching English. Various forms of humour, such as stories, jokes, theatre, and games, should be integrated into language teaching courses to cater to the academic needs of prospective teachers. Language instructors should be encouraged to employ humorous teaching techniques in content-based English language/literature courses. Incorporating humour as a teaching aid in language education programs is also recommended to enhance the effectiveness of developing speaking skills.

It is not true that only teachers with a good sense of humour merit from the use of humour. All teachers can use external sources without the need to produce their own humour.

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STRONG, Trevor. *Understanding humour: A teacher's handbook.* Online. 2013. Dostupné z: https://qspace.library.queensu.ca/bitstream/handle/1974/7836/Understanding%20Humour%2C%20A%20Teacher%27s%20Handbook.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y. [cit. 2024-02-12].

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ŠEĎOVÁ, Klára. Pedagogické efekty humoru ve výukové komunikaci. Online. 2012.Pedagogika ISSN 0031-3815. Dostupné z: https://pages.pedf.cuni.cz/pedagogika/?p=689

ŠIRL, Radim. *Humor a liminalita ve vztahu k profesi učitele*. Online. *Pedagogika, časopis pro vědy o vzdělávání a výchově*. 2022, roč. 72, č. 1. Dostupné z: DOI: https://ojs.cuni.cz/pedagogika/article/view/1994. [cit. 2022-11-6].

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[Tendencies in motivation fifth, seventh, eighth and ninth grades]. Online. In> AI Chat 10.12.2023. Dostupné z https://deepai.org/…at). [Citováno 2024-01-22].

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 Experimental activities

The fifth grade

5 Prepositions of place; *Is there …? Are there …?*

1 Complete the questions with *Is there …?* and *Are there …?* Then look at the pictures and answer them.
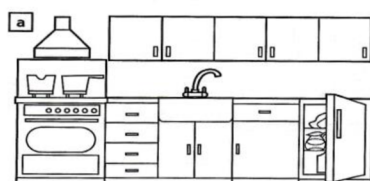
1 _____ a cooker between the sink and the fridge?

2 _____ a cupboard under the sink?

3 _____ a lamp next to the armchair?

4 _____ curtains in front of the window?

5 _____ a mirror opposite the bath?

6 _____ a toilet next to the washbasin?

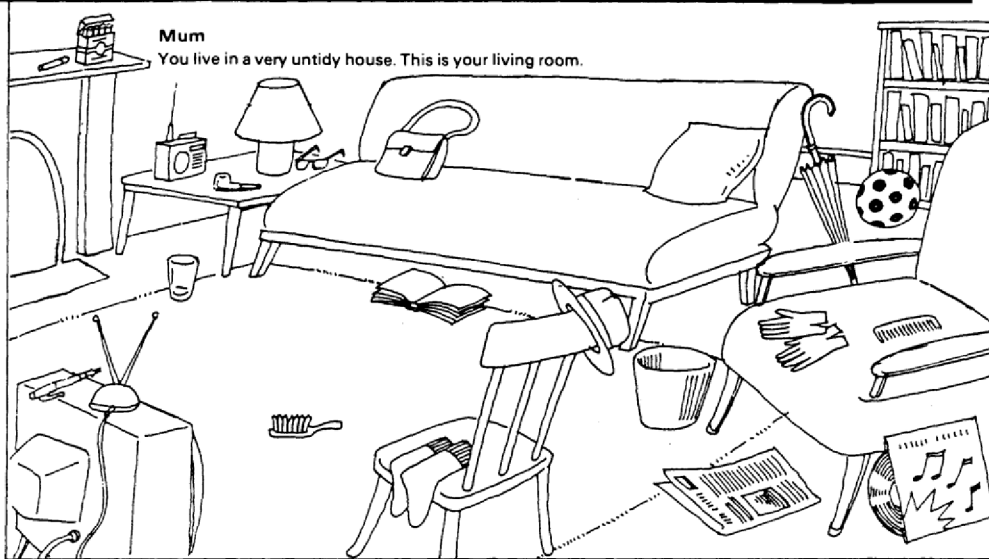**2 a** Draw these things in the pictures in exercise 1 and write sentences. Use *behind, in front of, in, next to, on* or *opposite*.

a box of oranges   a radio   a mobile phone   a poster   a sweatshirt   trainers

b Work with a partner. Tell your partner where the things in exercise 2a are.

Project 1 Photocopiable activities, Tom Hutchinson, 2014, Oxford University Press.

Mum
You live in a very untidy house. This is your living room.

You have lost these things:

Ask the others where they are!

Tom
You live in a very untidy house. This is your living room.

You have lost these things:

Ask the others where they are!

Humorous activity

Elementary communication games, Jill Hadfield, 1984, Nelson, p.31.

Seventh grade

Communicative Guess the comparative

A

1 Russia is colder than Spain.

2 The Americans are _____ than the British.

3 Swimming is better exercise than walking.

4 A sofa is _____ than a chair.

5 A Rolls Royce is more expensive than a Citroen.

6 Driving is _____ than flying.

7 Men are more aggressive drivers than women.

8 Basketball players are _____ than footballers.

9 Red wine is healthier than whisky.

10 Canada is _____ than Brazil.

11 The weather in Britain is worse than the weather in Portugal.

12 Italian men are _____ than British men.

B

1 Russia is _____ than Spain.

2 The Americans are friendlier than the British.

3 Swimming is _____ exercise than walking.

4 A sofa is more comfortable than a chair.

5 A Rolls Royce is _____ than a Citroen.

6 Driving is more dangerous than flying.

7 Men are _____ drivers than women.

8 Basketball players are taller than footballers.

9 Red wine is _____ than whisky.

10 Canada is bigger than Brazil.

11 The weather in Britain is _____ than the weather in Portugal.

12 Italian men are more stylish than British men.

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Traditional activity

New English File, Elementary level, Teacher's book, 2004, Oxford University Press.

Comparatives quiz

✂

Which is (big): the USA or Russia? *Answer:* Russia	Which was (long): the First World War or the Second World War? *Answer:* the Second World War	Who is (old): Scarlett Johansson or Keira Knightley *Answer:* Keira Knightley
Which is (small): a mouse or a rat? *Answer:* a mouse	Which river is (long): the Nile or the Amazon? *Answer:* the Nile	Which is (heavy): silver or gold? *Answer:* gold
Who is (young): Brad Pitt or Johnny Depp? *Answer:* Brad Pitt	Which is (hot): Australia or New Zealand? *Answer:* Australia	Who is (tall): Wayne Rooney or Lionel Messi? *Answer:* Wayne Rooney
Which is (old): New York or Los Angeles? *Answer:* New York	Which is (tall): the Eiffel Tower or the Empire States Building? *Answer:* the Empire States Building	Which is (expensive): diamonds or gold? *Answer:* diamonds
Which film was (long): *Pirates of the Caribbean* or *Titanic?* *Answer:* Titanic	Which is (short): a game of basketball or a game of ice hockey? *Answer:* a game of basketball	Who is (rich): the Queen or J.K. Rowling? *Answer:* J.K. Rowling
Who is (young): Maria Sharapova or Ana Ivanovic? *Answer:* Ana Ivanovic	Which is (heavy): a football or a basketball? *Answer:* a basketball	Which is (far) from London: Rome or Madrid? *Answer:* Rome
Which ocean is (big): the Atlantic or the Pacific? *Answer:* the Pacific	Which is (expensive): a Mercedes or a BMW? *Answer:* a Mercedes	Which competition is (old): the football World Cup or Wimbledon? *Answer:* Wimbledon
Which song is (short): *Yellow Submarine* by The Beatles or *Blue Suede Shoes* by Elvis Presley? *Answer:* Blue Suede Shoes	Which are (high): the Alps or the Pyrenees? *Answer:* the Alps	Which university is (old): Oxford or Cambridge? *Answer:* Oxford

✂

Humorous activity

Interactive 1, Teacher's Resource Book, 2010, Cambridge University Press.

Eigth grade

- Are you good at sports? Do/did you enjoy the PE classes at school? Why (not)?
- Are you or have you been a member of any sports team? Do you or did you use to do any sport competitively? (If yes, in what kind of competitions do/did you participate?)
- Are you a good swimmer? Are you afraid of water? Do you enjoy water sports? (e.g. swimming, diving, snorkelling, water polo, canoeing, rafting, windsurfing, etc.)
- What is your favourite sport or game? Do you prefer playing it or just watching? Would you rather watch a football match at a stadium or on TV?
- Do you enjoy cycling, jogging or walking in the neighbourhood? Why (not)?
- What kind of sports or activities do you usually enjoy in winter? How often do you go skiing/snowboarding/skating/sledging?
- Have you ever played golf/volleyball/pétanque? Can you explain the rules?
- Do you like wrestling? Do you like any Asian martial arts? Do you or did you use to practise any kind of martial arts? Why (not)?
- Did your parents encourage you to go in for sports? (What kind of sports?)
- Who is your favourite professional athlete?
- Would you like to be a professional athlete yourself? Why (not)?
- Why do you think professional sports are so commercial nowadays? Is it good?
- What sport do you think is the most expensive? Why?

Traditional activity: FLÁMOVÁ, Helena. Cvičebnice angličtiny. Olomouc: Agentura Rubico, s.r.o. ISBN 978-807346-208-6.

Humorous activity ANDERSON, Jason. *Speaking games*. Photocopiable activities to make language learning fun. London: Delta Publishing, 2020. ISBN978-3-12-201740-5.

Ninth grade

Humorous activity

PHILIP, Richard. *Have you ever?* Board game. Online, obrázek. In: en.islcollective.com. 2010-1-10. Dostupné z: https://en.islcollective.com/english-esl-worksheets/grammar-topic/present-simple-vs-continuous-progressive-tense/board-game-have-you-ever/861.

PRESENT PERFECT QUESTIONS 1

1 - Have you ever sold something you own?
2 - Have you ever eaten something strange?
3 - Have you ever burnt something on purpose?
4 - Have you ever dreamt about winning money?
5 - Have you ever flown in an airplane?
6 - Have you ever won a competition?
7 - Have you ever drunk sour milk?
8 - Have you ever hidden from your parents?
9 - Have you ever ridden a motorcycle?
10- Have you ever met somebody famous?
11- Have you ever rung somebody by mistake?
12- Have you ever paid too much for something?
13- Have you ever hurt yourself in the kitchen?
14- Have you ever sung in front of people?
15- Have you ever spent a night in a forest?
16- Have you ever had something stolen?
17- Have you ever taken a beautiful photograph?
18- Have you ever torn your clothing?
19- Have you ever written to someone overseas?
20- Have you ever seen something that scared you?
21- Have you ever slept for more than 12 hours?
22- Have you ever sat in the sun all day?
23- Have you ever spilt a drink on somebody else?
24- Have you ever been stung by an insect?
25- Have you ever thrown a rock into the ocean?

ESL VAULT. *Present Perfect Questions*. Online. 2024. Dostupné z: https://eslvault.com/present-perfect-conversation-questions/.

Riddles

Q: What does a ghost eat for dessert?

A: I scream. (Ice cream)

Q: Where does a ghost mail his letters?

A: At the ghost office. (Post office)

Q: What did the ghost mail home while on vacation?

A: Ghostcards. (Post cards)

Q: What amusement park ride does a ghost like best?

A: The roller ghoster. (Roller coaster)

Q: What do you say to a ghost with three heads?

A: Hello, hello, hello.

Q: What's the difference between a ghost and a butcher?

A: One stays awake and the other weighs a steak.

KELLY, Charles. *Ghost Riddles*. Online. Jokes in English. Interesting Things for ESL Students. 2005. Copyright ©. Dostupné z: https://www.manythings.org/jokes/9973.html.

Tongue twisters

Shoeshine Shop
I saw Suzie sitting in a shoeshine shop.

Can you can a can?
Can you can a can as a canner can can a can.

Tom Threw Thumbtacks
Tom threw Tim three thumbtacks.

Medium Tongue Twisters

Fuzzy Wuzzy
Fuzzy Wuzzy was a bear. Fuzzy Wuzzy had no hair. Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't very fuzzy, was he?

Unique New York
You know New York, you need New York, you know you need unique New York.

I have got a date
I have got a date at a quarter to eight; I'll see you at the gate, so don't be late.

Two witches, two watches
If two witches would watch two watches, which witch would watch which watch?

Difficult Tongue Twisters

Doctor doctoring
When a doctor doctors a doctor, does the doctor doing the doctoring doctor as the doctor being doctored wants to be doctored or does the doctor doing the doctoring doctor as he wants to doctor?

PESCE, Claudia. *10 Top Tongue Twisters*. Online. Busy Teacher. 2007-2011. Dostupné: https://busyteacher.org/4050-top-10-tongue-twisters-true-teachers-treasure.html.

Jokes

1. **The Perfect Son.**
   A: I have the perfect son.
   B: Does he smoke?
   A: No, he doesn't.
   B: Does he drink whiskey?
   A: No, he doesn't.
   B: Does he ever come home late?
   A: No, he doesn't.
   B: I guess you really do have the perfect son. How old is he?
   A: He will be six months old next Wednesday.

2. Girl: You would be a good dancer except for two things.
   Boy: What are the two things?
   Girl: Your feet.

3. A family of mice were surprised by a big cat. Father Mouse jumped and and said, "Bow-wow!" The cat ran away. "What was that, Father?" asked Baby Mouse. "Well, son, that's why it's important to learn a second language."

4. My friend said he knew a man with a wooden leg named Smith.
   So I asked him "What was the name of his other leg?"

5. The doctor to the patient: 'You are very sick'
   The patient to the doctor: 'Can I get a second opinion?'
   The doctor again: 'Yes, you are very ugly too...'

6. A man goes to the doctor and says, "Doctor, wherever I touch, it hurts."
   The doctor asks, "What do you mean?"
   The man says, "When I touch my shoulder, it really hurts. If I touch my knee - OUCH! When I touch my forehead, it really, really hurts."
   The doctor says, "I know what's wrong with you - you've broken your finger!"

7. Patient: Doctor, I have a pain in my eye whenever I drink tea.
   Doctor: Take the spoon out of the mug before you drink.

8. Patient: Doctor! You've got to help me! Nobody ever listens to me. No one ever pays any attention to what I have to say.
   Doctor: Next please!

Idioms

Talk the Talk: Speaking Cards

Explain the meaning of each card and give examples of its usage

They were at each other's throats.	What makes your flesh crawl?	If you see eye to eye- that means?
Don't hold your breath?	Let's play it by ear.	He gave me the cold shoulder.
I hate his guts.	I was pulling my hair out.	I rolled my eyes.
She risked her neck to save that boy.	I've got a frog in my throat.	He never lifts a finger.
heart-breaking.	He bent over backwards.	I have a gut feeling that...
He's dead from the neck up.	My lips are sealed.	I've got a splitting headache.

Talk the Talk fun expressions

3. Horror movies make my flesh crawl. They are so scary and creepy.

4. They were at each other's throats all day long. What were they arguing about?

2. We never see eye to eye. We just agree to disagree

1. Don't hold your breath. A class trip to Bora Bora is not going to happen.

5. Let's play it by ear and see how we feel about that later.

6. He gave me the cold shoulder. He completely ignored me.

7. I was pulling my hair out because I couldn't assemble that stupid bookcase.

9. He bent over backwards to help me. I was so grateful for his assistance.

8. I hope I get that job. Cross your fingers!

10. He risked his neck-saving that boy from drowning.

11. Can't talk right now. I've got a frog in my throat.

12. She rolled her eyes when Jason (the nerd) boasted about how cool and popular he was-again!

13. He never lifts a finger. He doesn't do a single thing for anyone.

14. That's a heart-breaking story- What a tragedy!

15. His Uncle Phil is dead from the neck up. He's really dumb!

16. I have a gut feeling that he's lying about not taking money from the register.

17. I heard a hair-raising scream - panicked and ran for the nearest exit.

18. His new music video is mind blowing wait 'til you hear it. It's awesome.

19. My lips are sealed. I'll never tell another soul your secret.

20. I can't think now. I've got a splitting headache.

21. I got cold feet and didn't ask her to the dance.

22. Don't waste your breath- your parents won't ever let you go to the heavy metal concert.

23. That director had two hit movies- back to back.

24. Stop splitting hairs. Those two things are almost the same.

25. Construction work is back-breaking- do you really want to become a builder?

26. He washed his hands of the whole matter. He doesn't like to get involved.

27. That new supervisor is a thorn in my side- always making endless demands.

28. Stop pulling my leg. That can't be true. You're joking.

29. That's an eye-popping exhibit of futuristic flying machines.

30. I hate his guts. He's such a rotten guy. So mean!

31. That music is ear-splitting. Turn it down, please. I'm going deaf.

32. That is never going to happen. Over my dead body.

MISTAKE

33. I put my foot in my mouth when I called my new girlfriend by my old girlfriend's name.

36. I had to bite my tongue so I wouldn't call my boss a moron- and get fired.

34. A Ferrari Testarossa costs an arm and a leg. For millionaires only.

35. The new recruit got a tongue-lashing from the drill sergeant because he couldn't follow directions.

EN.ISLCOLLECTIVE.COM. *Funny Body Idioms Classroom Poster + Glossary*. Online. 2020. Dostupné z: https://en.islcollective.com/english-esl-worksheets/speaking-practice/warmer-filler-cooler/humor/funny-body-idioms-classroom-poster-glossary-cards/121324.

Video

First video
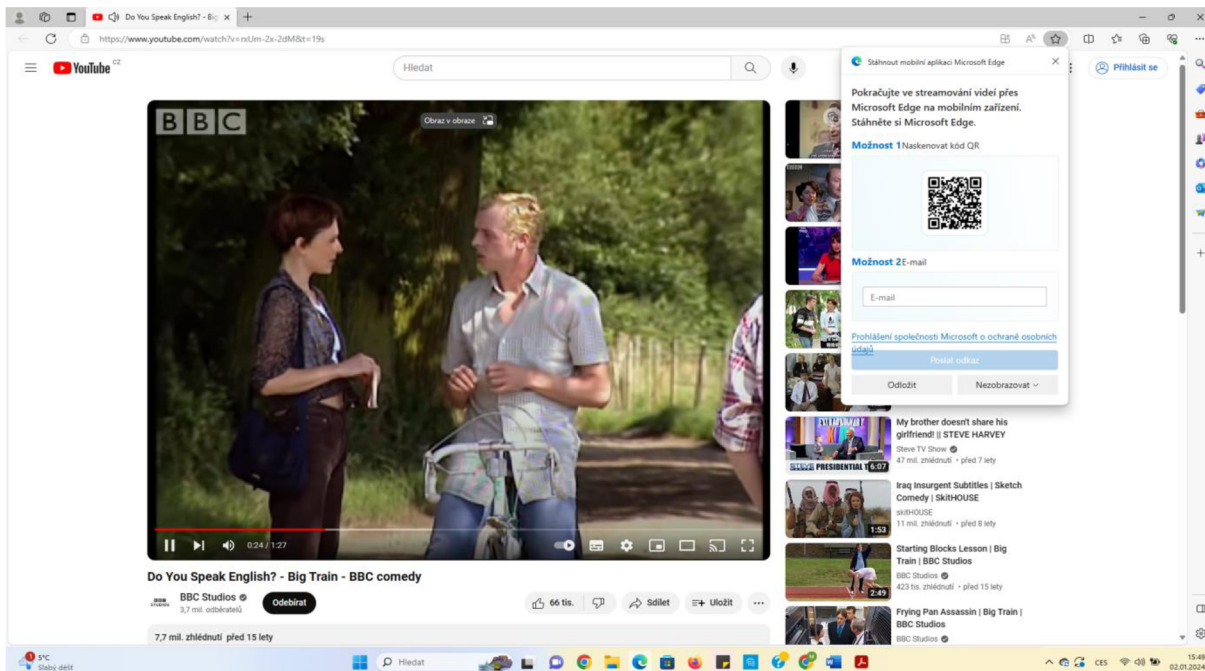
BIG TRAIN COMEDY. *Do You Speak English*? Online. BBC, 2008. Dostupné z:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rxUm-2x-2dM&t=19s.

Second video

FUNNY AFRICAN LEARNING ENGLISH. Online. 2020. Dostupné z:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Apz7nsR2YI.

Appendix 2 First questionnaire

1. Uveď prosím, co Tě baví na studiu angličtiny.

   Můžu se zdokonalit, poté se domluvím a rozumím...

2. Co z Tvého pohledu pravděpodobně ovlivní Tvou motivaci ke studiu?
   Ohodnoťte prosím následující na stupnici 1-3. (1 – není důležité, 2 - neutrální, 3 - velmi důležité)

   - Obsah lekce ① 2 3
   - Typ úkolů (aktivity používané ve třídě) 1 2 ③
   - Atmosféra ve třídě 1 ② 3
   - Učitel 1 2 ③

   Jiné (prosím upřesněte)

3. Jak byste popsal/a svůj postoj k humoru obecně?
   ~~Pozitivní~~
   Neutrální
   Negativní
   Nejsem si jistý

4. Myslíš si, že je vhodné, když učitel používá ve třídě humorné aktivity?
   ~~Ano, je to vhodné~~
   Není to vhodné
   Nejsem si jistý

5. "Jsem více motivován mluvit (rozmluvím se) v hodinách angličtiny, když můj učitel používá humor." (Vyber prosím jednu možnost).
   ~~Souhlasím~~
   Neutrální
   Nesouhlasím
   Nejsem si jistý

6. Uveď prosím důvod k otázce 5.

   Když se společně nad tématem zasmějeme, můžeme se o rozpovídat a tím pádem mluvíme více a častěji.

7. „Humor použitý během hodiny angličtiny zvyšuje můj zájem o učení." (Vyber prosím jednu možnost)

   Souhlasím
   ~~Neutrální~~
   Nesouhlasím
   Nejsem si jistý

Appendix 3 Second and third questionnaire

Která aktivita se Ti zdála humornější a proč?

2.

Která aktivita Tě více motivovala k tomu, aby jsi se <u>zapojil do rozhovoru</u> se spolužákem/spolužáky?

2.

Humornější aktivita mi pomohla k (můžeš vybrat více možností):

(a) zapamatování si slovní zásoby

(b) porozumění gramatické oblasti

(c) upevnění kamarádských vztahů se spolužáky

d) jiné (upřesni)

VIDEO 1

JOKES 2

GHOST RIDDLES 3

BODY IDIOMS 4

TONGUE TWISTERS 5

Appendix 4 Evaluation of first questionnaire results

Fifth grade

Please, state what motivates you to learn English.

- Nothing
- Activities
- Playing video games
- Hollidays, communication with foreigners
- Teacher
- Entertainment
- Simplicity
- Games in the classroom
- Working in groups
- Pronunciation
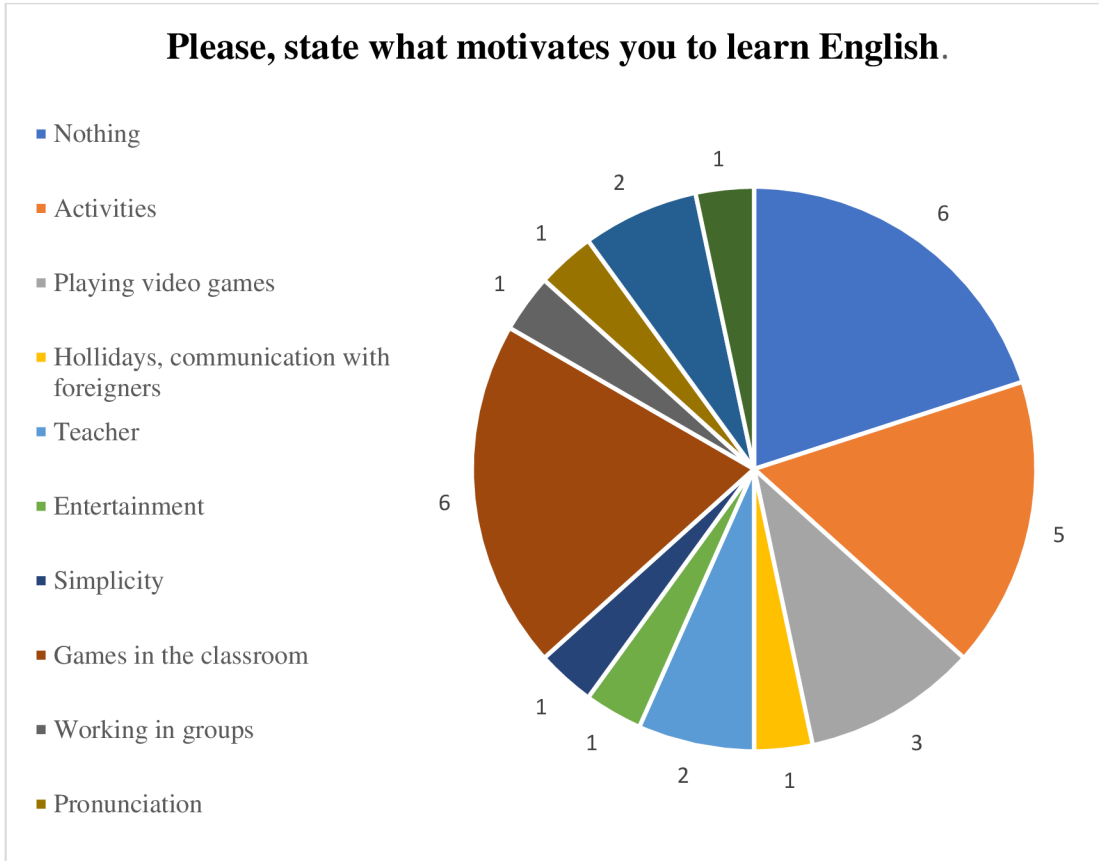
Figure 12: Question 1 - 5th grade

Question 2: Please, rate the following on the scale of 1-3. (1-not important, 2-neutral, 3-very important)

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Content of a lesson	1	12	7
Type of tasks (activities used in a classroom)	0	12	8
Learning environment (atmosphere)	0	10	10
Teacher	1	1	18
Other (please, specify)	16	1	3
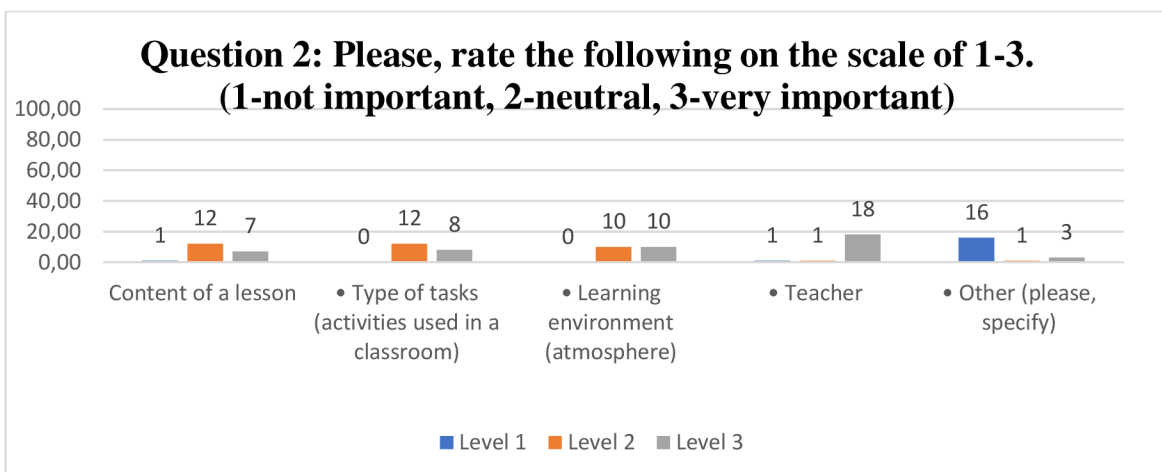
Figure 13: Question 2 - 5th grade

Question 3: How would you describe your attitude to humour in general?

1   1   0

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative
- Not sure

18

Figure 14: Question 3 - 5th grade

4. Do you think it is appropriate for a teacher to use humorous activities in English classes?

- Yes, it is appropriate
- No, it is not appropriate
- Not sure
- 4. čtvrt.

Figure 15:Question 4 for the fifth grade

5. "I am more motivated to speak (talk myself out) in English classes when my teacher uses humour." (Please choose one option).

1   0

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Not sure
- Other

19

Figure 16:Question 5 for the fifth grade

6.   Please give a reason for question 5.

- The whole class gets talking
- The class more fun
- Thanks to the teacher
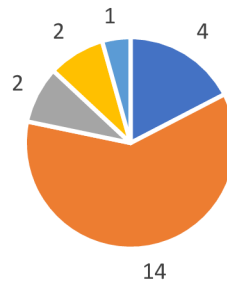- Type of activity
- Feeling comfortable

Figure 17: Question 6 for the fifth grade

7. "Humour used during English lessons increases my interest in learning." (Please select one option)

- I agree
- Neutral
- I disagree
- I am not sure
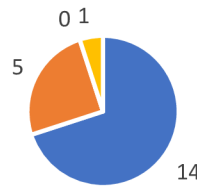
Figure 18:Question 7 for the fifth grade

8. If you agreed with question 7, please indicate in which area (e.g. memorization of vocabulary, motivation to speak English, grammar).

- remembering vocabulary
- understanding grammar
- motivation to speak
- better mood
- better to learn

Figure 19:Question 8 for the fifth grade

9. "I am more willing to attend a lesson where humor is used." (Choose one option)

- I agree
- Neutral
- I disagree
- I do not know

Figure 20:Question 9 for the fifth grade

Seventh grade

Please, state what motivates you to learn English

- Nothing
- Activities
- Teacher
- Humour
- Simplicity
- Games in the classroom
- Self-improvement
- Interesting facts
- Text translation
- Learning vocabulary
- Projects

2 1 1 1 2 6 6 10 1 1 2 8 10
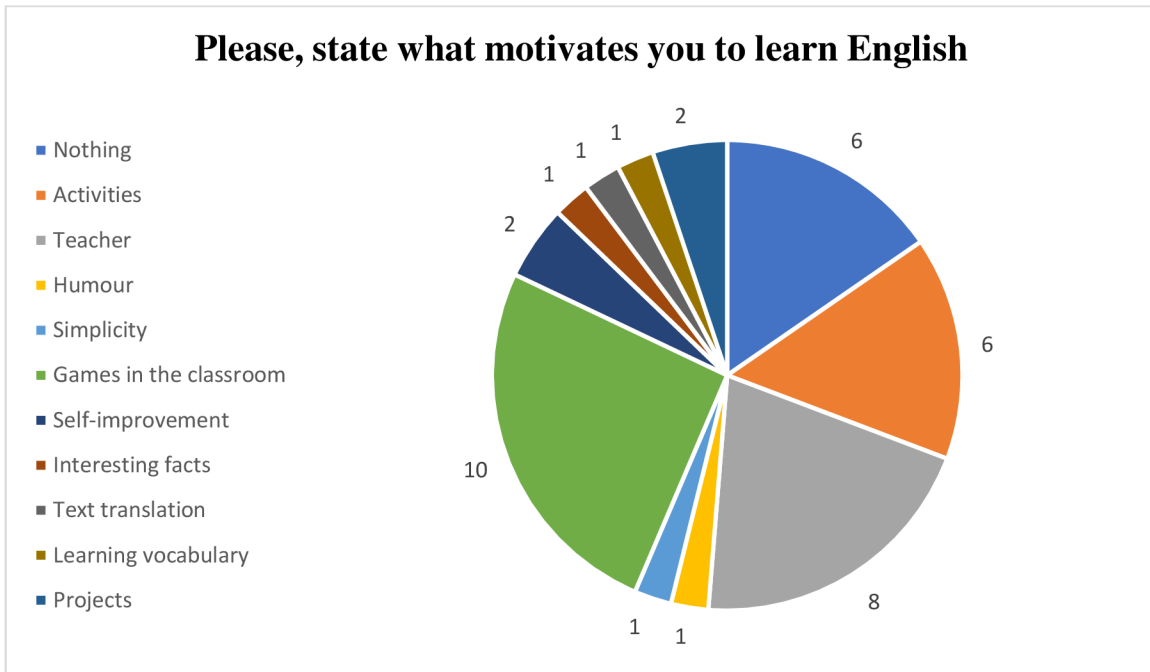
Figure 21:Question 1 for the seventh grade

Question 2: Please, rate the following on the scale of 1-3. (1-not important, 2-neutral, 3-very important)

	Content of a lesson	• Type of tasks (activities used in a classroom)	• Learning environment (atmosphere)	• Teacher	• Other (please, specify)
Level 1	6	4	4	2	0
Level 2	10	13	10	11	0
Level 3	3	6	12	11	3

■ Level 1 ■ Level 2 ■ Level 3
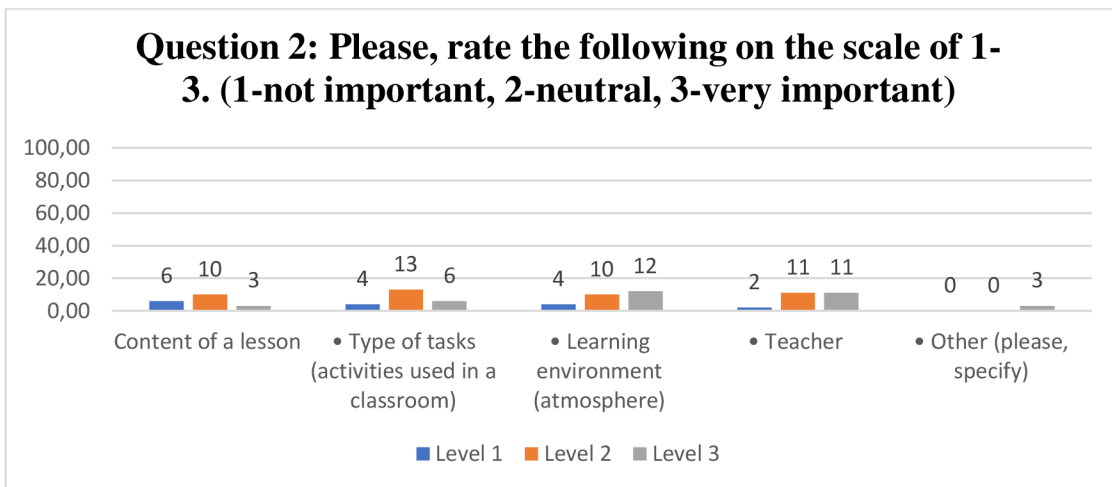
Figure 22:Question 2 for the seventh grade

3. How would you describe your attitude to humour in general?

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

0 10 17

Figure 23:Question 3 for the seventh grade

106

4. Do you think it is appropriate for a teacher to use humorous activities in English classes?

- Yes, it is appropriate
- No, it is not appropriate
- Not sure

3
0
24

Figure 24: Question 4 for the seventh grade

5. "I am more motivated to speak (talk myself out) in English classes when my teacher uses humour." (Please choose one option).
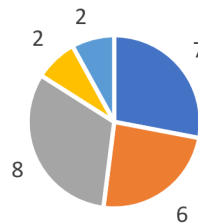
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Not sure
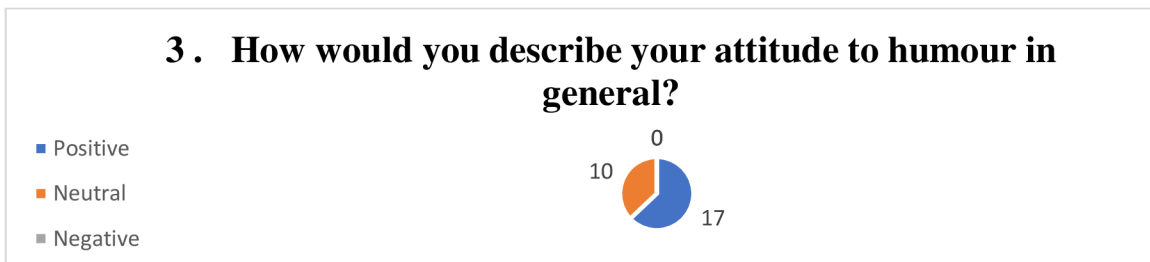
1
5
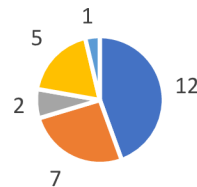2
12
7

Figure 25:Question 5 for the seventh grade

6. Please give a reason for question 5.

- The whole class gets talking
- The class is more fun
- I do not know
- I do not like to speak English
- I never start to speak
- I depends on humour
- The lesson is better after using humour
- I must speak with or without using humour

1
1
2
5
2
3
1
1
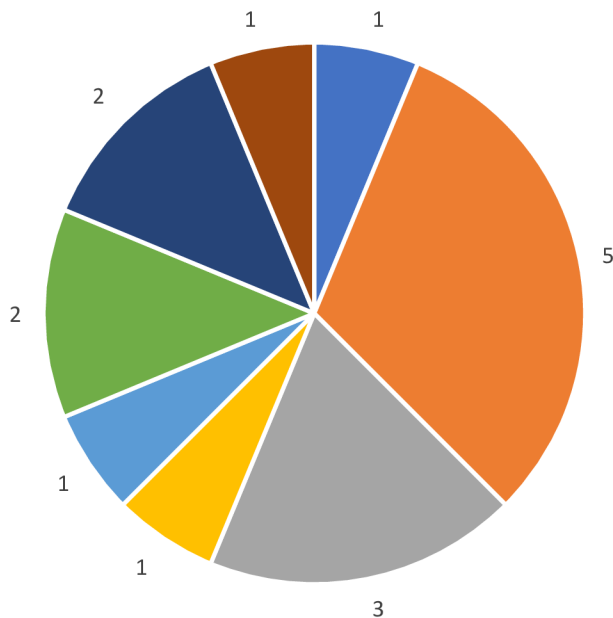
Figure 26:Question 6 for the seventh grade

Question 7: "Humour used during English lessons increases my interest in learning." (Please select one option)

- I agree
- Neutral
- I disagree

2 2 8

15

Figure 27: Question 7 for the seventh grade

Question 8: If you agreed with question 7, please indicate in which area (e.g. memorization of vocabulary, motivation to speak English, grammar).

- remembering vocabulary
- understanding grammar
- motivation to speak
- a bit of everything

1 1 3

7

Figure 28: Question 8 for the seventh grade

Question 9: "I am more willing to attend a lesson where humor is used." (Choose one option)

- I agree
- Neutral
- I disagree
- I do not know

1 1 9

13

Figure 29:Question 9 for the seventh grade

Eighth grade

Question 1: Please state what motivates you to learn English

- Nothing
- Games
- Crosswords
- Teacher
- Everything
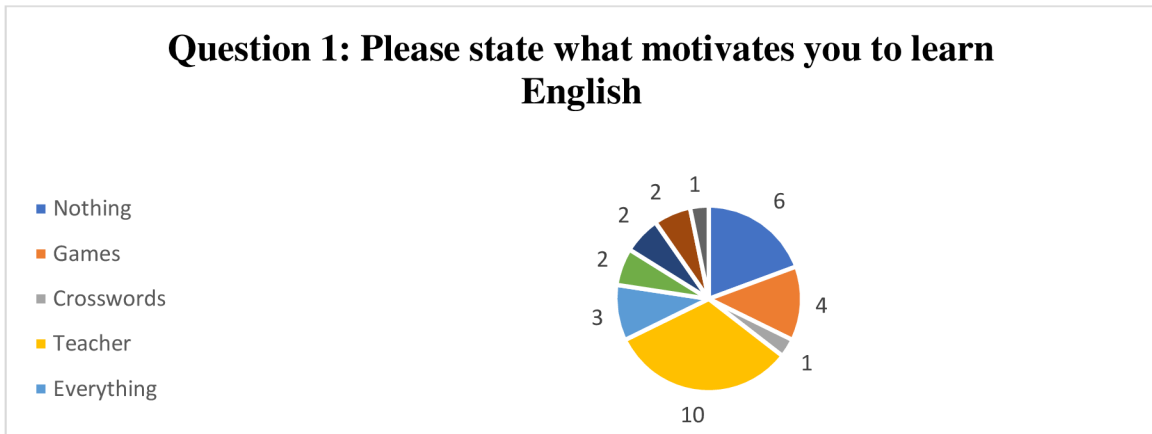
Figure 30: Question 1 for the eight grade

Question 2: What is likely to influence your motivation to study?
Please, rate on the scale 1-3

Content of a lesson, Type of tasks (activities used in a classroom), Learning environment (atmosphere), Teacher

Level 1, Level 2, Level 3
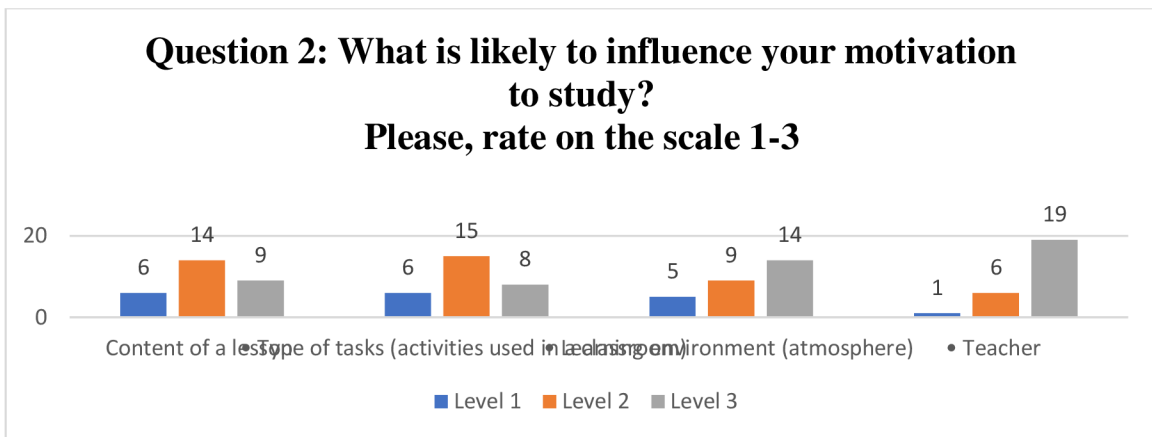
Figure 31:Question 2 for the eight grade

Question 3: How would you describe your attitude to humour in general?

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative
- Not sure

Figure 32: Question 3 for the eight grade

Question 4: Do you think it is appropriate for a teacher to use humorous activities in English classes?

- Yes, it is appropriate
- No, it is not appropriate
- Not sure

1 3 0

25

Figure 33:Question 4 for the eighth grade

Question 5: "I am more motivated to speak (talk myself out) in English classes when my teacher uses humour." (Please choose one option).

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Not sure

0

9

11

1

8

Figure 34:Question 5 for the eighth grade

Question 6: Please give a reason for question 5.

- class is more fun
- depending on mood
- talk myself out of it
- I like humour
- I do not like humour
- I never speak if I do not have to
- it depends on type of humour used
- I learn better when I am in good mood
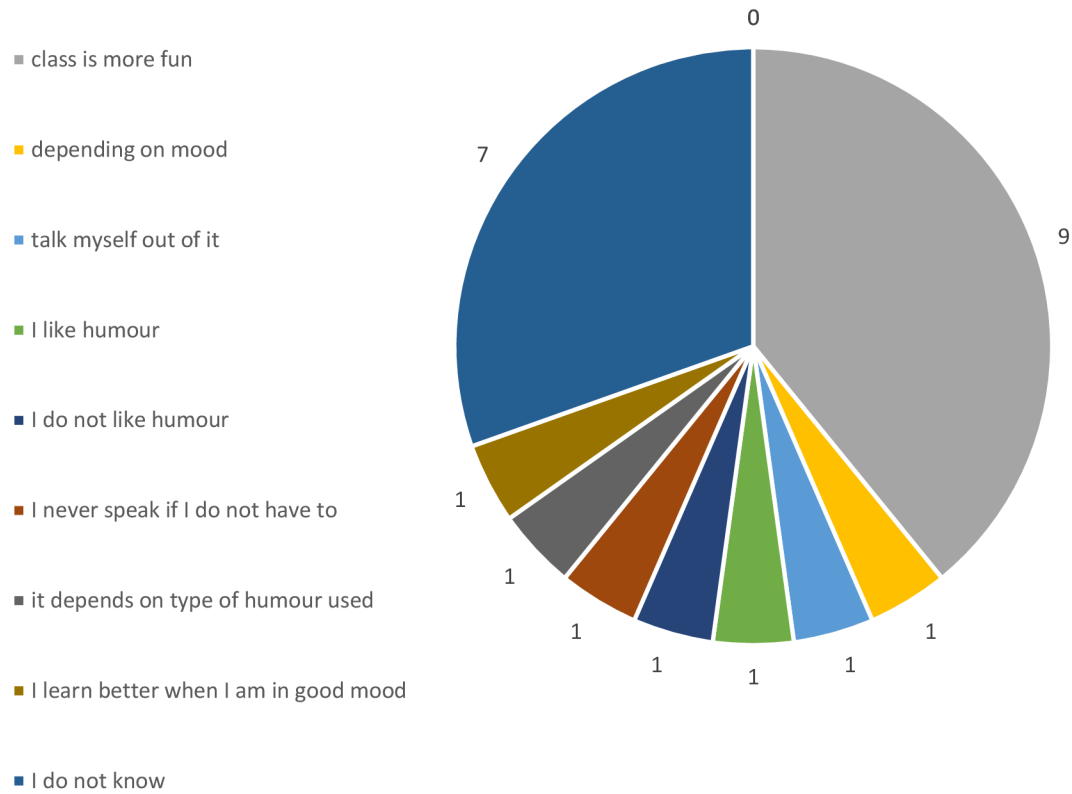- I do not know

0

7

9

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

Figure 35: Question 6 for the eighth grade

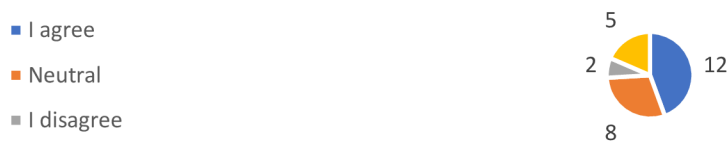# Question 7: "Humour used during English lessons increases my interest in learning." (Please select one option)

- I agree
- Neutral
- I disagree

5

2

12

8

Figure 36 :Question 7 for the eighth grade

111

Question 8: If you agreed with question 7, please indicate in which area (e.g. memorization of vocabulary, motivation to speak English, grammar).

- remembering vocabulary
- understanding grammar
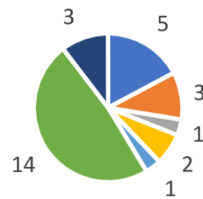- motivation to speak
- better to learn

3   5
3
1
14   2
1

Figure 37: Question 8 for the eight grade

Question 9: "I am more willing to attend a lesson where humor is used." (Choose one option)
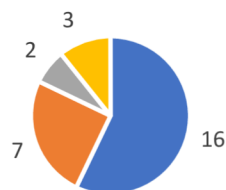
- I agree
- Neutral
- I disagree
- I do not know

3
2
7   16

Figure 38 : Question 9 for the eight grade

112

Ninth grade

Question 1: Please, state what motivates you to learn English

- Teacher
- Learning new things
- Films
- Games
- Music
- Social networks
- Self-development
- socializing
- The fact that I can do something
- Nothing
- I like humour
- Motivation to talk
- Conversation
- No response
- "I don't like English"
- "I enjoy everything"
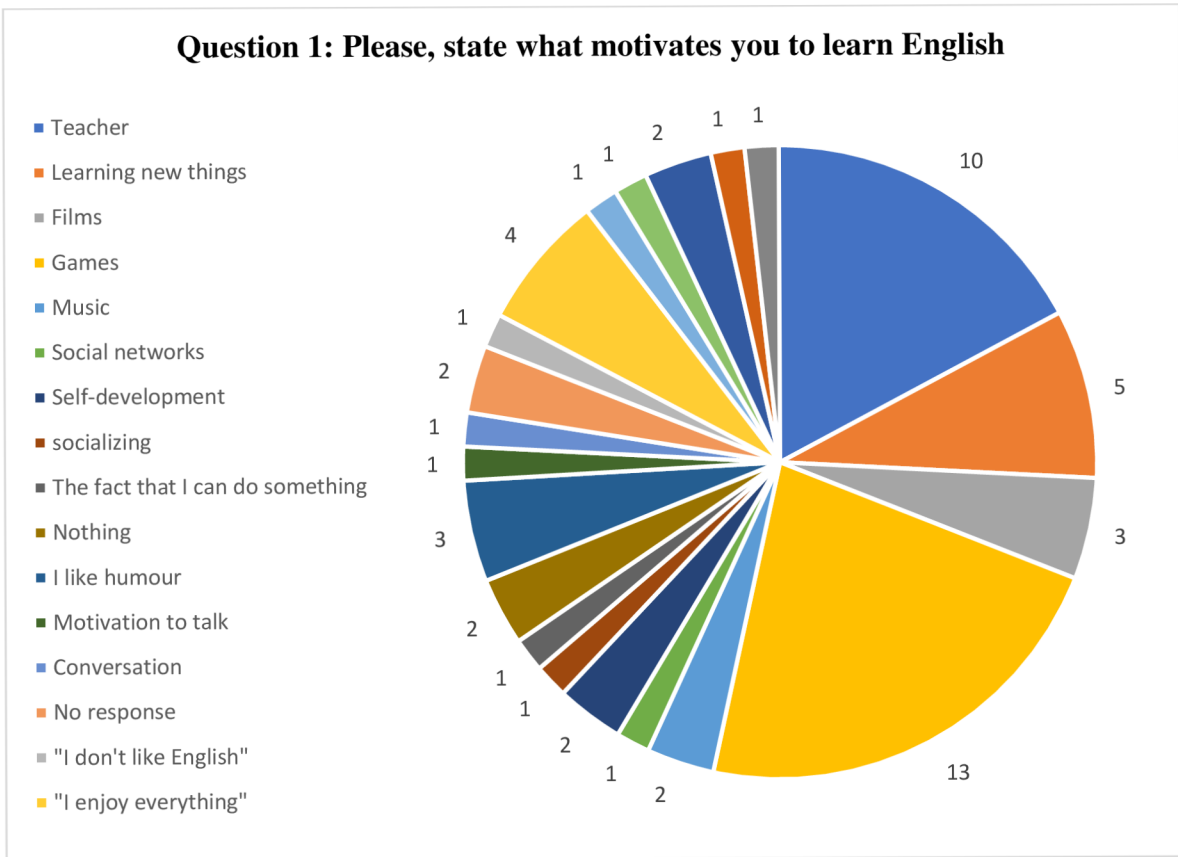
Figure 39: Question 1 for the ninth grade

Question 2: What is likely to influence your motivation to study Please, rate the folowing on the scale of 1-3.

	Content of a lesson	• Type of tasks (activities used in a classroom)	• Learning environment (atmosphere)	• Teacher
Level 1	15	11	9	3
Level 2	23	20	18	13
Level 3	6	11	18	29
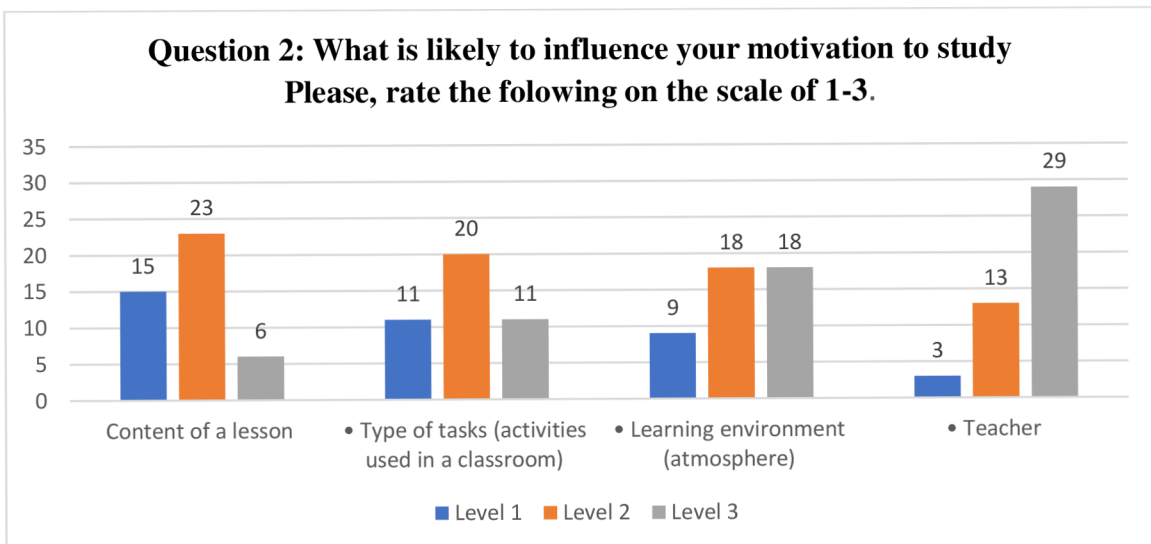
Figure 40: Question 2 for the ninth grade

113

Question 3:   How would you describe your attitude to humour in general?

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative
- Not sure

1 2

6

36

Figure 41: Question 3 for the ninth grade

Question 4:   Do you think it is appropriate for a teacher to use humorous activities in English classes?

2 4

39

- Yes, it is appropriate
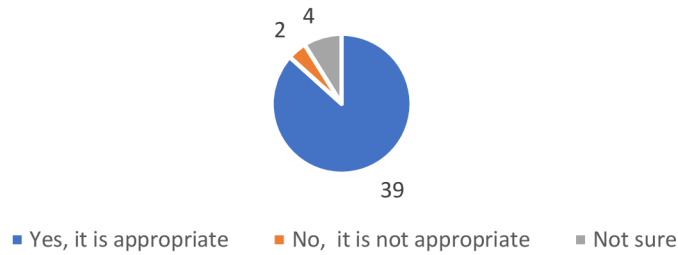- No, it is not appropriate
- Not sure

Figure 42: Question 4 for the ninth grade

Question 5: "I am more motivated to speak (talk myself out) in English classes when my teacher uses humour." (Please choose one option).

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Not sure

4

6

17

18

Figure 43: Question 5 for the ninth grade

Question 6:   Please give a reason for question 5.

- when we can talk together about a topic and therefore talk more often
- I like humour
- the lesson is more humorous
- better atmosphere
- it's variable
- not everyone knows how to use appropriate jokes
- I'm not sure
- no answer

Figure 44: Question 6 for the ninth grade

Question 7: "Humour used during English lessons increases my interest in learning." (Please select one option)

- I agree
- Neutral
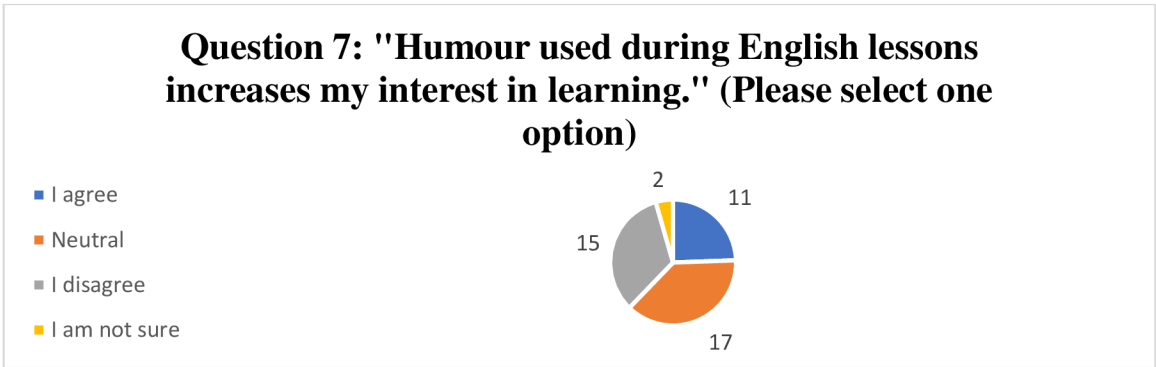- I disagree
- I am not sure

Figure 45: Question 7 for the ninth grade

115

Question 8: If you agreed with question 7, please indicate in which area (e.g. memorization of vocabulary, motivation to speak English, grammar).

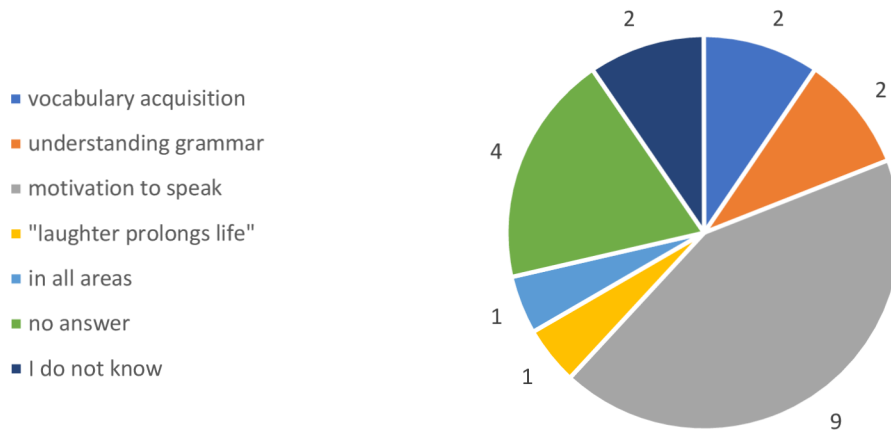*Figure 46: Question 8 for the ninth grade*

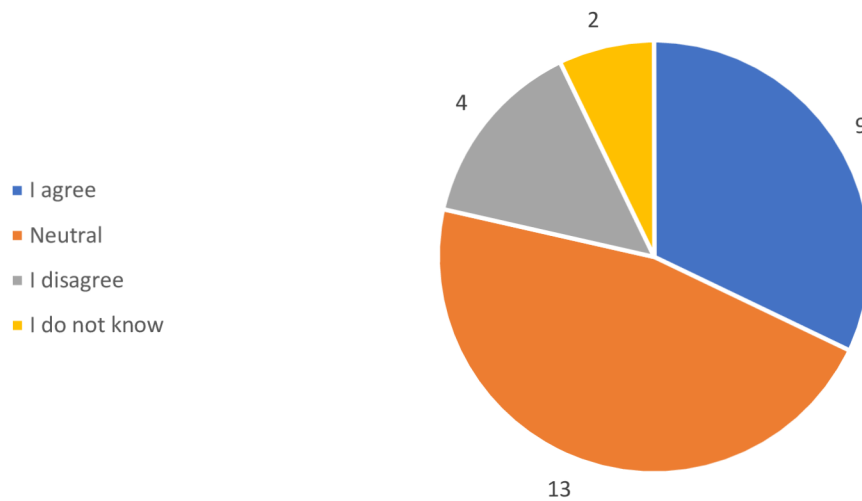**Question 9: "I am more willing to attend a lesson where humor is used." (Choose one option)**

Figure 47: Question 9 for the ninth grade

Appendix 5: An interview with teachers

Genereal questions

1. How long have you been teaching English?
2. What is your attitude towards humour in general?
3. What do you think will influence a student´s motivation to speak in a foreign language? What will activate them to speak?

   Specific questions
4. What do you think about the role of humour in ELT in general?
5. What sort of humour activities do you use in your classes? (jokes, sitcoms, riddles, puns).
6. What is your objective while teaching these activities?
7. What do you think about using humour as a tool to promote students´ speaking skills?
8. What effects on students´ motivation do you see after using humour as a teaching strategy in your lessons?

Rozhovor s učitelem A

D – dotazující

1. **„Jak dlouho učíte?"**

„Učím 5 let."

2. **„Jaký máte názor na humor obecně?"**

„Humor je rozhodně potřebný."

3. **„Co podle Vás ovlivní motivaci studentů, aby začali mluvit anglicky. Co je zaktivizuje?"**

„Motivací mluvit může být to, když mají pevnou půdu pod nohami, tzn. jsou schopni o daném tématu hovořit, protože je zajímá, a mají dostatečně osvojenu slovní zásobu. Studenti jsou obecně v anglické konverzaci zdrženlivější, protože se obávají, že udělají chybu. Dle mého i humor může být dostatečným aktivizujícím činitelem, který prolomí ony pomyslné bariéry, a namotivuje studenta k nějakému výkonu. Pokud vyučující zvolí vhodné způsoby, jak studenty rozesmát, pobavit, uvolnit, tak si myslím, že se pak nebudou soustředit tolik na své nedostatky a pokusí se třeba i humorným způsobem reagovat (budou danou aktivitu brát jako hru

či zábavu). Dále pak samozřejmě motivaci studentů ovlivňuje jejich úroveň, které v anglickém jazyce dosahují, a obecně jejich zájem. Obecně studenty ve škole aktivizuje učitel, nejlépe nějakou aktivitou, která jim dává smysl anebo jim přijde zábavná."

4. **„Co si myslíte o humoru v ESL hodinách obecně?"**

„Myslím si, že humor je příjemným zpestřením hodin, ovšem je potřeba správně zvolit jeho formu, aby korespondovala s charakteristikou žáků. To může být mnohdy obtížnější, než se zdá. To, co učiteli přijde humorné, mohou žáci vnímat jinak. U starších žáků (např. na SŠ) může učitel dle mého využít i sofistikovanější formy humoru, které mohou vést k zamyšlení, kdy si žáci řeknou, jak chytré to vlastně je (různé slovní hříčky apod.). Mladší žáci od humorných aktivit očekávají spíše pobavení, smích. Učitel musí zhodnotit, co by na žáky mohlo působit pozitivně, vybrat něco, co jim bude blízké; humor, který pochopí apod."

5. **"Jaký druh humorných aktivit v hodinách používáte?"**
"Např. aktivita „Shipwreck" – žáci musejí z potápějící se lodi vyhodit dva lidi, aby se zbytek zachránil, a musejí se dohodnout a vysvětlit své důvody)." Dále pak používám problem solving activity."

6. **"Za jakým účelem tyto aktivity používáte?"**

„K procvičování právě probíraných gramatických jevů používám různé aktivity zaměřené např. na komunikaci mezi žáky (ve dvojicích nebo skupinkách), které vybízejí ke kreativitě – žáci např. vymýšlejí co nejlepší odpovědi na řadu absurdních otázek, což často přidává celé aktivitě humorný nádech. Dále třeba k posílení spolupráce a argumentace se žáci ve skupinkách musejí společně dohodnout na nějakém konkrétním řešení."

7. **„Co si myslíte o používání humoru jako výukové strategii k posilování (rozvíjení) mluvicích schopností?"**

„Myslím si, že využití humoru je v tomto ohledu žádoucí. Nejenže na žáky může působit pozitivně po psychologické stránce, tedy zbaví je případně ostychu, zlepší náladu, zvýší soustředění, ale také zábavným způsobem pomáhá žákům interagovat mezi sebou, a tedy pozitivně rozvíjet mluvící schopnosti."

8. **„Jaké změny v motivaci pozorujete po použití humorných aktivit (jako výukové strategii) ve svých hodinách?"**

„Myslím si, že vhodně zvolený humor může žáky podnítit k aktivitě a zvýšit jejich motivaci. U svých žáků pozoruji chuť se zapojit, předvést se a pobavit někoho dalšího. Dále si myslím, že humorné aktivity žákům lépe pomohou si zažít probírané učivo, zopakovat si jej apod. Kromě učiva samotného pak mohou žáci humornou formou posilovat kreativitu, spolupráci, kompetence k mluvení."

Rozhovor s učitelem B

„Jak dlouho učíte?"

„Asi 15 let."

1. **„Jaký máte názor na humor obecně?"**
„Je důležitý pro odlehčení některých situací."

2. **„Co podle Vás ovlivní motivaci studentů, aby začali mluvit anglicky. Co je zaktivizuje?"**
„Pokud na ně učitel mluví anglicky, musí se snažit anglicky odpovědět. Děti baví, když si můžou klást otázky navzájem."

3. „Co si myslíte o humoru v ESL hodinách obecně?"
„Děti humor v hodinách určitě baví a hodiny jsou tím veselejší."

4. **„Jaký druh humorných aktivit v hodinách používáte a za jakým účelem?"**
„Já osobně humor příliš nevyužívám, možná během pantomimy se děti vždy pobaví."
    „Proč ty tyto aktivity nevyužíváte?
„Jelikož mi na ně nezbývá moc čas."

5. **„Za jakým účelem tyto aktivity používáte?"**
„Otázka zodpovězena v předchozí otázce."

6. „Co si myslíte o používání humoru jako výukové strategii k posilování (rozvíjení) mluvicích schopností?"

„Určitě je to přínosná strategie, pokud   se děti baví, uvolní se a lépe komunikují."

7. „Jaké změny v motivaci pozorujete po použití humorných aktivit (jako výukové strategii) ve svých hodinách?"

„Zdá se mi, že se děti uvolní a lépe pak pracují."

Rozhovor s učitelem C

1. „Jak dlouho učíte?"

„12 let"

2. Jaký máte názor na humor obecně?

„Určitě je potřeba. Bez humoru je těžké žít."

3. „Co podle Vás ovlivní motivaci studentů, aby začali mluvit anglicky. Co je zaktivizuje?"

„Dobrá nálada, příjemný učitel. Děti by měly být uvolněné. Nesmí se bát dělat chyby."

4. „Co si myslíte o humoru v ESL hodinách obecně?"

„Záleží na povaze žáků. Někdy humor pomůže, ale jsou i skupiny, kde se k tomu musí přistupovat opatrně."

D: „Můžete to více upřesnit?"

„Záleží, jaké žáky učím, zda by určitý druh humoru pochopili, jejich celkový přístup k učení, zda by v konečném důsledku mohl pomoci k nějaké změně. Učitel by měl být opatrný při výběru humorných aktivit, zásadně jen pozitivní humor, vyhýbat se sarkasmům a černému humoru."

5. „Jaký druh humorných aktivit v hodinách používáte?"

„Pantomima – dítě předvádí nebo i slovně popisuje slovo, zbytek třídy hádá
Soutěže. Čtení vtipných textů".

6. **„Za jakým účelem tyto aktivity používáte?"**

„Pantomimu používám zvlášť u mladších žáků, aby si odpočinuli od psaní, aby je to více bavilo, je to i metoda, která napomáhá nenásilnému zapamatování si nové slovní zásoby (děti se učí a ani o tom neví…)."

Čtení vtipných textů a následná konverzace (ale tady se musí vybrat vhodná skupina žáků, někdy je efekt přesně opačný, často to žáci považují spíše za trapné...)."

7. **„Co si myslíte o používání humoru jako výukové strategii k posilování (rozvíjení) mluvicích schopností?"**

„Pokud se používá s mírou, tak je to v pořádku. Pokud se to ale stane pravidlem, může to narušovat morálku třídy – opět záleží na skupině, někde to jde častěji, někde je to "na tenkém ledě" (třeba sportovní třídy s převahou kluků – může to sklouznout k vulgarismům, narážkám na nevhodná témata, snížení kázně...). Ale obecně je to dobrý způsob, jak uvolnit atmosféru ve třídě, navázat dobré vztahy s žáky – tím se budou chtít zapojovat, budou se méně bát (což je i předpoklad k rozvíjení mluvících schopností). Žáci se musí cítit dobře, mít důvěru k učiteli a tomu humor napomáhá."

8. **„Jaké změny v motivaci pozorujete po použití humorných aktivit (jako výukové strategii) ve svých hodinách?"**

„Některé to začne více bavit, lépe si zapamatují, více se hlásí a chtějí se zapojit. Někteří to ale zase naopak berou jako signál "přestáváme se učit" a "nemusím dávat pozor" a nezapojují se vůbec, protože to nepovažují za nutné – vždyť jde jen o "zábavu".

Rozhovor s učitelem D

1. **„Jak dlouho učíte"?**

    18 let

2. **„Jaký máte názor na humor obecně"?**

    „Ano, je důležitý."

    D: „Můžete to prosím upřesnit?"

Humor může být považován za důležitou součást našeho života. Pomáhá nám to zlepšit svůj duševní stav a snížit stres.

3. „Co podle Vás ovlivní motivaci studentů, aby začali mluvit anglicky. Co je zaktivizuje"?

„S mluvením dost bojujeme. Někdy pustím nějaké video, to je trochu nabudí. Jinak požíváme hry jako kvízy, pexeso, PC, Wordwall. myslím, že i učitel může do jisté míry ovlivnit motivaci studentů nebo aktivitami, které si zvolí."

4. „Co si myslíš o humoru v ESL hodinách obecně?"

„Děti to baví. Zahrajeme si nějakou scénku. Když se mohou zasmát, tak je to baví."

5.   „Jaký druh humorných aktivit v hodinách používáte?"

„Letos jsem ještě nepoužívala."

6. „Za jakým účelem byste tyto aktivity použila, kdybyste měla tu možnost?"

„Pro zpestření hodiny."

D: „Napadá Vás ještě nějaký účel?"

„Obecně se humor využívá k vytvoření příjemné a uvolněné atmosféry v hodinách. Také může pomoci přilákat pozornost studentů a udržet je aktivní a angažované. Používání humoru je může rovněž pomoci naučit se nová slova, fráze nebo gramatiku, protože si je budou pamatovat jako součást zábavného okamžiku."

7. „Co si myslíš o používání humoru jako výukové strategii k posilování (rozvíjení) mluvicích schopností?"

„Nemám na to názor, bez slovní zásoby to je těžké."

8. „Jaké změny v motivaci pozorujete po použití humorných aktivit (jako výukové strategii) ve svých hodinách?"

„Když je to baví, tak se více snaží a jsou uvolněnější. Mojí žáci ale neumí pracovat s textem, je to katastrofa."

Rozhovor s učitelem E

1. „Jak dlouho učíte?"

„Asi 5 let."

2. „Jaký máte názor na humor obecně?"

„Humor je super. Mám ráda, když se lidi smějí". Humor pomáhá k odlehčení situací. Mám ráda, když se věci otočí do legrace".

3. „Co podle Vás ovlivní motivaci studentů, aby začali mluvit anglicky. Co je zaktivizuje?"

„Co platí na studenty, aby mluvili? Záleží na temperamentu žáka, pokud jsou ukecaní. Vhodné jsou „self-centered questions", jelikož zapojí své vlastní zážitky, vlastní zkušenosti."

4. „Co si myslíte o humoru v ESL hodinách obecně?"

„Hodina není tak upjatá, je uvolněnější, uvolněná atmosféra, která následně vede k větší komunikaci."

5. „Jaký druh humorných aktivit v hodinách používáte a za jakým účelem?"

„Zatím jsem humorné aktivity nepoužila. Vlastně jednou jsem použila vtipné video. Ne vždy ale děti chápou vtip. Znám Lost Pinguin"

6. „Za jakým účelem tyto aktivity používáte?"

„Otázka zodpovězena v předchozí otázce."

7. „Co si myslíte o používání humoru jako výukové strategii k posilování (rozvíjení) mluvicích schopností?"

„Těžko říct, jelikož humor moc nepožívám. Schválně se ptám humorně, abych docílila mluvení. Například u role-play-prodavač/zákazník se děti dobře baví a smějí se. Děti si sami dokážou vytvořit humornou situaci. Komiksy jsou rovněž zábavné, děti to mají rády."

8. „Jaké změny v motivaci pozorujete po použití humorných aktivit (jako výukové strategii) ve svých hodinách?"

"Jsou děti, které se u toho vyblbnou a tím pádem jsou i vice aktivní".