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**Learner's Attitude Toward Teacher's Use of the  
Sense of Humor in Daily English Classroom**

Dissertation submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of *Master* in Literature and Civilization.

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## **Dedication**

This humble work is dedicated to my lovely parents whom they were always patient, supporting and encouraging me through the changes and phases I have been through.

I also want to thank my brothers and sisters for their unconditional love and support.

Finally, I want to thank my friends and colleagues for being there for me.

## **Acknowledgments**

This thesis has offered us a context to develop our perspectives, insights, and understanding. It has not only been a pleasure to do something that is inspiring, but also to meet inspiring people who are the main reason this Thesis is now finished.

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Finally, I would like to express the deepest gratitude to my family. You have brought balance and emotion to my life and supported me through intermittent times of uncertainty. Because of you, I have learned joy, happiness, and a lot about the true nature of whole-hearted learning. I dedicate this thesis to you.

## **Abstract**

The present study investigates the learner attitude toward teacher's use of sense of humor in daily English classes. The central problem underlying this investigation is to know what they feel and think about the daily use of the sense of humor of their teacher's in EFL classes. the main cause behind this problem is the traditional methods of teaching, and how teacher can reduce stress and tension, and foster a more comfortable classroom atmosphere. Thus, this research aim is to describe how students feel about the use of the sense of humor within English classes. Then, in order to collect data about the attitude of English student within English classes, a survey was designed and delivered students in the department of English, faculty of letters, languages and art, Dr Tahar Moulay University. After that, the research provides an analysis for the collected data and a discussion of the main results, which have shown the significant of using sense of humor as a pedagogical tool in daily English classes. Finally, some suggestions and recommendations that may help in improving the teaching-learning process of the English language.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

**EFL** English as a Foreign Language

**IHPT** Instructional Humor Processing Theory

**IRT** Incongruity-Resolution Theory

**ELM** Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion

**LLS** The Learning Loss Scale

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## **General Introduction**

It is well known that our life is highly affected by sense of humor, which plays an important role in today's human society development. Based on this fact, it is indispensable to take advantage of the several benefits of sense of humor in many aspects of human life, especially in facilitating and aiding the task of English language education.

Student trying to learn English as a foreign language need further support from teacher, because he has an important job to effectively instruct, guide, develop, and challenge student to perform at levels student may not think possible before enter the real world. For doing such tasks, they are in need of using various tools that can help them learn the language easily and effectively.

When teachers use sense of humor in the classroom, students receive benefits such as improved learning. By incorporating various strategies of sense of humor in the classroom, teachers create a welcoming environment for students. this environment creates a positive climate and gives the teacher an advantage when delivering lectures, leading discussions, and building rapport with their students. Moreover, using sense of humor in the classroom helps ease tension and stress, and makes the class more attentive.

The aim of this research work is to survey the effectiveness of sense of humor in improving learning and the student attitude toward teacher's use of sense of humor in daily English classroom.

In this research, we want to describe the learner's attitude toward the daily use of sense of humor by English teacher in learning English language, and the research question explored in this study

What are the learner's attitudes toward the teacher's use of sense of humor within daily English classroom?

The research hypothesis that was derived suggests that the teacher's sense of humor has an impact on the learner's attitude.

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## **Chapter One:**

# **Overview of the Sense of Humor in the Classroom**

## 1. The Review of Literature

### 1.1.Introduction:

Teachers in the classroom have an important job to effectively instruct, guide, and challenge student to make them perform in a higher level. In this chapter, humor is introduced as a communicative tool used in the classroom, which is highly important due to its efficacy in improving both student attitude toward learning, and in establishing a positive atmosphere in the classroom to improve the Teaching process.

In addition, humor helps flourish the teacher-student relationship both inside and outside the classroom. We shed the light on different types of humor; the appropriate, the inappropriate, and the use of verbal and nonverbal immediacy. In addition, on how students perceive cognitive learning in the classroom. Backing up this work with evidences by displaying the Instructional Humor Processing Theory (IHPT) that was created by Wanzer, et al. (2010) that consist of the following theories, the Incongruity-Resolution Theory (LaFave, Haddad, & Maesen, 196),, the Disposition Theory (Zillman & Cantor, 1996), and the theory of the Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984). To explain and assist on how to use effectively humor in the classroom? . Humor in the learning process displays several benefits in the psychological, educational, sociological, and physiological sides of students in the classroom. Moreover, this work provides Guidelines for Using Humor in the classroom for teachers to facilitate and improve the learning process.

## 1.2. Humor in the Classroom

Humor assists in creating a friendly atmosphere in classrooms because it can create funny emotions. Robinson (1983) researched humor and expressed that what is “learned with laughter is learned well” (p. 121). Moreover, according to Cosner (1959) humor and laughter were similar to an invitation to start a conversation because they assisted in decreasing social distance. Previous research has found that humor in the classroom caused students to feel more at ease, created engagement, and displayed to the students that the teacher is a regular person (Neuliep, 1991). Minchew (2001) found that humor was a teaching tool that engaged students, to make the classroom environment livelier, and enhanced learning. Berk’s research in 1996 concluded that humor could break down barriers so that teachers and students can better communicate. Similar to Berk’s study, humor was found as a tool that helped reduce stress and anxiety in students’ attitude (Neumann et al., 2009). Booth-Butterfield, Booth-Butterfield, and Wanzer (2007) found that when individuals encoded humorous messages, their focus on the sender increased. Here, students were more attentive when the teacher incorporated humor into the class and were able to identify humorous messages. In addition, other studies have been conducted to find out the effects of humor in the classroom. Shiyab (2009) found that 66.7 percent of Arab students believed that the use of humor increased their understanding and comprehension of material and motivated students to attend class. So due to the incorporation of humor tension has decreased and social anxieties are reduced, so students are relaxed and more attentive to the teacher

### 1.3. Definitions

Research shows that the sense of humor is an effective way for people of all ages to release pent-up tensions or energy, permit the expression of ideas or feelings that would otherwise be difficult to express and facilitate coping with trying circumstances (McGhee, 1983). The link between the sense of humor and academic success is also well documented. Positive connections between teachers' use of humor and academic achievement even follow students into colleges and beyond (Hickman & Crossland, 2004-2005).

Humor researchers describe laughter as a response to pleasurable and/or amusing physical, emotional, and/or intellectual stimuli that affects the brain in interesting and very complex ways. This understanding is based on data collection and clinical analyses causes and effects of laughter, which are said by many researchers to be so complex that it is quite difficult for them to settle on one basic definition of humor. Some even assert that humor patterns and what people find funny are not traceable at present (Latta, 1998).

### 1.4. The Most Appropriate Types of Sense of Humor

There are many forms of humor that are used in the classroom, but some categories of humor are appropriate, while other types of humor are inappropriate. Some types of humor are jokes, riddles, sarcasm, stories, nonverbal expressions, and cartoons and can be expressed in virtually any situation or topic (Cornett, 1986; Wanzer et al., 2006; Frymier et al., 2008); however, there are some forms of humor that students prefer. Appropriate humor prompts a sense of positive humor because positive humor incorporates an attitude or perspective that reduces tension in the classroom (Chabeli, 2008). Researchers have identified four different categories that were seen as appropriate humor: related humor (Cornett, 1986), unrelated humor to class material (Loomans & Kolberg, 1993), self-

disparaging humor (Bryant & Zillmann, 1989), and unintentional or unplanned humor (Martin, 2007).

### 1.4.1 Related Sense of Humor

Related humor can include jokes, stories, role-playing, or creative language that is related to the topic being covered in the classroom. Unrelated humor identifies the same examples of related humor but is not related to material covered in lectures or discussions. A teacher can use self-disparaging humor when he or she uses stories, jokes, or comments about himself/herself in a belittling style. Lastly, unintentional or unplanned humor can be identified when teachers said or did something that was not intended to be funny, but students perceived the teacher's actions to be humorous (Wanzer et al., 2006). Appropriate humor has multiple forms and delivery tactics. There are several steps to effectively use humor in the classroom: identifying by (Englert, 2010) in the classroom where appropriate humor can be used, decide what type of humor appropriately fits the situation, and evaluate how effective the type of humor used have on the students (Englert, 2010). When humor assists student learning, the teacher knows to use it in the future.

With today's technology, teachers have many sources available at their disposal. Media objects can be identified and shown to students as using a video for class that is related to what is being covered, and for today's classroom, YouTube is a common <sup>1</sup>tool that contains clips and videos. Teachers are creative when planning their lectures and discussions because there is important information that must be understood by the students. So the use of external objects should be handled carefully to ease tension and stress, and to improve the positive atmosphere of the classroom. Stories used in the classroom can be incorporated by teachers and/or students to share funny or embarrassing situations,

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<sup>1</sup> Humor and Students' Perceptions of Learning by Kent Truett, B. A. August, 2011

thoughts, or experiences (Chauvet & Hofmeyer, 2007). Additionally, the researchers believe that story sharing encouraged students to listen, helped them engage, and assisted them to accept their peers in the classroom. In addition, teachers can incorporate a personal story that relates to the material, which will gain attention from the students.

Hellman (2007) expressed that it is important to use humor at a specific time in the classroom. He went on to say that, teachers must first establish rapport and credibility with their students and then incorporate the proper type of humor. Another way humor can be included in the classroom is by using unrelated humor.

#### **1.4.2 Unrelated Sense of Humor**

Unrelated humor does not belong to the information being covered, but it does have a purpose in the classroom. Unrelated humor can be viewed as jokes, humorous stories, or punch lines that are used by a teacher that do not increase lesson enhancement (Loomans et al., 2002). Unrelated humor helps students by allowing them to relax and get away from the monotony of lectures. Zhang (2005) found that small talk, self disclosure, and personal stories increased effectiveness and liking in students. One way to incorporate small talk by the teacher is to show up a few minutes before class. This can be an opportunity for teachers to develop teacher-student relationships. Because small talk and self disclosure are a type of unrelated humor, it gives the teacher the opportunity to show he is a normal person and trustworthy allowing students to feel more comfortable (Glenn, 2002). Teachers can also make students feel comfortable by using euphemisms or creative words and phrases. The use of euphemisms can assist teachers with humor; for example, they could refer to a person who is not tall with the phrase “vertically challenged” (Hellman, 2007). This example displays that teachers can make everyday talk funny.

### 1.4.3 Self-Disparaging Sense of Humor

Another type of humor researched by Wanzer and colleagues was self-disparaging humor. Students can take advantage of the professor's humor when they hear a funny story and can add additional stories or comments to relate the story to a similar topic.

Frymier et al. (2008) found the student who has a tendency to humor prefer teachers who use disparaging humor because students tend to imitate similar humorous qualities as their professor. Hence, it benefits teachers to try to identify with their students, so they can incorporate this desire of humor to the classroom. When the teacher uses self-disparaging humor, it gives students the opportunity to use humor themselves. Hellman (2007) stated that it is important to let students enjoy their moment when incorporating humor. Allowing students to use or build on humor in the classroom shows that the students feel comfortable with the teacher because the teacher allows opportunities for students to display their humor orientation. Self-disparaging humor was found to enhance motivation in students to process the information (Wanzer et al., 2010). When students juxtapose their personality with their teacher and make them side by side, the students can relate to their teacher easier. Finally, unintentional humor can be an effective form of humor in the classroom.

Teachers are not perfect; they make mistakes and do not always say what they mean to say which identifies unrelated humor (Wanzer et al., 2006). An additional example of this can be a slip of the tongue. When teachers are delivering lectures, they are constantly thinking about their next point to cover and are trying to establish and maintain engagement. While teachers process information and reciprocate information to students, teachers sometimes say something they wish they could take back. Unintentional humor happens in many classes and is not necessarily a negative attribution; it shows that even

teachers make mistakes and are not perfect every time they deliver lectures or create discussions. Teachers' use of unintentional humor can be an appropriate form of humor and might help students because it does not belittle them.

<sup>2</sup> If teachers are able to use humor effectively, students will benefit from this type of communication tool. Torok et al. (2004) identified humor as having "the potential to humanize, illustrate, defuse, encourage, reduce anxiety, and keep people thinking" (p. 14).

Students' perceptions of learning can be affected by teachers, since humor has this ability to accomplish all this success. Neumann et al (2009) displayed similar findings in which humor assisted students in maintaining concentration throughout the class period. One student explained that the use of humor causes students to pay better attention to the overall lecture, so they [students] would not miss the type of humor that was incorporated. Other students said humor brought back engagement when they were not concentrating on the lecture (Neumann et al., 2009). The use of humor is an important teaching tool that must be studied in order to have teachers that are more effective.

### **1.5. The Most Inappropriate Types of Sense of Humor**

Humor used by teachers that does not contribute to classroom participation, engagement, or learning should be avoided by teachers in order to prevent negative implications in the classroom. If the teacher uses humor inappropriately, students can become inclined to thinking that they are being violated in the classroom (Wanzer et al., 2010).

Previous researchers have identified inappropriate forms of humor used by teachers such as offensive humor (Torok et al., 2004), unrelated humor (Ziv, 1988) student-disparaging humor (Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, & Weir, 2003), other-disparaging

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<sup>2</sup> Humor and Students' Perceptions of Learning by Kent Truett, B. A.  
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humor, and self-disparaging humor (Wanzer et al., 2006). Inappropriate humor can be viewed as negative humor. Chabeli (2008) defines negative humor as “an attitude or perspective that is intended to belittle, ridicule, discriminate, and encourage negativity amongst learners” (p. 52). Moreover, Ziv (1988) unrelated humor found that irrelevant humor used in the classroom does not improve learning.

### **1.5.1 Unrelated Sense of Humor**

The researcher discussed that unrelated humor could distract students and make it harder for them to re-engage in the classroom and in the information covered in the class. Wanzer and colleagues found that the most offensive humor was vulgar, sexual, or related to alcohol consumption (Wanzer et al., 2006). Specifically, sexual humor is not seen as<sup>3</sup> a type of humor that is professional, so teachers should avoid using it, and teachers need to be aware of what they say and do inside and outside of the classroom. Teachers who use verbally aggressive humor are sometimes liked or disliked by students but it depends on the student’s perspective.

Most students view this type of humor as inappropriate humor, but some students think that it is effective humor. Verbally aggressive students prefer aggressive humor because they deem verbal aggressiveness as a positive interaction (Frymier et al., 2008).

### **1.5.2. Verbally Aggressive Sense of Humor**

Students who have an aggressive sense of humor might surpass the teacher who possesses the same style of humor that is verbally aggressive in the classroom. Sometimes there are hidden phrases that verbally aggressive individuals cope with, while nonverbally aggressive individuals would not catch. Students who find offensive humor as appropriate

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<sup>3</sup> Humor and Students’ Perceptions of Learning by Kent Truett, B. A.  
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humor might identify it as an effective communication tool, or other students feel they are being targeted as the butt of the joke. Because some students find offensive humor appropriate while others find it inappropriate, teachers need to be aware of using offensive humor. Increasing knowledge and learning should be a high priority for teachers in the classroom and even outside. It is the teacher's responsibility to show that he/she cares about the class and the students in this classroom. Frymier (2007) found that a teacher and students construct an interpersonal relationship, in which they both need to commence class with relational goals.

A relational goal for teachers could be a positive learning environment. Teachers must maintain professionalism when teaching, so a connected classroom environment is important instrument to work with. Dwyer, Bingham, Carison, Prisbell, Cruz, and Fus (2004) described a connected classroom environment in which students' perceptions of a helpful and civil communication environment was present. Different types of disparaging humor can have negative effects on students. If a teacher belittles students in class or stereotype school students as a whole, the teacher can do more harm to the classroom environment. When individuals become offended, positive interactions can be more difficult to implement. It is important that teachers do not insult students because it will cause problems among the teacher and students.

### **1.5.3 Student Disparaging Sense of Humor**

Wanzer et al. (2006) gave examples of disparaging humor where the teacher targeted students' intelligence, gender, appearance, religion, and opinion. Belittlement of students can be identified as a negative form of humor and can cause negative vibes between the teacher and students because students might feel the teacher is constantly targeting them. A teacher may not intentionally belittle a student, but the humor used by

the teacher may be interpreted by the student as a putdown or inappropriate. Other-Disparaging humor targeted nonstudent groups (Wanzer et al., 2006). “Others” received attention based on race, gender, university affiliation, sexual orientation, appearance, religion, and/or political affiliation. Because classrooms are a diverse population, it is important that teachers use humor not only professionally, but also appropriately. This will help create a positive learning environment and help students identify their teacher as a professional. Research has found humor to be a positive learning tool used by teachers, so it is important that teachers know the positive and negative types of humor used by teachers (Aylor & Oppliger, 2003; Torok et al., 2004). If teachers know how to properly incorporate humor into the classroom, they will have a better chance of creating a positive learning environment for students. The purpose of teacher humor use has been discussed, but additional explanations need to be explained concerning males and females’ perceptions of humor.

### **1.6. Verbal and Nonverbal Immediacy in the Classroom**

Teachers commence the semester with students who are nervous, anxious, and eager to learn, so it is important that the professor construct a positive learning environment. There are several ways to create a positive learning atmosphere by using humor (Skinner, 2010; Wendt, 2008) and immediacy (Zhang, 2005). Sanders and Wiseman (1990) studied the effects of immediacy and identified some immediacy behaviors as smiling at students, moving around the room, using eye contact, and decreasing student-teacher distance. For this reason, when teachers combine humor with immediacy, a positive atmosphere can be developed. Gorham and Christophel (1990) reco<sup>4</sup>mmended that teachers should constantly attempt immediacy behaviors such as being vocally expressive, using humor, maintaining eye contact, and praising students. Teachers who do not seem to

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care or who speak in a monotone voice can create a negative learning environment, which can delay student learning. Gorham and Christophel (1990) found that humor and immediacy assisted learning, but each had different positive effects on students; however, the researchers stated that the relationship established between the teacher and students created more learning when teachers implemented humor and immediacy together (Gorham & Christophel, 1990). For example, a teacher can tell a funny story and can incorporate different facial expressions or use hand and body gestures to make the story more engaging and humorous for students. Teachers who use nonverbal and verbal messages create a combination that represents a positive attributes of the teacher.

### **1.6.1 Verbal Immediacy**

Richmond, Lane, and McCroskey (2006) found that teachers who displayed immediacy often used a multitude of nonverbal and verbal communication behaviors that display positive attributes of the teacher, thus reducing physical and psychological space between themselves and students. This creates a more effective student-teacher relationship. Witt and Wheelless (2001) found that when teachers use various levels of verbal immediacy in conjunction with nonverbal immediacy, student's recall of information is fast and learning loss reduced. Voice assists teachers when incorporating humor by allowing the teacher to alter his/her voice (Richmond & McCroskey, 1998). Additional researchers found similar results, realizing that when teachers increased the use of verbal and nonverbal immediacy, students learned more (Witt, Wheelless, & Allen, 2004); therefore, when immediacy and humor both are implemented in the classroom, teachers need to be aware of the benefits their student receive during the class period

### **1.6.2 Teacher Immediacy in the Classroom**

Teachers have the ability to incorporate immediacy by showing students excitement and passion for teaching, which will help students feel they can relate to their teacher inside and outside of the classroom. Self-disclosure and personal examples used by teachers allow students to get to know their teacher better. Students will have a better idea of how to interact with their teacher in the classroom and in one-on-one conversations. Comments that teachers use to encourage students to continue discussion or to praise for explanations in the classroom will assist in creating increased immediacy (Richmond & McCroskey, 1998).

### **1.6.3 Nonverbal Immediacy**

Nonverbal immediacy can be used in different humorous situations. Simple hand gestures, facial expressions, posture, touch, eye behavior, and bodily movement can assist teachers when trying to incorporate immediacy (Richmond & McCroskey, 1998). Hand gestures and facial expressions can assist teachers' delivery of information by revealing emotions that correlate with the humorous message. Posture and bodily movement can also increase engagement because students must focus on the relationship of nonverbal immediacy to humor. Students feel more comfortable talking to teachers when the teacher uses immediacy. Mottet and Beebe (2002) found that teachers who incorporated nonverbal immediacy activated a pleasure-emotion response, which assists students when approaching teachers. Teacher immediacy displays caring for students, if teachers by combining immediacy with humor can close the gap o their relation with students, students might feel more comfortable asking questions in class. This might increase knowledge and allow students to remember more information in the future.

When teachers display immediacy, perceptions of the teacher might be different. Houser and Frymier (2009) found that highly teachers who often displayed immediacy were more approachable, so students sensed they had more of an impact in the class. Hsu (2010) found that when teachers expressed immediacy behaviors such as smiling, gesturing, and using different vocal expressions, students were more motivated to learn. Via humor, the teacher in the classroom can incorporate gesturing, and smiling.

Skinner and Fowler (2010) found that humor produces a beneficial learning environment. Immediacy and humor are two communication tools that will give teachers an advantage in the presence in the classroom.

The combination of humor and immediacy create and sustained engagement when used by teachers (Neumann et al., 2009; Richmond & McCroskey, 1998; Witt et al., 2004). Brosvic and Epstein (2007) found that when teachers maintained a level o motivation in students, they learned and remembered more information. Immediacy by teachers is an important communication tool that can increase motivation and learning in students

### **1.7. Instructional Humor Processing Theory**

W<sup>5</sup>anzer et al. (2010) stated that how humor is understood and the nature of the humor used determines if humor assisted in learning or not. Teachers must be able to recognize their strong and weak communication tools and must take advantage of their skills in order to be an effective teacher. Instructional Humor Processing Theory (IHPT) was created by Wanzer, et al. (2010) and consists of the following three theories: Incongruity-Resolution Theory (LaFave, Haddad, & Maesen, 196), Disposition Theory (Zillman & Cantor, 1996), and Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984).

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<sup>5</sup> Humor and Students' Perceptions of Learning by Kent Truett, B. A. August, 2011

### 1.7.1 Incongruity-Resolution Theory

Incongruity Theory reveals that people identify funny messages that exhibit inconsistency, contrast, or surprise (Berlyne, 1960). LaFave et al. (1996) expanded Incongruity Theory and established the Incongruity-Resolution Theory (IRT). The IRT emphasized how the receiver of the message cognitively understood humorous messages to be recognized then to be considered funny by the receiver of the joke (LaFave et al., 1996). IRT starts with the assumption that people come into situations with certain anticipations of appropriate behaviors. For the humorous message to be interpreted and assessed as humorous, the receiver recognized an occurrence that was inconsistent with his/her anticipation (LaFave et al., 1996). This message can be perceived as funny; however, if the incongruity is too complex for the receiver, the receiver will not understand the humorous message. When teachers use humor that is ambiguous or complex, they must be able to explain the ambiguity or complexity of the message. Once the message is made clear, students will be able to identify the purpose of the humor used by the teacher. Because teachers use different types of humor, students must think outside the box. This can lead to further understanding of information covered in the classroom.

### 1.7.2. Disposition Theory

The Disposition Theory model shows that appreciation of humor increases when the person who is using the humor is seen positively. When the person using humor is disliked, individuals will not find the humor to be funny (Zillman & Cantor, 1996). If the person or object that is targeted by the humor is seen in a positive manner, people will identify the humor to be inappropriate; however, if the person or object is seen in a negative manner, people will perceive the humor to be funny (Zillman & Cantor, 1996).

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Thus, it depends on peoples' perceptions of humor. Some people prefer self-disparaging humor, while others prefer other-disparaging humor to be funny. Some people do not identify messages to be funny, so it depends on the person's sense of humor. Raney (2004) simply states that Disposition Theory predicts the satisfaction increases when people who are liked receive positive outcomes, while people who are disliked receive negative outcomes. An example of this would be that people like to see the "good guy" win and the "bad guy" lose. Disposition Theory falls into the current study because it helps students identify which types of humor teachers are using more often.

Moreover, Disposition Theory will help the teacher identify which types of humor helps students perceive better outcome of learning.

### **1.7.3. Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion**

Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion (ELM) explains how people perceive persuasive messages and clarify the relationship linking learning and thinking (Cacioppo & Petty 1984; Petty & Cacioppo, 1981, 1986). When certain conditions boost a person's motivation and engagement, people are likely to try to recall applicable images, associations, or experiences from memory; identify conclusion about the value of the argument; and/or derive a final evaluation of attitude in favor of the recommendation (Cacioppo & Petty, 1984). The ELM contains two explanations for persuasion through high and low elaboration likelihoods. When elaboration likelihood was high, a person was engaged and his ability to think is increased and he is highly motivated (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984). When elaboration likelihood was low, a person's ability to think was not present or reduced and motivation decreased as well (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984).

Wanzer et al. (2010) established the IHPT that consisted of the three previous theories discussed. Wanzer and colleagues chose the Incongruity Resolution Theory

because students must understand how to process humor. They believed there were three possible outcomes that existed for the IRT. First, the incongruity of the humorous message was not recognized so, students did not grasp the humor in the message. Second, the incongruity of the humorous message was identified but was not resolved. Hence, students were not able to understand the humorous message. Third, the student identified and understood the humor and was perceived as funny (Wanzer et al., 2010). The Disposition Theory was chosen because people have different perceptions of feelings of people who are targeted or made the “butt” of a joke (Zillman & Cantor, 1996). This theory helps students identify appropriate and inappropriate forms of humor.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion applies to the IHPT because when students perceive that the message is relevant, they should have greater motivation; therefore, students would have greater understanding and retention of the information (Wanzer et al., 2010). IHPT looks at the different types of teacher humor and the positive and negative effects humor has on student learning. This theory helps in describing the differences in perceptions of students’ views of humor use by a teacher (Wanzer et al., 2010). Because IHPT identifies different types of humor and the effects it has on learning. IHPT is a new theory and therefore has limited amounts of previous research. IHPT will help identify the effects of teacher’s sense of humor use on students’ perceived learning in the classroom. Wanzer et al. (2010) believed that how humorous messages were understood, determined if humor promoted learning or not.

### **1.8. Student Perceived Cognitive Learning in the Classroom**

It is the teacher’s responsibility to incorporate communication tools such as humor and immediacy, which will assist them to cover all the information that will contribute to student learning. Some students identify learning as the grade received in the class, or being motivated to attend class, or teacher impact on student’s attitude. Perceived cognitive

learning can be identified when one feels that some type of change has happened, new information has been grasped, or additional understanding has been achieved (Caspi & Blau, 2008). Students may not fully grasp information delivered by the teacher, but they might perceive they do in fact understand the information discussed.

In order to identify how much students learn, Richmond, et al. (1987) struggled to design a scale that would assess cognitive learning via learning loss. The Learning Loss Scale (LLS) asked the following two questions: “How much did you l<sup>7</sup>earn in this class?” and “How much do you think you could have learned in this class had you had an ideal instructor?” (Richmond et al., 1987, p. 6). Learning loss was created by reducing the answer to the first question from the answer to the second question. This score displayed the reported sum of learning the student perceived was learned in a class (Richmond et al., 1987). The researchers found a strong correlation between nonverbal immediacy and students’ perceived learning (Richmond et al., 1987).

Students might learn more when their teacher incorporates humor in the classroom because humor can make students feel more comfortable. The SPCLS scale has prove to be very reliable for the current study because the questions support the purpose of the current study. Students’ perceptions of learning are important to identify because researchers can determines what works for teachers when covering material in the classroom. If teachers have a better understanding of how students learn, they can incorporate specific material to increase learning outcome.

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### 1.9. Psychological Benefits of Humor

John F. Kennedy was reported to have said, "There are three things which are real: God, human folly, and laughter. The first two are beyond our comprehension. So we must do what we can with the third" (Hunsaker, 1988). One of the things, which can be done with humor, is to take advantage of its coping mechanism or psychological benefits in the classroom. For example, humor is seen as reducing discomfort and easing tension, a way of reducing failure or coping with defeat (saving face). In addition, to make the serious and less interesting more appealing (Linstead, 1985). Humor can serve as a passage to avoid frustration, apathy, resentment, hostility, and anger; it can offer an escape from the harshness of reality and lighten the burdens present in the classroom (Weaver, 1987).

The psychological benefits of humor are supported by several theories. The <sup>8</sup>Anxiety Reduction Theory imply that the increase in level of humor is directly associated with the reduction of the anxiety level of students which, if true, further buttresses the case for the use of humor as a release valve in the classroom (Herbert, 1991). The Psychoanalytic Theory struggle to confirm that humor is an acceptable expression in society for forbidden wishes, often with a release of tension through laughter (Coleman, 1992).

Another theory of humor, the Arousal Theory, illustrates the effects of humor in stress reducing. This theory explains the function of laughter as that of reducing tension and built-up energy (Lefcourt & Martin, 1986). Martin and Lefcourt (1988) argue that nurturing children's sense of humor may arm them with a coping skill to combat the stresses of life. Freud (1960) labeled humor as, "the highest of the defensive processes (i.e., defense mechanisms)." In his analysis in 1932, Freud went on to explain humor as a

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reflection of the confidence to reduce stress. Korobkin, (1988); Long, (1983); Ziv, (1976); Dixon, (1973 );Gilland and Mauritsen, (1971) in accordance with Martin and Lefcourt's (1988) and Wilson's (1979) Arguments, believe that humor is a classroom advantage to reduce fear and anxiety of students. Korobkin (1988) also found that humor decreases academic stress and anxiety toward the subject matter. Another related theory relevant<sup>9</sup> to the use of humor in the classroom is the Relief Theory. Meyer (1990), represent the Relief Theory, that reduction of tension and anxiety is an important element in the learning process. Sullivan (1992) argues that by reducing classroom anxiety using humor, test anxiety may be reduced simultaneously. There also exists evidence from a study conducted by Sarason (1960) that highly anxious students perform better on tests when humor is included into the testing situation (Gibbon, 1988).

Another psychological implication of humor is the enhancement of learners' self-esteem (Pollak & Freda, 1997). A successful learning process involves the assumption, "I can do it." Humor can encourage students in the learning process, which often involves temporary setbacks, and embarrassing exposure. Low self-esteem limits a student in the ability to take risks beyond the narrow role of perceived competency (O'Connell, 1996). By using humor and the skill of laughing at oneself, a student can be more self-forgiving, thereby allowing him or her to become engaged in the learning process.

### **1.10. Sociological Benefits of Humor**

The sociological implications of humor in learning are highly important for both establishing better group interactions and transmitting cultural mores (Coleman, 1992). One of the major functions of schools is socialization: to acculturate knowledgeable, understanding, compassionate, and empathic new members to society (Callahan, Clark, &

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Kellough, 1992). Effective teachers are individuals, according to Hageseth (1995), who can "take themselves lightly, but take their work and life seriously as they encourage others to do likewise." They are individuals who can shift a difficult situation into an intriguing challenge. They are teachers who can encourage students to appreciate the universality of the human condition, that all are here to make the world work by complementing one another (Pollak & Freda, 1997). Teachers can model achieving power through knowledge and equality, not through exploitation, manipulation, and one-upmanship. Through teaching, teachers facilitate learning through enthusiastic, generous sharing, laughing at their own foibles, and their encouragement to take risks in the safe environment of the<sup>10</sup> learning situation.

*The socialization process involves learning how to be- with oneself, with others, and with life's challenges. Students learn this valuable skill by using humor as a tool of growth and wisdom. Humor can be used as a binding force through which group members share common experiences, develop team work, and play and work together toward common goals (Duncan,1984). In general, humor, when used appropriately, can be an effective tool for socialization and to improved interpersonal relations in the classroom (Krohe, 1987).*

### **1.11. Educational Benefits of Humor**

Humor serves many educational functions as communication in the classroom. Maslow, after all, defines humor and laughter as "education in a palatable form" (Weaver

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& Cotrell, p. 168). Colwell and Wagle (1984) further believe that humor strengthens teacher-student relation by enabling students to see teachers as another human. Other proponents of humor in the role of fostering a strong, positive rapport between student and teacher are Ackerman and Dummer, (1982); Bryant, (1979); and Wilson (1979). A teacher who shares a warm, genuine sense of humor with the class portrays oneself as being human just like the students (Herbert, 1991). Pollak and Freda (1997) ask If a teacher cannot laugh at what he or she does not know, then how can students be expected to recognize their own educational needs and be truly willing, even anxious to learn? For example, if an English teacher puts a sentence on the board to label parts of speech and a student points out a mistake the teacher has made in labeling one of the more complicated components, that teacher has several options. One is to deny the mistake; another is to pretend the mistake was made on purpose; another is to own the error, thereby revealing his or her humanness and ability to recover. Therein lays the humor, the ability to enjoy a joke at one's own expense.

The reality of learning is that trial and error, stumble and recovery, are not only inevitable but also crucial for real learning to take place. If a teacher can laugh at himself or herself and laugh with (never at) students, the teacher is well on the way to establishing a positive climate and eliminating much of the stress that is often present in classrooms today. Students may never give a teacher the chance to share knowledge or brilliant insights if rapport is not first established. Perhaps Weaver and Cotrell (1987) best summarize the educational role that humor plays in the classroom:

*A warm, genuine, sense of humor can reveal humanness- a comfortable, secure attitude with themselves as instructors, with their course material (knowledge), with their students, and with their relationship with students. Certainly, one of the important benefits of humor is that it breeches the broad gap between instructors and students. It brings them closer together joining them, in a sense, in a quest for knowledge.*

When teachers confront negative students with humor, they often find that this use of humor is an effective way to define the students' anger and hostility (Pollak & Freda, 1997). Humor is a powerful tool in education and can be used within the classroom to put the students at ease and make the learning process more enjoyable. As educators become active participants in their students' laughter, they will have an opportunity to become engaged with them (Ackerman & Dummer, 1982). A humorous response exerts a powerful force over a tense situation. Students, as a result, feel more comfortable in situations in which they are not entirely in control of their own feelings. Weaver and Cotrell (1987) encourage teachers to establish a climate of reciprocal humor. Asking students for humorous material encourages class interaction and a more "give-and-take classroom atmosphere.

*Humor "...has a central place whether as a natural product or as a life-saving response to the exigencies of the institution - boredom, ritual, routine, regulations, oppressive authority" (Gibbon, 1988).*

<sup>11</sup>Essentially, the primary value of humor in the classroom is to "stimulate, illustrate, motivate, and ease tension" (Kelly, 1983). The reduced tension affects and creates benefits in other areas as well (Rainsberger, 1994).

Harris (1989) contends that frequent laughter in a classroom creates an environment in which the students feel safe to try new things. Students have the freedom from these boundaries to experience true knowledge. Kelly (1983) believes that a large reason for increased enjoyment of school is the positive attitude and learning climate created because of the reduced stress level.

Classrooms with decreased tension and reduced stress foster greater creativity and imagination and contribute to an enjoyable classroom setting in which students show a positive attitude into learning. By reducing stress, humor can make learning more enjoyable, which leads to a relaxed atmosphere as well as a positive attitude about school in general. Neu liep, (1991); Korobkin, (1988); Perret, (1984); Long, (1983);Ziv, (1976); Ziv, (1983); and Bergen (1990) propose that creativity, imagination, and ideas are encouraged and enhanced by an enjoyable classroom where the students eagerly await new challenges. Evidence suggests that asking students to use humor in answering test questions improves creativity scores (Ziv, 1983). Humor may legitimize non-conventional, divergent thinking. Instructors may be surprised to see answers that contain unexpected consequences from his students. Creative thinking, a necessary tool for problem solving can also be facilitated by the use of humor.

When employing brainstorming techniques, for example, if a teacher offers a thought that is «incongruous or unexpected or incompatible" (Fry & Allen,1996), that input can help students see a situation in two very rational but different perspectives.

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Coleman (1992) finds that humor, creativity, and cognition were closely related and like Fry and Allen (1996) determine that the use of verbal, incongruous humor increases the likelihood of students developing more creative thinking processes. The essence of creative thinking therefore, is that ability to perceive situations from various points of view. The old adages "The grass is greener on the other side, but pity the man who has to mow it" and "Every cloud has a silver lining, but unfortunately every silver lining comes with its cloud" are examples of perspective. Humor, then as an educational benefit, has as its chief function, the ability to unhitch blinders, to rattle perceptions, to help one look at one thing and see another (in a creative sense)

Humor is an effective device in interpersonal communication skills. Victor Borgeonce stated, "Laughter is the shortest distance between two people" (Sullivan, 1992). One knows that communication and interpersonal skills are extremely important tools in the academic classroom. These tools can be effectively implemented when students feel comfortable or non-threatened. Many scholars argue that the use of humor aids in creating an open communication climate in the classroom. Laughter is seen to coordinate human interaction as an approval, and invitation for the hearer to respond in kind, an invitation to elaborate, and a resource in affiliation (O'Donnell-Trujillo & Adams, 1983). Power struggles often surface in classrooms. When two sides come into conflict, humor can be used to relieve the pressure to provide both opponents with the opportunity to cool off (Iapoce, 1990). In such situations, humor provides the teacher with the chance to rethink the situation and react with a rational consequence as opposed to a punishment established out of stress and anger (Curwin & Mendler, 1990). Such a rational response spares the child's self-esteem. Because of the ability to diffuse tension in such situations,

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humor actually enhances relationships and brings people closer together. "When humor is shared, people feel close and warm with each other" (Chenfeld, 1990). Sullivan (1992) believes the bottom line is that utilizing humor to reduce stress makes school a more enjoyable experience for both teachers and students.

### **1.12. Physiological Benefits of Humor**

In addition to instructional benefits, humor, maybe be physiologically therapeutic. Humor and laughter are healthy. A good laugh improves blood flow, increases oxygen in the blood, exercises lungs, diaphragm, and face muscles, and releases a natural painkiller into the body's system (Cornett, 1986). In addition, because of the increase in endorphin secretion, pain decreases and pleasure increases (Herbert, 1991). Peter and Dana (1982) encourage the use of humor as a preventative health measure. They argue that laughter, and plenty of it helps to increase the intake of oxygen to the blood; exercises muscles, particularly the lungs and diaphragm; and produces endorphins, the body's natural painkillers. Likewise, Fry (1963) examined the effects of laughter and humor on physical health. Both were found to reduce the incidence of heart disease, strokes, depression, cancer, and other stress related conditions. The use o humor influences the functioning of the brain. In terms of left-brain /right brain differences, Svebak (1977) found that, laughter increase the functioning of both sides of the brain simultaneously, which resulted in producing an unusually high level of consciousness and information processing in the brain, thereby allowing the brain to reach a higher level of capacity. Gardner (1981) found that laughter brought about similar simultaneous heightening of brain hemispheres in patients with brain damage. Rapp (1951) assumes that a sense of

humor is in truth healthful. And it is beneficial to the body." Physician, J.T.Walsh concluded after extent research that:

*The effect of laughter upon the mind not only brings relaxation with it, so far as mental tension is concerned, but makes it also less prone to dread sand less solicitous about the future. This favorable effect on the mind influences various functions of the body and makes them healthier than would otherwise be the case (Moody, 1978).*

Colwell and Wigle (1984) argue that humor also has affective benefits. They cite learning theorists to support their beliefs that humor can motivate students who are bored or stressed or who have negative attitudes toward school. Korobkin (1988) found that humor increases motivation towards and satisfaction with learning.

### **1.13. Guidelines for Using Humor in the Classroom**

Humor can be a liberating force, or it can be a destroying one. Some guidelines to ensure that humor has a positive effect it may be included in beginning of the class with an amusing thought or joke, the use of humorous stories and relating student-oriented activities that often contain humorous material "(O'Donnell-Trujillo & Adams, 1983). The aim here is to involve students on an intellectual and emotional level .Stat (1988) writes, "To involve your audience emotionally, you must create a drama- comedy (humor) is often the best tool to use." There are situations in which humor can prove counterproductive. If used at the wrong time, it has the ability to cause distraction. If used in excess, it may

become uncontrollable and transform the classroom into a circus. If used inappropriately it may damage self-esteem, feelings, or cause embarrassment (Bariaud, 1988).

Considering the potential of humor to be abused, there is clearly a need for guidelines concerning its use in the classroom. Bryant and Zillman (1988) cite that teachers' use of humor must be perceived as natural like being you, or else it may backfire. Teachers who normally feel uncomfortable using humor must be aware of attempting to force it into their classrooms. If humor is irrelevant to the subject matter, valuable class time may be wasted and the class may become in chaos, thereby contributing to poor classroom management (Sullivan, 1992). Bryant and Zillman (1983) suggest that teachers, especially of young children, should hold before using humor unless they are certain that the children have the capacity and the knowledge to understand it. For example, irony and other forms of "distortion humor" can confuse children and create misconceptions that are difficult to correct.

The basic component of some humor is ridicule. Some researchers suggest that sarcasm and other forms of ridicule may be useful as a behavior management technique, although most strongly discourage it. Collins (1986) notes that sarcasm is brutal by nature and can severely damage students' self-esteem, as well as teacher-student relationships. In addition to the guidelines previously discussed, some researchers offer other suggestions. Sullivan (1992) cautions that: (1) teachers must recognize when humor is not appropriate, (2) teachers should never joke about a student's name because of it may damage the student's self-esteem, and (3) teachers should not simply tell jokes in class, but should keep their humor relevant to what is being covered, since telling jokes reduces valuable class time. The use of non-relevant humor, or that which is not at all related to the subject matter

at hand, is shown to be effective aid in information acquisition for younger children, those of preschool to early primary school age (Zillman & Bryant, 1983).

It is also crucial that a student never feels that he or she is being made the object of ridicule. Because Sullivan (1992) and Herbert (1991) argues that teachers should be willing to laugh at themselves and should be careful to match their humor to the level of their students. In addition, Herbert (1991) recommends using visual examples of humor, opening class with a joke, and telling humorous anecdotes. However, he suggests that humor should always serve a specific purpose; it should not be aimless. Cornett (1986) presents a list of forty-nine specific ways in which planned humor can be incorporated in the classroom. Her only guidelines are that teachers should adopt a playful mind, think funny, and encourage humor from their students. Although a vast array of humor categories exists, one must carefully choose the type of humor being used. Clearly, the misuse or abuse of humor in the classroom may have negative effects.

Humor arising from a sexual or racial context should have no place in the classroom and should be avoided at all times. Because, the classroom environment becomes negative and hostile (Dickmeyer, 1993). Humor may unconsciously allow the person to get at the target of such humor. The “target” is the individual who is placed in one of these situations by humor (Edwards & Gibboney, 1992). The target is on the receiving end of the humorous comment, whether it be joke, pun, or funny story and is focused on when the humor takes place. As mentioned earlier, targets of teacher's humor can be self, student, or other. Humor may be effectively utilized to promote the superiority of one group or person over another as expressed by the Superiority Theory of humor (Gruner, 1978). This theory focuses upon raising the level of sense of self-esteem, confidence, and reduced threat that are incorporated with a humorous response to a

stressful experience or situation (Martin & Lefcourt, 1988). Examples of this type of humor are the various ethnic, racist, and sexist jokes that<sup>13</sup> are increasingly becoming taboo in a more enlightened, sensitive society (Coleman, 1992). A major assumption of this theory is that people laugh when they feel superior to others (Meyer, 1990). Closely related to the Superiority Theory is the Disparagement Theory of Humor, whereby humor, as disguised aggression, is used at the expense of others to get a small victory in the midst of defeat (Rainsberger, 1994).

Humor is a vital component of today's society. This is evident throughout history by having its place among affluent persons from respected presidents in the political arena, portraying messages to the common people. Also as an integral part of communication in the family, the foundation of social existence.

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**1.14. Conclusion:**

To conclude, humor has the ability to assist students while learning. As we have seen in this chapter about humor and its functions in the classroom, its types, categories, and her multiple benefits on students. Moreover how learner perceive cognitively humor. Also, providing this work with Guidelines 1.on the use of humor in the classroom. The next chapter will define the data collection tools used for this work. A questionnaire to asses student's attitude toward the use of humor in the classroom, and how it will contribute positively to the benefit of the teaching- learning processes.

## Chapter Two:

# Research Methodology and Discussion and Interpretation of Results

## **Research Methodology and Discussion of Results**

### **2.1. Introduction**

There is no doubt that the field of teaching English as a foreign language is loaded and always being updated with new methodologies to facilitate the teaching/learning process, and more importantly to upgrade the learning outcomes. Yet, there is particularity to the use of the sense of humor within English classes to foster a comfortable atmosphere, Ease tension and release stress ,to better acquire foreign language and use it to communicate thought and desires, which is the central purpose of learning a foreign language.

This Chapter presents the analytical part of the major findings of results, and data gathering instrument, which have used to investigate the learners attitude to the implementation of teachers sense of humor in Daily English classes.

### **2.2. Research Methodology**

Moving to something more practical is the next move of any research design. In this section is prevented to present a detailed account of the research methodology, and the appropriate method for a clear comprehension of the study.

#### **2.2.1. Participants**

Participants in this study included 65 English learners in University of Dr Tahar Moulay in all levels. The researcher chose those levels because a student who is studying at those levels has the ability to answer the survey; this study survey took place in the EFL classroom at Dr Tahar Moulay (English department). The survey targeted both male and

female students that studied at the university; all of the student participants were male or female between 18-30 years old.

### **2.2.2. Data Collection Procedure**

The study used survey method to explore the student attitude toward teacher's use of sense of humor in the daily English classroom. 65 students provided a Completed questionnaire as the surveys were given out and collected.

Data collection is regarded as a hard task, and complicated process for conducting a research. As O'leary (2004, p.150)

*Collecting data is a hard task, and it is worth remembering that one method is not inherently better than another. This is why whatever data collection method to be used would depend upon the research goals, advantages, as to the disadvantages of each method.*

### **2.2.3. Instruments**

In the survey, there were four different sections for the thirteen items . The first section was about the Importance of the use o the sense o humor within English classroom. The second section was about the Psychological benefits o the use of the sense of humor within English classroom, the third section was about the effect of the sense of humor on learning outcome within English classroom, the fourth section was about false or inappropriate sense o humor within English classroom.

Besides of that we manage to provide the study with tables that contents a furthermore explanation about the questionnaire analysis.

#### 2.2.4. Data Analysis

The data collected from the survey, is going to be analyzed using Excel. In this vain, data analysis refers to the “ *Process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of the collected data*” De Vos (2002, P.339).

#### 2.2.5. Students Questionnaire

A definition of a questionnaire given by Brown (2001, p.6) is:

*"Any written instrument that presents respondents with a series of questions or statement to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers "*

The questionnaire of this research was addresses to EFL student of all levels in the Department of English in University of Dr Tahar Moulay , with the objective of knowing their attitude toward teachers use of the sense of humor with Daily English classes.

### 2.3. Discussion and Interpretation

#### 2.3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the major findings from the survey that implemented in the EFL classes at Dr Tahar Moulay University. Participants surveyed in the attitude towards the teachers use of sense of humor within English class, Moreover, to give furthermore explanation about the survey we divide the 13 questions into 4 sections.

**Section One:** The importance of the use of the sense of humor within English classroom

**Q1:** the teacher in the classroom should use the Sense of humor

**Q2:** A teacher who uses sense of humor in the classroom is more approachable.

**Q3:** The teacher-student relationship is enhanced using sense of humor.

**Q4:** Sense of humor can sometimes help student to learn and remember difficult material in a subject.

**Section Two:** The psychological benefits of the use of the sense of humor within English classes.

**Q1:** The use of the sense of humor in the classroom helps reduce tension and stress.

**Q2:** The use of the sense of humor in the classroom makes student more interested in learning the target language.

**Q3:** Student look forward to attend a classroom, in which teacher uses sense of humor as a tool to make the class more comfortable.

**Q4:** Sense of humor helps student be more attentive, and keeps the classroom environment interesting.

**Section Three:** The effect of the sense of humor on learning within English class.

**Q1:** Sense of humor increases the process of learning.

**Q2:** The use of the sense of humor helps foster an interactive classroom environment.

**Q3:** The use of the sense of humor in the classroom as a communicative tool is effective for learning.

**Section Four:** False or inappropriate sense of humor

**Q1:** Sense of humor should never be used to embarrass or mock a student.

**Q2:** Teacher should avoid using Sarcasm in the classroom.

### 2.3.2 Interpretation of the Results

When the differences between these two were not large enough to draw conclusions, the #1 and #2 (disagree responses) were looked at together as were the #4 and #5 (agree responses). The greater percentage of #5 responses (strongly agree) would represent the positive effects of Teachers use of the sense of humor within English classroom. The higher percentage of #1 (strongly disagree) would represent the ineffectiveness of Teachers use of the sense of humor within English classroom. The percentages of these responses were compared for each of the Thirteen Items.

The results obtained from the study lend support to the research questions. It was predicted that teacher's use of sense of humor in the classroom has a positive effect on student attitude and on learning progress within English class. Analysis of the result of student attitude toward teacher use of sense of humor in classroom will be *presented and discussed (see Tables 1 and 2)*.

Items #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total
1	0	0	0	10	1	1	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	28
2	0	3	1	16	2	3	7	5	1	0	1	0	0	69
3	3	3	1	14	4	4	4	0	6	4	1	1	3	70
4	23	17	21	13	25	26	10	13	21	12	19	26	21	205
5	39	42	42	12	33	31	41	46	37	48	44	38	41	398

**Table II.1: Number of Students who selected Each Response**

Table 1 contains the number of students, from the total of 65, who selected each response for each of the Thirteen Items. The Items' numbers are located at the top of the table with the 5 likert scale response numbers running down along the left-hand side. The last column to the right is a total column showing the sum of each response for all the Thirteen Items. Table 2 is set up in the same manner, yet contains the percentages of responses for each Item rather than the number for students. Table 2 contains the percentage of students selecting each response

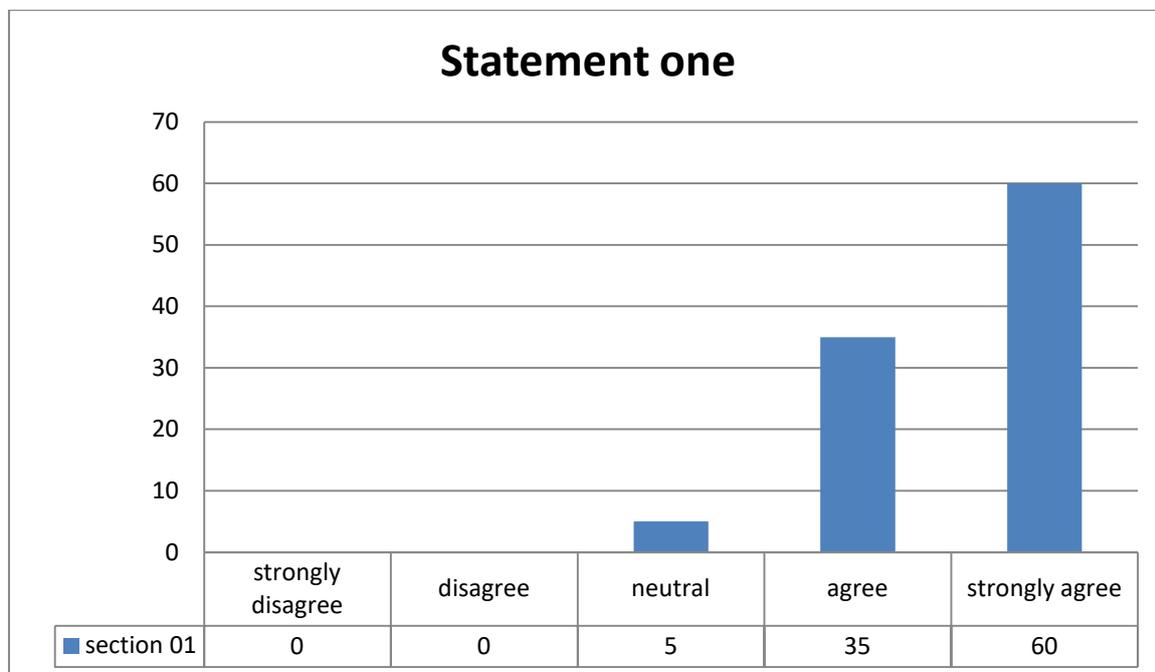
**Table II.2: Percentage of Students who selected Each Response**

Items #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total
1	0%	0%	0%	15%	2%	2%	5%	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	3%
2	0%	5%	2%	25%	3%	5%	11%	8%	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%	6%
3	5%	5%	2%	22%	6%	6%	6%	0%	9%	6%	2%	2%	5%	7%
4	35%	26%	32%	20%	38%	40%	15%	20%	32%	18%	30%	40%	32%	28%
5	60%	64%	64%	18%	51%	47%	63%	70%	57%	74%	66%	59%	63%	56%

### Section one: The importance of the use of the sense of humor

**Statement 1:** "Sense of humor should be used by the teacher in the classroom"

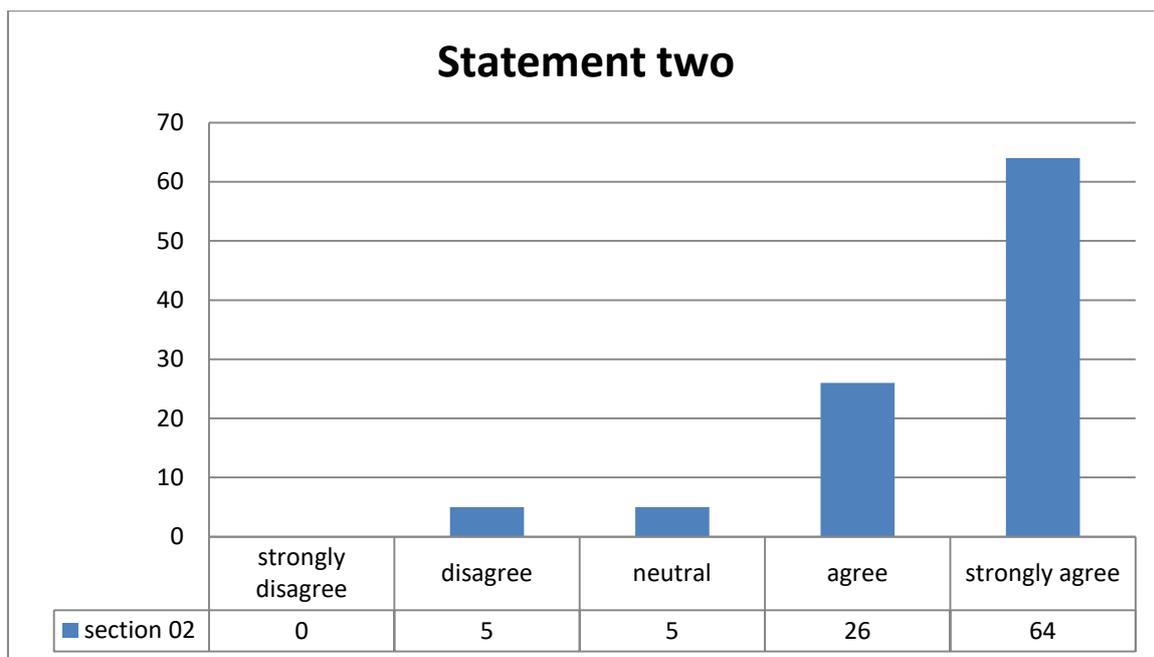
Sixty percent of students selected the strongly agree response while none selected the strongly disagree response. The strongly agree response represented the largest percentage of responses to statement one. This 60% represents over half of the students strongly agreeing about the significant of teacher's use of the sense of humor in classroom. An additional 35% selected mildly agree, yielding a total of 95% in agreement of the importance of using the sense of humor within classroom.



**Figure II.1: Sense of humor should be used by the teacher in the classroom.**

**Statement 2:** "A teacher who uses sense of humor in the classroom is more approachable."

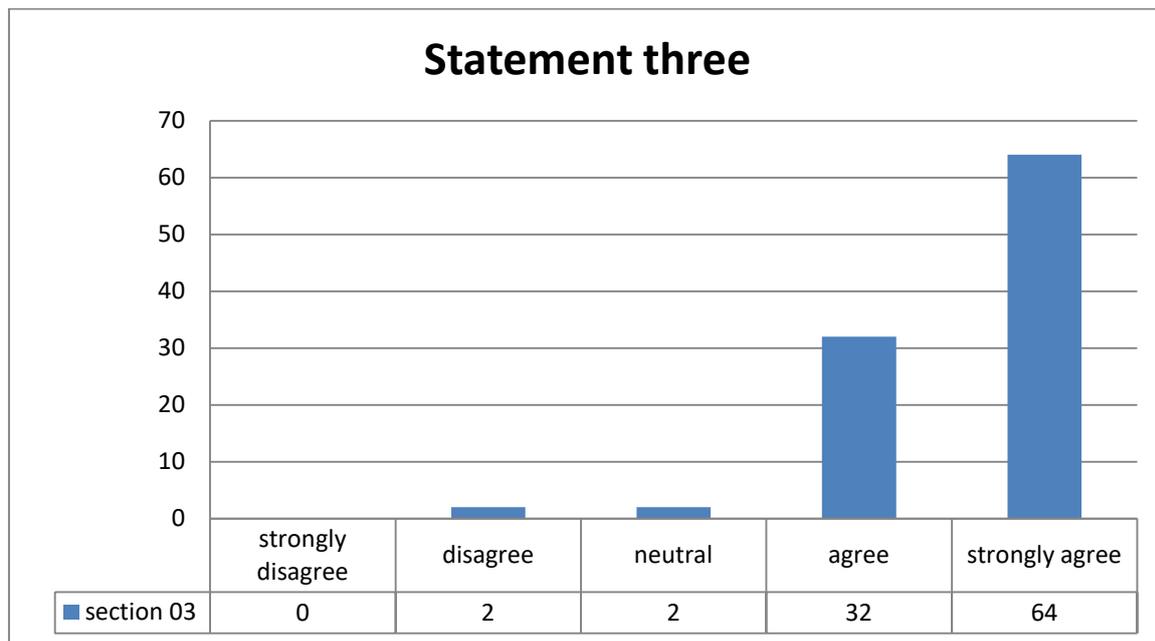
Once again, a large contrast existed between the strongly agree and the strongly disagree responses. Over half the students selected the strongly agree response as compared to the strongly disagree response, with percentages of Sixty-four and Zero respectively. This means that over half of the students feel that a teacher who uses sense of humor in the classroom is more approachable. The results become more convincing when adding the mildly agree 26% response rate.



**Figure II.2: A teacher who uses sense of humor in the classroom is more approachable.**

**Statement 3:** "The teacher-student relationship is enhanced using sense of humor ".

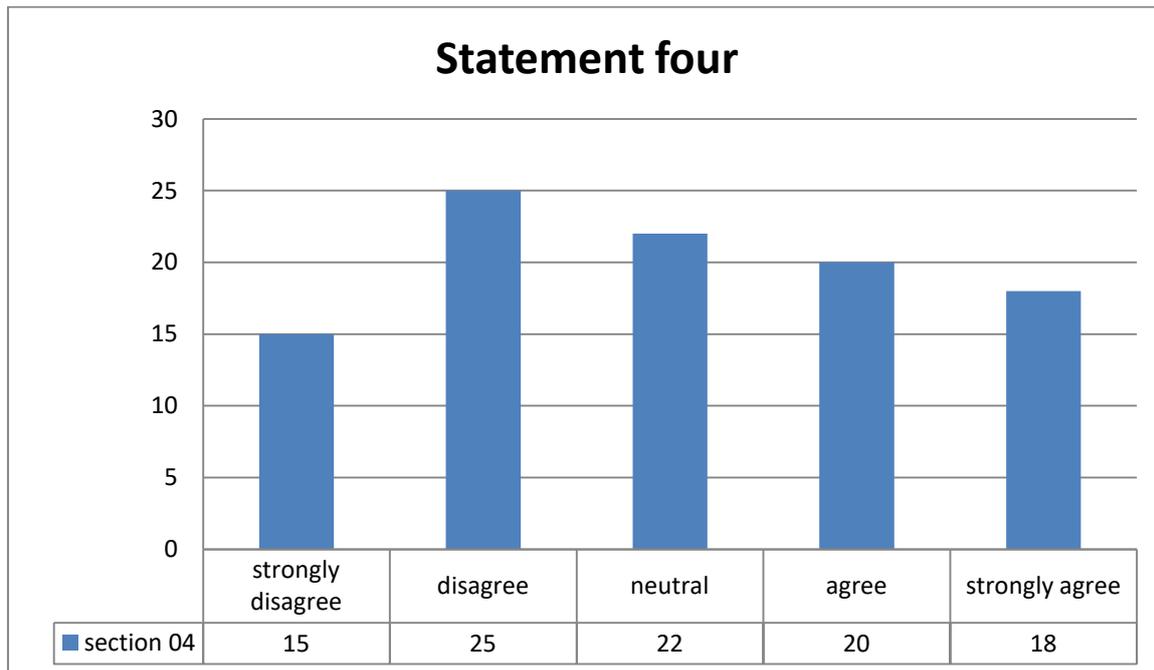
Students responded in a manner that was identical to statement two. Sixty-four percent of the students selected the strongly agree response whereas none selected the strongly disagree response. Over half the students feel that the teacher-student relationship is enhanced using the sense of humor.



**Figure II.3: The teacher-student relationship is enhanced using sense of humor.**

**Statement 4:** Sense of humor can sometimes helps student to learn and remember difficult material in a subject.

The responses selected by the students for this statement were too close to draw a conclusion based on this statement. Fifteen percent of students strongly disagreed with the sense of humor may sometimes helps student to learn and remember difficult material in a subject, whereas 18% strongly agreed that sense of humor is helpful in learning and remembering material in a subject. Comparison of combined strongly agree and mildly agree responses with strongly disagree and mildly disagree responses, 38% and 40% respectively, yielded a difference still too small to draw any conclusions. The closeness of the selected responses may have been a result of ambiguity of the statement, students' perceptions of the sense of humor, and its intentions.

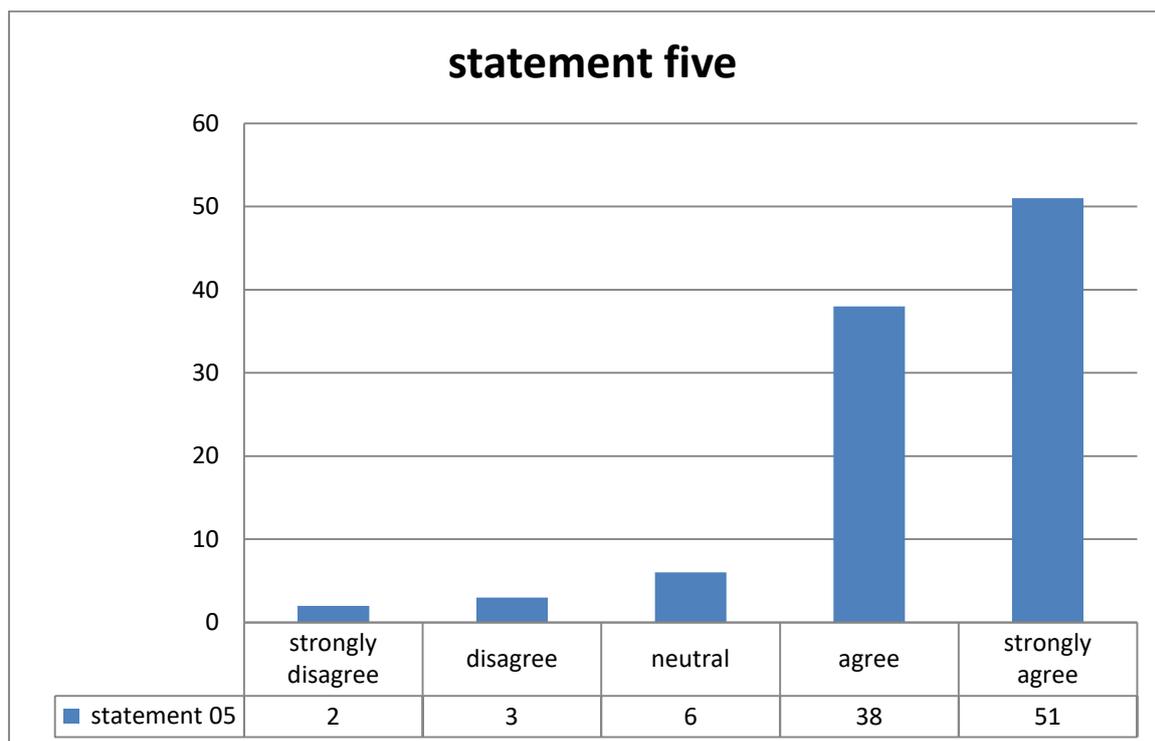


**Figure II.4: Sense of humor can sometimes helps student to learn and remember difficult material in a subject.**

**Section two: The psychological benefits of the use of the sense of humor within English classroom.**

**Statement 5:** "The use of the sense of humor in the classroom helps reduce tension and stress."

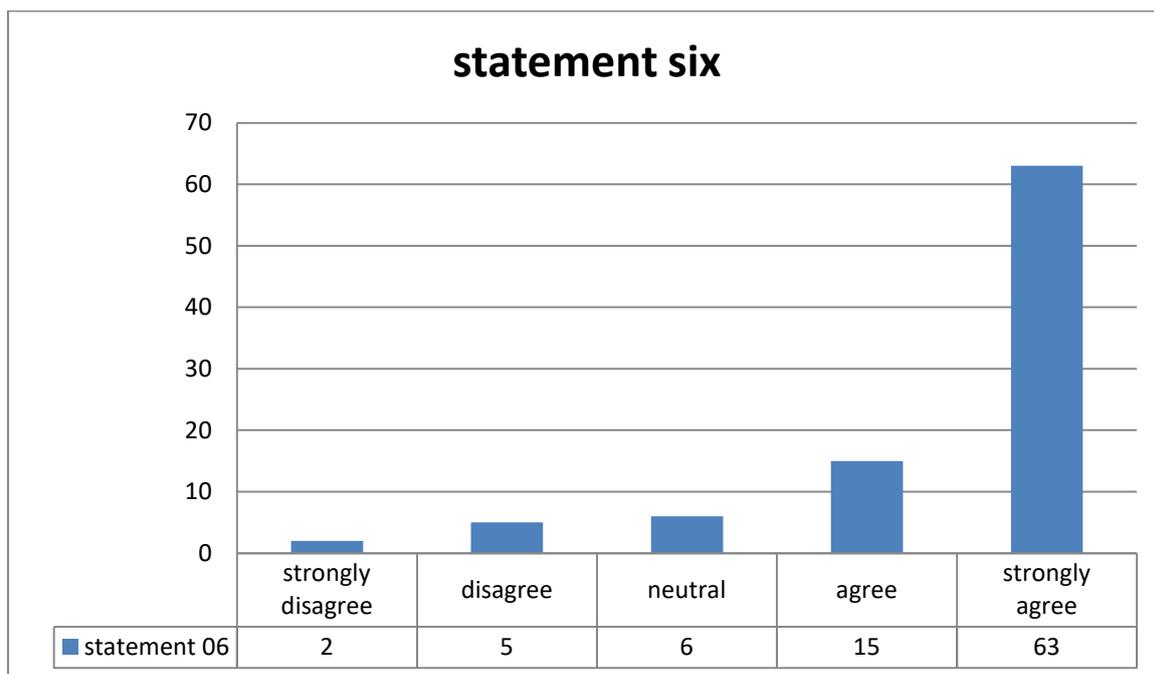
Only 1.5% of the students selected the strongly disagree response, whereas over half, 51%, of students chose the strongly agree response for this statement. Just over half the students feel that the use of sense of humor in the classroom helps reduce tension and stress.



**Figure II.5. The use of the sense of humor in the classroom helps reduce tension and stress**

**Statement 6:** "The use of the sense of humor in the classroom make student more interested in learning the target language".

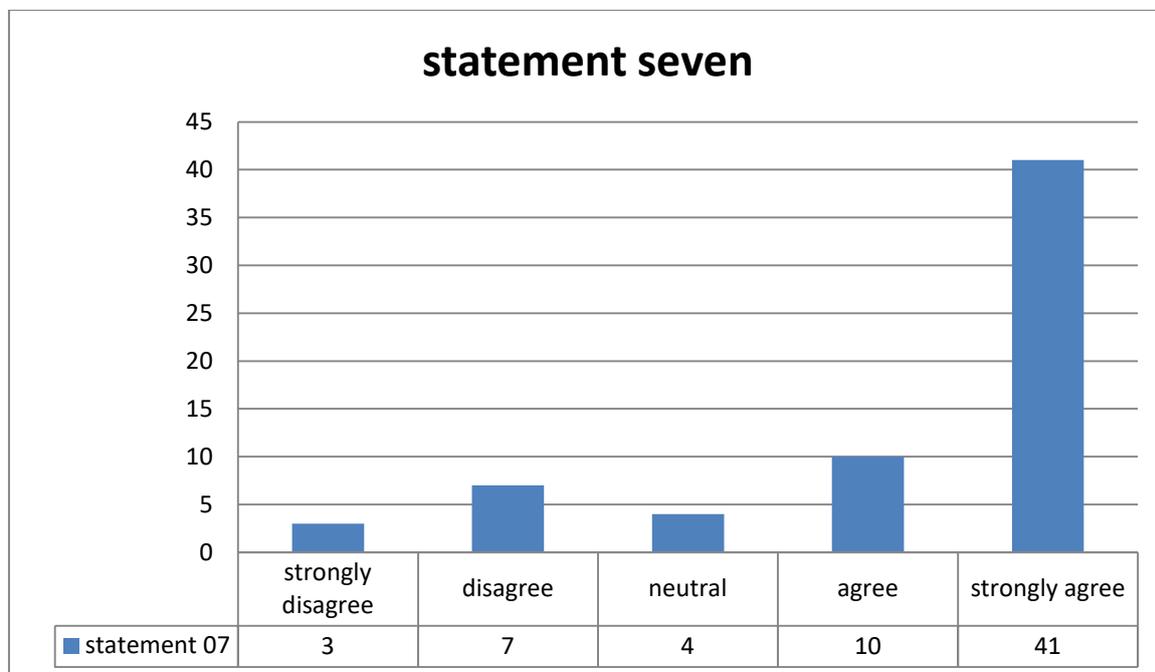
Forty-eight percent of the students chose strongly agree (#5) response indicating that nearly one-half of students felt that the use of the sense of humor in the classroom make them more interested in learning the target language. Only 1.5% of the respondents believed it to be ineffective in learning the target language. This was indicated by only 1.5% of the students choosing a strongly disagree (#1) response.



**Figure II.6. The use of the sense of humor in the classroom make student more interested in learning the target language**

**Statement 7:** " Students looks forward to attend a classroom, in which teacher uses sense of humor as tool to make the class more comfortable"

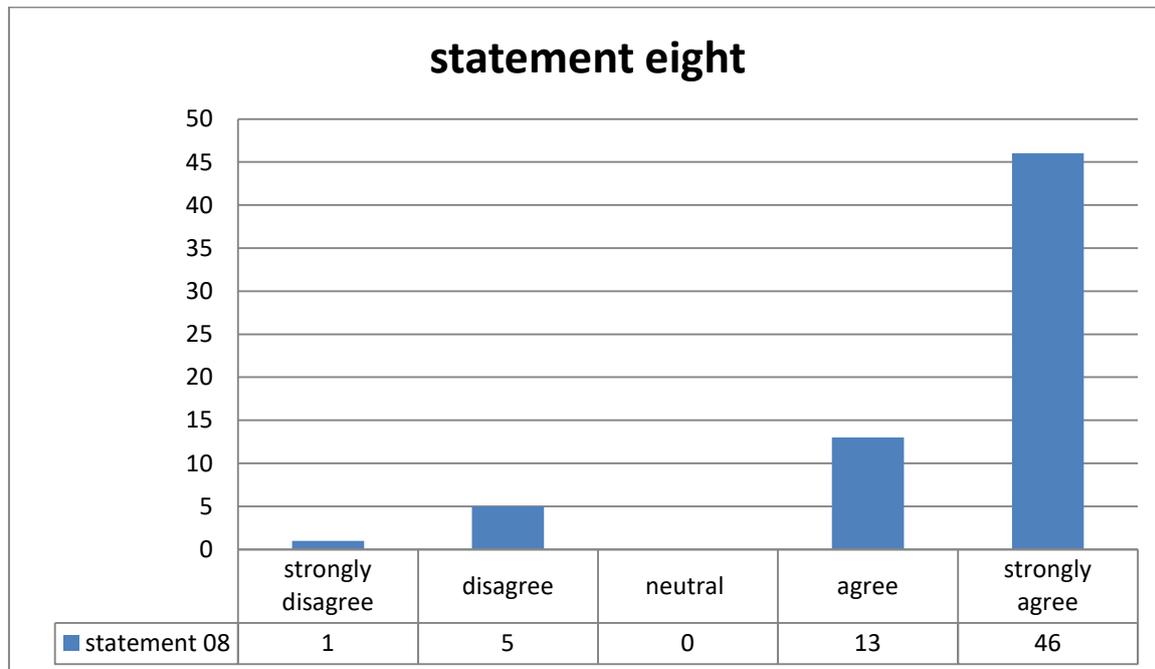
Sixty-three percent of the students surveyed chose strongly agree (#5) response that student looks forward to attend a classroom in which teacher uses the sense of humor as a tool to make the class more comfortable whereas 4.6% responded with strongly disagree (#1) choice. This suggests that some students, though even a slight number, do find it appropriate to use humor to ridicule another student.



**Figure II.7. Students look forward to attend a classroom, in which teacher uses sense of humor as tool to make the class more comfortable**

**Statement 8:** “Sense of humor helps student be more attentive, and keeps the classroom environment interesting.”

Seventy-one percent of the students responded with the strongly agree (#5) response whereas 0% chose the strongly disagree (#1) response. This indicates that the students perceived humor as helpful in keeping their attention, and keeps the classroom environment interesting. One can interpret that humor adds to the interest level of the student.

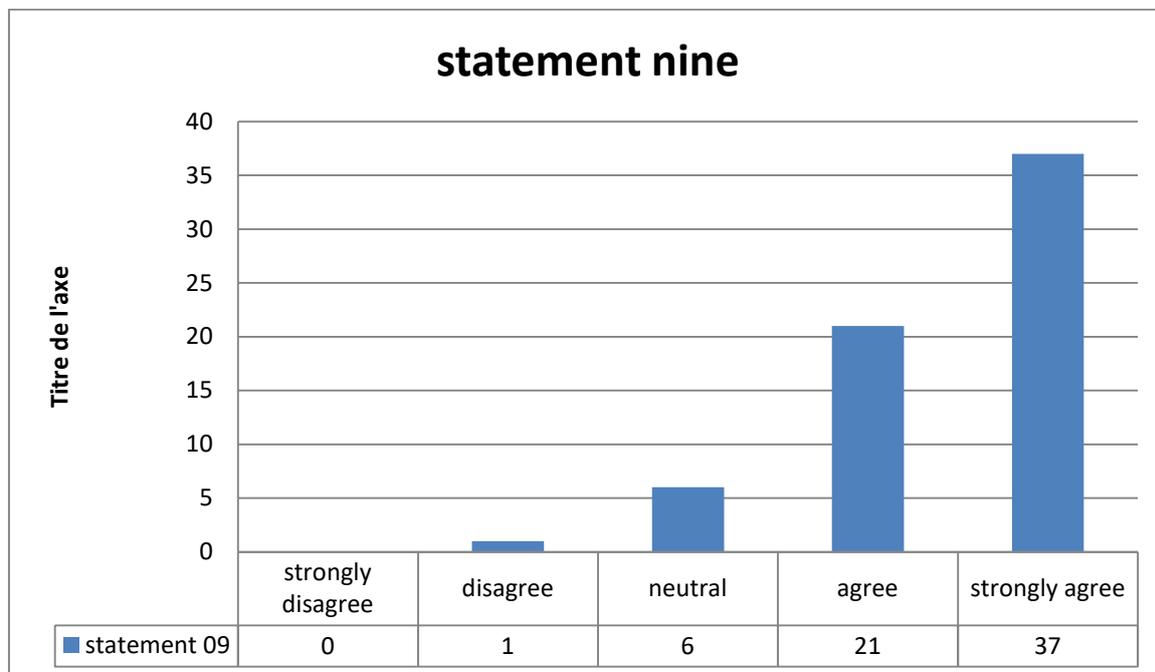


**Figure II.8. Sense of humor helps student be more attentive, and keeps the classroom environment interesting**

### Section three: The effect of the sense of humor on learning within English classes.

**Statement 9:** Sense of humor increases the process of learning.

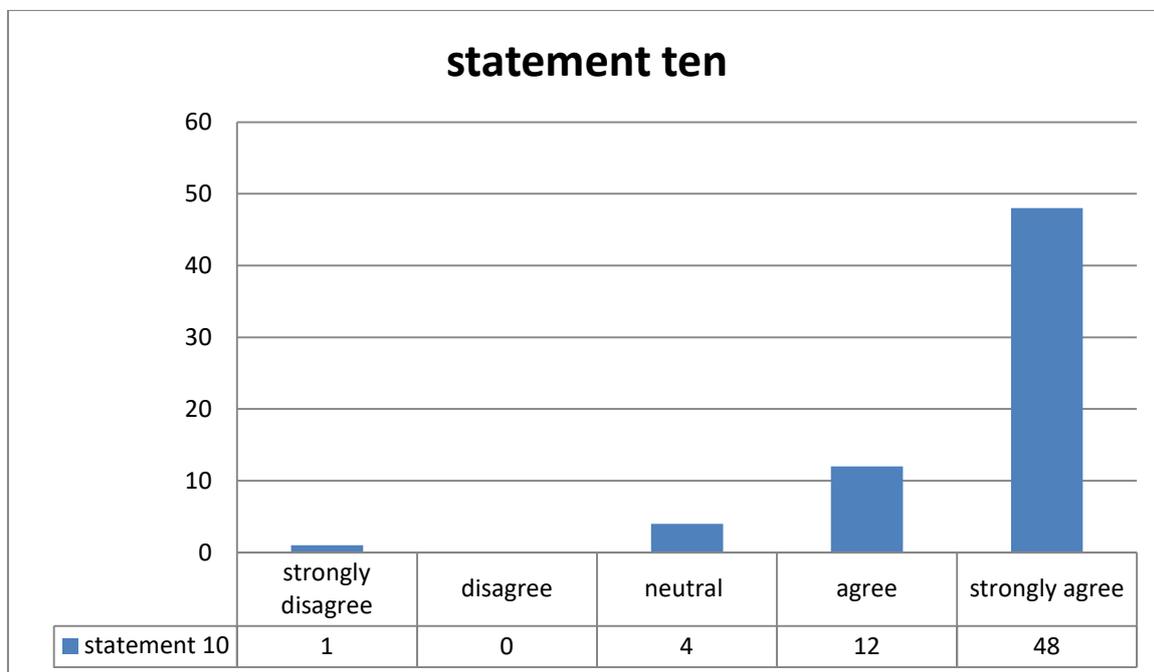
Fifty-seven percent of students responding selected the strongly agree response (#5) whereas 0% selected the strongly disagree (#1) response. This indicates that the students perceived that the sense of humor increases the learning process.



**Figure II.9. Sense of humor increases the process of learning**

**Statement 10:** The use of the sense of humor helps foster an interactive classroom environment.

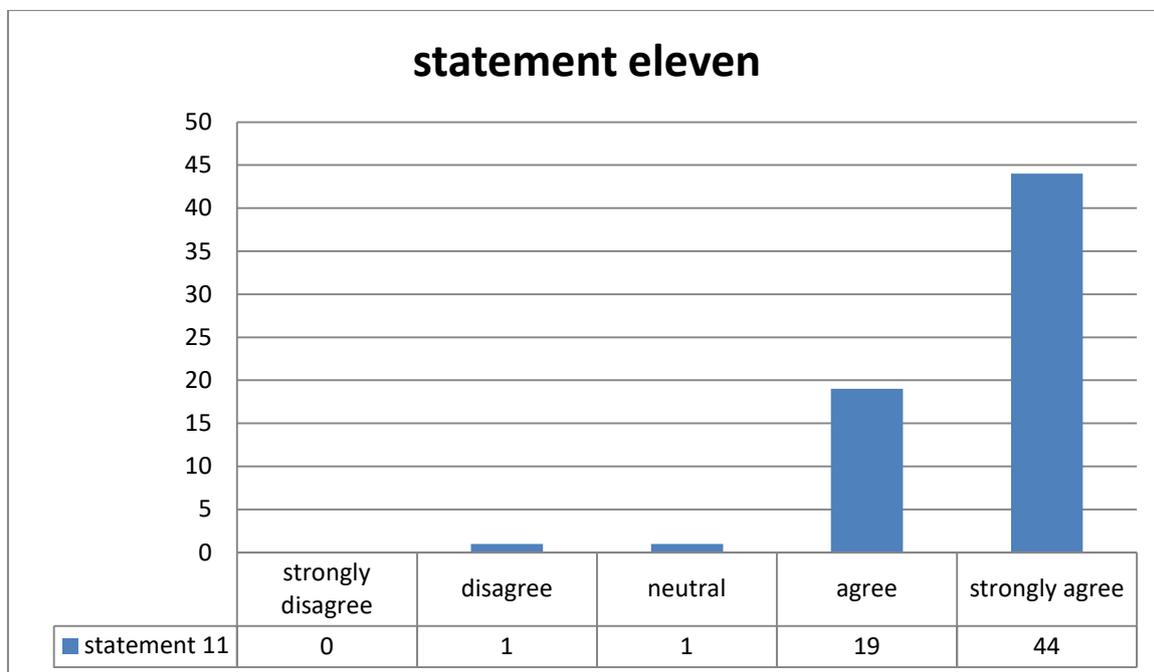
Almost two-thirds of the students selected the strongly agree (#5) response whereas only 1.5% chose the strongly disagree (#1) response. This suggests that students feel that the use of the sense of humor helps foster an interactive classroom environment.



**Figure II.10. The use of the sense of humor helps foster an interactive classroom environment.**

**Statement 11:** The use of the sense of humor in the classroom as a communicative tool is effective for learning.

Students responded in a manner that shows that, Sixty-six percent of the them selected the strongly agree response whereas none selected the strongly disagree response. Over half the students feel that the use of the sense of humor in the classroom as a communicative tool is effective for learning.

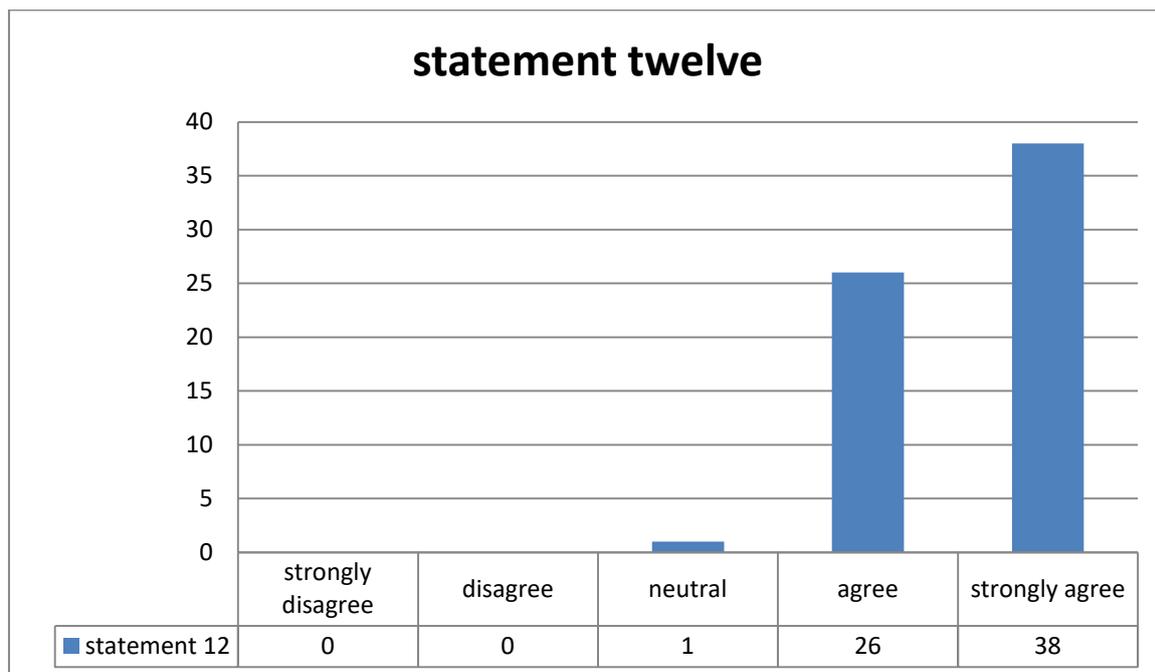


**Figure II.11. The use of the sense of humor in the classroom as a communicative tool is effective for learning**

## Section four: False or inappropriate sense of humor

**Statement 12:** Sense of humor should never be used to embarrass or mock a student.

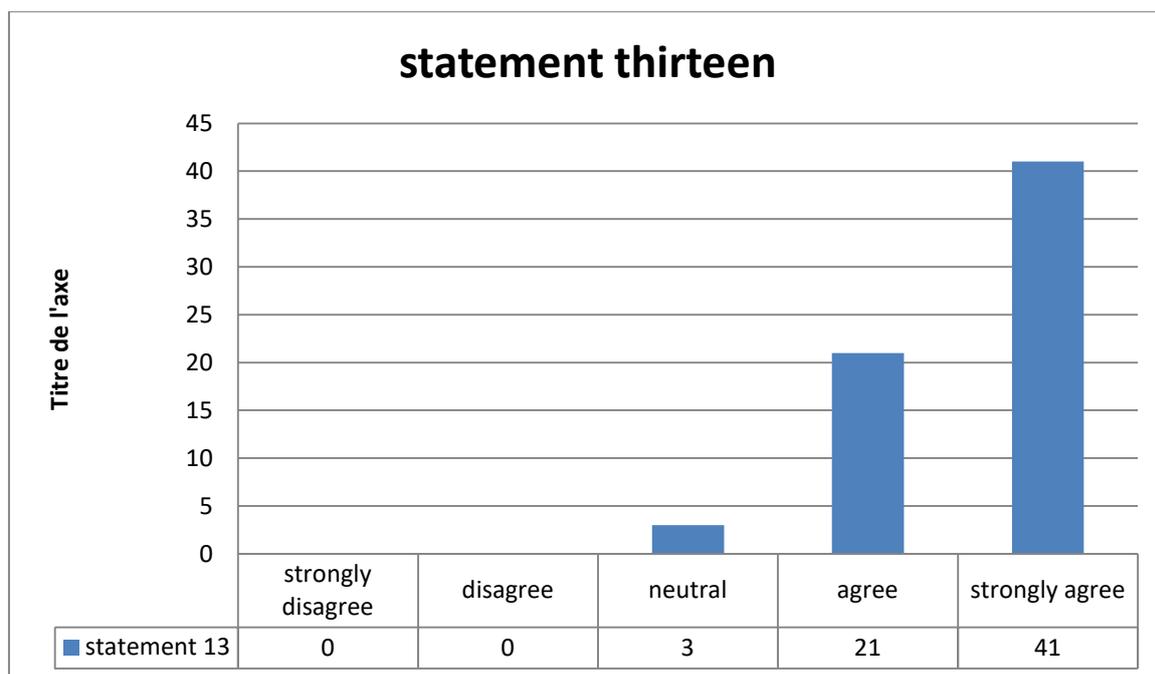
Fifty-nine percent of the students chose strongly agree (#5) response indicating that more of half of students felt that the sense of humor should never be used to mock students. Whereas zero percent of student thinks that it is permitted to embarrass student in the classroom.



**Figure II.12. Sense of humor should never be used to embarrass or mock a student.**

**Statement 13:** Teacher should avoid using Sarcasm in the classroom.

Sixty-Three percent of students selected the strongly agree response while none selected the strongly disagree response. The strongly agree response represented the largest percentage of responses to statement number one. This 63% represents over half of the students strongly agreeing that teachers should avoid using Sarcasm in the classroom. An additional 32% selected mildly agree, yielding a total of 95% in agreement of teacher should avoid using sarcasm within classroom.



**Figure II.13. Teacher should avoid using Sarcasm in the classroom**

This chapter presents the major findings from the survey that implemented in the EFL classes at Dr Tahar Moulay University. Participants surveyed in their attitude towards teacher's use of sense o humor in daily English classroom. Moreover, to give furthermore explanation about the survey we add tables to give more insights about the survey analysis. In the questionnaire analysis, the first table contains numbers of student response in each o the four sections to get a clear idea about the importance of the use of sense of humor in classroom. The second table displays the percentages of each student responses about each of the four sections; all this just to lend support to the main research question and to approve that using sense of humor in the classroom has several advantages on learning progress and student attitude.

A survey was used to test the hypothesis that the learner's attitude toward the daily use of the sense of humor by English teachers has a positive effect in learning English language. The thirteen items of the survey assessed students' agreement or disagreement with statements concerning humor's use and effectiveness in learning English language. The premise behind this procedure was that the greatest percentage of subjects who responded with the #5 (strongly agree) response, the greater support for the research questions. The greater percentage of responses did fall in this category. Students reported agreeing with statements concerning sense of humor used by teachers in daily English classes at a greater rate than disagreeing with such statements. Twice as many students agreed with such statements rather than disagreed, indicating the positive effects of using sense of humor in daily English classes and on reducing stress and tension, and fostering a comfortable and interactive classroom environment. Such results help one to conclude that if such a large percentage of students report that there is a huge importance of using sense of humor in daily English classroom, it must be an effective tool to improve learning English language.

**2.3.3. Discussion of the Results**

This chapter focuses on bringing together the findings of the study; and to evaluate the results within the context of the findings of the wider review of the empirical literature that took in the second chapter. The main aims of the study focused on assessing how students respond to the use of sense of humor in daily English classroom. Whether students are more comfortable to learn English by the use of the sense of humor by English teachers in the classroom, if there is any chance that using the sense of humor will upgrade the learning outcome.

Because of the difficulties, that encounters us to collect the data for the study from all of the expected 65 participants and the lack of time. Regardless of these limitations, it is apparent that the study is an important area to research, given the importance of using sense of humor in our daily life, and the view held by the literature that it would transform the learning process in only a short number of years.

When taking into account the general attitude of students in this study, it should be underlined that the majority of individuals in this work had a positive attitude towards the teacher's use of sense of humor in classroom. This growth of positivity perhaps reflects the attitude of who found that using sense of humor in classroom is now thought to be central to future success in learning English language. The students were extremely positive in their attitude toward the teacher's use of sense of humor, and were the largest supporters of its use in the classroom.

It is important to highlight that the research studies primary data also underlined a number of potential challenges and obstacles that exist when trying to implement the use of sense of humor in daily English classroom. The literature stated that a major obstacle could be the personal attitudes of the students toward sense of humor, and teacher's careful and wise use of sense of humor in classroom.

If the classroom becomes a tense, negative environment, students will have difficulty in learning. When these young adults have so many sources of stress weighing on their minds, It seems so easy for the students to get so caught up in the stress of grades, homework assignments, peer pressure, and family problems that school becomes a negative place and experience. Therefore, one of the educator's main priorities should be transforming the situation and creating a positive learning environment.

Several factors that may have affected this study need to be addressed. The issue of home or family environment of the students may have played a role in the way sense of humor was perceived by the individual students. For example, in some family situations, sense of humor may have been an integral part of daily life, whereas in others, the sense of humor may have been completely nonexistent. In the environment in which sense of humor was integral, these students may have perceived teacher's use of sense of humor in a more positive manner, being useful in a stressful situation, including the classroom; whereas in an environment in which sense of humor was rarely used, one may have perceived it as ineffective and inappropriate for learning English language.

**2.3.4. Summary**

The study had one-research questions and it focused on discovering how are student's attitudes toward teacher's use of sense of humor among college students who study English as a foreign Language (EFL). Whether students are more appealing for using sense of humor to help them to learn English language, if there are any forms of sense of humor used by the teachers that are preferred as a communicative tool in the classroom and how students think the sense of humor is helpful for their learning overall of the English language. Although the results listed in this chapter merely presented the findings from the student surveys, the responses were often fairly conclusive and highlighted that using the sense of humor was welcome in the classroom. Moreover, it was found that students were engaged by the idea of using sense of humor in the classroom to develop learning; it also was felt that if applied correctly, and gradually, the teacher's use of the sense of humor in daily English classroom could help to benefit in many aspects, especially in increasing the learning outcome.

The use of university students was important because it was felt that their higher maturity level than school age students meant that they would be able to take into account the serious nature of this study and answer accordingly. Through this, the study has gained important data that can help come to conclusions about the use of sense o humor by English teachers in the classroom. These results help to confirm and answer the research question, enabling to conclude on the subject and further the knowledge of the wider literature.

**2.3.5. Conclusion**

This chapter aims to present a detailed yet concise conclusion as to the main findings from the research. Yet, this is not the only aim of the chapter as it also attempts to provide recommendations for the future (both in terms of further study and in terms of advice for teachers of EFL students that centers on the use of sense of humor in the classroom) and addresses the major limitations of the work.

The study aimed to discover how students respond to use of sense of humor in the classroom, whether students are more in favor of using sense of humor to help them improve their language skills, if there are any forms of sense of humor that are preferred in the classroom and how students think the use of sense of humor impacts their learning overall of English language in classroom. The major findings that emerged from the work are outlined and emphasized in the section below.

It was important for the study to find out how students respond to the teachers use of sense of humor in the classroom. Within this context, the study found that the research findings generally reflected the views of the wider and empirical literature on the subject. In the result and analysis of data collection, student attitudes were generally positive toward the implementation of sense of humor in the classroom. It was found that their views tended to suggest that sense of is crucial to improved success in the classroom

Through the conclusions presented in this chapter, it is clear that the majority of the results for this sample provide conclusive evidence that students view the use of sense of humor as effective and a way of helping to improve the learning process in the classroom. These results indicate that students are keen to the teachers who use sense of humor in the EFL classroom to facilitate their learning, teachers, and curriculum developers to take into consideration the huge impact of sense of humor in classroom.

**2.3.5.1. Limitations**

It is important to highlight that there were a number of limitations that influenced the study. It is important to underline that the survey design was effective, but that there were other problems that limited the results. For example, the research survey was effective in helping gain results aimed at the major research question, and gain more detailed information about the participants' attitude toward teachers use of sense of humor to help them for improving their language skills and learning outcome. Future research should consider ways to ensure better participation in answering surveys. In addition, the difficulties that faces teacher to apply sense of humor in the classroom, concerning their own experience with sense of humor, so the curriculum developers should take into account to create a guideline for teachers to use sense of humor effectively in the classroom.

**2.3.5.2. Future Study**

There are recommendations to be made following the successful completion of this study. Although the results were conclusive, the study was limited in terms of its sample population. The work focused on attitudes of students toward teacher's use of sense of humor among college students who study English as a foreign Language (EFL) in Algeria (university of Dr Tahar Moulay). The results that have been produced are slightly limited in their ability to present generalized findings. The population size was at its maximum, in terms of access, but it is acknowledged that for such a broad subject as EFL teaching at the university level in Algeria, a much larger population would be needed to be able to generalize. Despite this, the results were conclusive but it is necessary to present a more general study with a larger population sample to be able to generalize these findings with any great success. It is suggested that the study be replicated with a far wider audience across a range of EFL classrooms at the university level in Algeria to gain a more reflective set of findings for the country as a whole.

Furthermore, this style of study should not necessarily be limited to a hypothetical situation. It would perhaps be more appropriate to design a pilot study in which two classrooms develop their English Language skills, with one of the classrooms using sense of humor in their learning while the other does not. It would then be possible to gain a comprehensive comparison of how students that are exposed to the sense of humor in the classroom are helped and participate in lessons when placed next to a group of students that do not have this access. This type of study would help to develop further the knowledge concerning the implementation of the use of sense of humor in English classroom within the university level context in Algeria.

#### **2.3.5.3. Recommendations**

A recommendation for further research would be an investigation of how we could apply the sense of humor to situations beyond the classroom environment, one such area that could be examined to some extent would be the physiological aspect and the effect of sense of humor on reducing stress and tension. With the increased number of deaths due to heart attack and stroke, stress being a major contributor, sense of humor may be a factor useful in creating a decline in this rate. Another recommendation to be considered is that educators should model the utilization of appropriate forms of humor. This practice equips students with the vital tools to survive in an extremely stressful society.

When used appropriately, the potential benefits of the sense of humor are endless. Based upon the findings of this study, the researchers suggests that educators consider the use sense of humor as a mechanism for reducing stress and tension and creating a more positive learning environment to improve English language process .

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## **Appendices**

### **Introduction:**

Dear participant (s),

It is our goal to help our students to be as well prepared as possible to learn English language effectively, this questionnaire is designed to obtain your views and opinions on how teachers use of sense of humor helps improve student to learn English language. In addition, your attitude toward teachers' use of sense of humor will be highly considered in this study.

We will greatly appreciate it if you will complete this questionnaire and return it back. We realize your schedule is busy one and that your time is valuable, but we are sure that you want to improve the quality of your learning. Your responses will be kept completely confidential; we asked for no identifying information on the survey form. The study has been approved by the university's research with Human Subjects Review Committee. We want to thank you in advance for your cooperation.

QUESTIONNAIRE: Student Attitude toward teacher use of sense of humor.

1= strongly disagree. 2= disagree. 3= neutral. 4=agree. 5=strongly agree.

<b>Attitudes toward teachers use of sense of humor</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1</b>	Sense of humor should be used by the teacher in the classroom					
<b>2</b>	A teacher who uses sense of humor in the classroom is more approachable.					
<b>3</b>	The teacher-student relationship is enhanced using sense of humor.					
<b>4</b>	Sense of humor can sometimes helps student to learn and remember difficult material in a subject.					
<b>5</b>	The use of the sense of humor in the classroom helps reduce tension and stress.					
<b>6</b>	The use of the sense of humor in the classroom make student more interested in learning the target language.					
<b>7</b>	Student look forward to attend a classroom, in which teacher uses sense of humor as tool to make the class more comfortable					
<b>8</b>	Sense of humor helps student be more attentive, and keeps the classroom environment interesting.					
<b>9</b>	Sense of humor increases the process of learning.					
<b>10</b>	The use of the sense of humor helps foster an interactive classroom environment.					
<b>11</b>	The use of the sense of humor in the classroom as a communicative tool is effective for learning.					
<b>12</b>	Sense of humor should never be used to embarrass or mock a student.					
<b>13</b>	Teacher should avoid using Sarcasm in the classroom.					