

DOI: [10.20472/TE.2020.8.2.001](https://doi.org/10.20472/TE.2020.8.2.001)

HUMOR AS A TECHNIQUE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (ELT)

WIRYA AHMED AMEEN

Abstract:

There is no doubt that teachers of English as a foreign language are faced with enormous challenges in their classrooms. They are expected to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse number of learners every year; and there is more content to teach each year as well. Providing teachers with different strategies and teaching methods is the area of Applied Linguistics. This paper aims at highlighting the value of adding some sort of fun-class activities to the miscellaneous teaching methods that are at the discretion of foreign language teachers. It explores the role of such activities in motivating students, the effect they have on reducing the boredom of teaching and learning processes, as well as their significance in rendering the whole process as interesting as possible.

To tackle the topic, the paper is organized into five sections: section one is introductory. It sheds light on the topic in general and the type of fun-class activities involved. Section two, dwells on the discipline of applied linguistics and its contribution to the process of foreign language teaching. Section three, exhibits the various methods and approaches put forward by applied linguists to assist foreign language teachers in the teaching process. Section four is the core of the study in which different fun-class activities are presented along with the linguistic aspect they support in language classes. Section five, eventually presents the conclusions the study has arrived at. The paper ends with a list of the references consulted.

Keywords:

language, fun-class, teaching

JEL Classification: I21, I29

Authors:

WIRYA AHMED AMEEN, College of Arts-Department of English, University of Knowledge, Erbil, Iraq,
Email: wiryagm67@gmail.com

Citation:

WIRYA AHMED AMEEN (2020). Humor as a Technique in English Language Teaching (ELT). International Journal of Teaching and Education, Vol. VIII(2), pp. 1-17., [10.20472/TE.2020.8.2.001](https://doi.org/10.20472/TE.2020.8.2.001)

1. Introduction:

Foreign language teaching (FLT) is an art; this is what is often maintained by specialists in the field. It is a highly skilled activity which is acquired by careful observation and patient practice.

Corder (1973) states that

'a particular practical activity is considered an art when it cannot be carried out successfully by following a set of rules of thumb, when our knowledge of all the factors involved is incomplete, and when many of the decisions on how to proceed must be left to the private experience of the practitioner' Corder (1973: 9)

To him, language teaching is an activity of this sort, and it is affected by many factors, of which students' motivation toward learning is an effective one. FLT, as claimed by van Qirsouw (1984:1), is a matter of considerable social importance. There is a great demand for it in many countries, and constitutes an important part of education from primary school to universities, in addition to company courses, evening classes and summer schools.

The same thing is largely true in Kurdistan. English, as a foreign language, is taught in schools, universities, language centers, evening classes...etc. Teachers adopt miscellaneous methods and strategies to this aim. This paper attempts to investigate the involvement of fun-class activities in the process of FLT, and their effect on the entire teaching process. Various fun-class activities are discussed in relation to the teaching of English grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure and so on. The activities are explained with reference to the linguistic aspect they tackle, along with illustrative examples.

2. Foreign Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics:

The discipline of Applied Linguistics can be regarded as one of the most practical of all linguistic branches. It is mainly concerned with the application of linguistic theories and procedures to the process of FLT. It is generally seen by scholars as a two-way street in which the applied linguist directs traffic from theory into practice and from practice into theory. Finch (2005: 180) maintains that FLT methods and strategies have been deeply influenced by contemporary developments in linguistics. Unlike older approaches, FLT programs today adopt more advanced approaches, such as 'the communicative method', to enhance the learner's communicative competence in the target language; that is the ability to apply the rules of grammar appropriately in their appropriate situations.

Helping the learner to acquire the communicative competence is predicated first on the primacy of speech, i.e., that English language learning is first about learning to *talk* in English, and secondly on the belief that learning a language is an intuitive process, i.e. learners are programmed to acquire language, and those FLT methods work best which work in association with the learner's inner capacity (ibid). In relation to the discipline of Applied Linguistics, Widdowson (2000) distinguishes between two traditions: Applied Linguistics (LA) and Linguistics Applied (LA). He states :

The difference is that in the case of linguistics applied, the assumption is that the problem can be reformulated by the direct and unilateral application of concepts and terms deriving from linguistic enquiry itself. In the case of applied linguistics, intervention is crucially a matter of mediation. Applied linguistics has to relate and reconcile different representations of reality.

Widdowson (2000:5)

Concerning the above distinction, Davies and Elder (2006:19) argue that such a distinction is necessary to observe, and it depends on the researchers' orientation; if they regard themselves as linguists applying linguistics so as to validate a theory, that is linguistics applied (LA); if they see themselves as applied linguists because they seek a practical answer to a language problem, that is applied linguistics (AL).

The above title suggests that applied linguistics and FLT are not synonymous, however, the learning and teaching of foreign languages constitute the most important area within the extensive field of applied linguistics. Thus, the title of this section denotes that applied linguistics is mainly pertinent to the application of linguistic knowledge to FLT process. Hence it is, as a discipline, not a theoretical study, but it makes use of the findings of theoretical studies, i.e. the applied linguist is a consumer, or user, not a producer of theories; and in relation to FLT, the applied linguist can be said to have the role of a consultant and an integral member of the planning team for the entire language teaching operation (Corder 1973: 10). The following section sheds light on some of the methods or strategies postulated by the discipline of applied linguistics for facilitating FLT process.

3. Methodologies in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT):

Broadly, the need to learn second or foreign languages has always existed in some form or other. However, only recently the demand for FLT has so immensely increased that there has been a need for educational facilities for excessively large number of learners. Hence, the tendency toward FLT increased dramatically commencing from the nineteenth century. Different stages developed

different methods but no single method is said to have gained a monopoly on the others. The following are some of those methods (van Qirsouw 1984:147):

1. The grammar-translation method:

This method is sometimes called 'the traditional method' though it does not denote that it is the oldest method. It is still extensively used in FLT. This method, as its objective, has to help learners acquire the L2 *deductively*, i.e. through the learning of explicitly formulated grammatical rules and paradigms. Its most popular exercise is translation from L1 into L2 and vice versa. The emphasis is on form and the arrangement of exercises often reflects the grammatical ordering of word classes. In this type of method, the focus is on the learning of rules taken for granted that rules have to be learned for their own sake; words are not presented in context, but in bilingual lists that have to be learned by heart. Besides, the exercise sentences are artificial, and the skills taught primarily benefit the reading skill. The oral skills are clearly neglected, and little attention is paid to pronunciation practices; and there is predominant use of the L1 by the teacher and learners alike (Stevens 1972:705).

2. The direct method:

This particular method subsumes a collection of approaches and techniques, the differences of which have never been fundamental. Their differences, rather, lead to various conclusions drawn for the process of FLT. This method emerged as a reaction to the grammar-translation method. With respect to its objectives, oral skills are generally more emphasized. The classroom methodology necessitates that the L2 utterances are directly associated with the denotated objects and actions; and that the use of L1 by teachers and learners is considered a detour which should be avoided. Moreover, the listening and speaking skills are taken to be best learned through listening and speaking practices; grammatical rule are not formulated, but taught *inductively* by practicing with complete and meaningful utterances (Rivers 1968: 18ff). The ideas of the proponents of this method, such as the Czech scholar Comenius, can be summarized as follows (Titone 1968: 14):

- a. The learner will acquire rules of grammar inductively, i.e. the learner does not learn the rules themselves, but provide direct practice in speaking and reading through imitation and repetition.
- b. The best method of teaching meaning is the one using sensory experience, generally visual perception.

Other well-known proponents of this method involve Jespersen (1860-1943) and Palmer (1877-1949) whose viewpoints are worth mentioning. Darian (1969: 546) says on Jespersen that one finds a lot of attention for certain didactic principles in his work, such as the use of contextual learning material and pattern drills; he is strongly opposed to practicing with disconnected sentences and with uninteresting and monotonous material. Harlod E. Palmer was also interested in providing a scientific foundation for FLT. He found it necessary to incorporate scientific research into language learning. He wanted to base the study of FLT on an integration of principles from linguistics, pedagogy and learning psychology (Titone 1968: 60).

3. The audiolingual method:

This FLT method belongs to the group of direct methods, partly because of the didactic procedures developed and partly because of the emphasis of spoken language as the primary teaching objective. It emerged as a reflection of the development and availability of audio-technology in the 1950s. The term 'audiolingual' became popular around 1960 and was used for the first time by Brooks (1975). He used the term to indicate oral skill as opposed to 'visual graphic', the written skill; but he didn't want the 'audiolingual' to be the suggested name for the method as it bypasses the written skill entirely, and this, to him, is something misleading and harmful (Brooks 1975: 236ff).

It is claimed that the 'audiolingual method' was based originally on the behaviorist learning be viewed as a mechanistic process of habit formation, and the conclusions drawn are the following (Rivers 1964: 24):

- a. Habits are strengthened by reinforcement.
- b. Foreign language habits are formed effectively by giving the right response, not by making mistakes.
- c. Language is behavior and behavior can be learned only by inducing the learner to behave.

4. The audiovisual method:

This method is also seen as a mixture of methods all having a common element that they all attach a great deal of importance to the use of visual elements. As far as the objectives of FLT are concerned, these approaches also have a common interest, namely the fact that they prioritize oral skills. The group of methods entitled 'audiovisual' belong largely to the category of the direct methods, not only from the point of view of objectives, but also because of the view they take of teaching procedures. The improved facilities of the modern technology of producing and

reproducing visual information can be said to have resulted in the hallmark of this method. The audiovisual methods developed in the last decades, and their psychological and linguistic principles show considerable resemblance to those of other direct methods. However, to some scholars the visual component is not more than a collection of useful aids and techniques which can be used in various methods (Titone 1968: 175).

5. The communicative method:

The origins of Communicative Language Teaching can be traced back to the late 1960s and early 1970s, when several applied linguists argued that language learners, despite their study of language as a system (essentially grammar and vocabulary) and extensive practice in language structures (through e.g. audio-lingual language teaching), were unable to use language effectively in real-world communicative situations. Hunston and Oakey (2010: 51) claim that communicative language teaching might be understood when considering communication from a number of different perspectives:

1. Communication as competence:

Describing communication as the goal of language teaching has, since the early 1970s, involved the development of increasingly refined definitions of communicative competence. Hence, understanding communicative competence is one way of understanding communicative language teaching. Before 1970s, the dominant view of language was structural, that is, language as consisting of discrete items and rules. In the 1970s, a confluence of factors allowed applied linguistics to coalesce on a new view of language as communicative competence. Significant influences included Halliday's (1973) work on the semantic potential of language, Hymes' (1972) exploration of the relationship between language as a system and communication in social situations, and Wilkins' (1976) development of the analytical notional/functional syllabus. Another important factor was the development of (British) applied linguistics as a field generating ideas distinct from earlier structural and Chomskian theories (Hunston and Oakey 2010: 51).

Thus, it is claimed that communicative competence includes not only grammatical competence (in the Chomskian sense), it also includes sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence i.e. speakers draw on a range of competencies when using language for communication; and consequently, language teaching should focus on all of these things. The communicative competence gives us a sense of 'where' we are going; it does not tell us 'how' we get there (ibid).

2. Communication as process:

The previous section focused on communication as a sense showing us *where* we are going; whereas this section focuses on its process, i.e. *how* we can get there. To understand communicative language teaching methodology, or what should be happening in classrooms, the communicative language teaching literature has turned to models of the communication process. The common position is that you learn to use language through communicating. Hence, understanding what is involved in the process of communication is a second way of understanding communicative language teaching. It is claimed that the most well-known model of the communication process is the linear model sometimes associated with the work of Claude Shannon. It deals with the transmission of messages, with one person sending information through some sort of channel of communication and another person receiving this information. This communication process has tremendous influence on how many of us understand language teaching. For example, productive and receptive language skills reflect the model's focus on sending and receiving messages. That is, the communicative nature of various information transfer activities suggested in the literature can be understood using this transmission model (Hunston and Oakey 2010: 55).

3. Communication in context:

According to this perspective, communication is something universal; and how we understand communication, how it is affected by changes in technology and society, and how it is intermingled with context and cultures, are all issues subsumed under this perspective. Supporters of this viewpoint maintain that actual communication is a situational and cultural dynamic that cannot be ignored in any context.

This view, then, constitutes an opportunity for, or a call to, language teaching professionals worldwide to explore what communication may or can be to them, in their own language teaching situations, and in their own small or large cultural *contexts*.

The above sections explored how three perspectives on communication seem to inform language teaching. They explained how communicative language teaching is a complex issue. They assert that teachers must ask themselves how communicative language teaching can be appropriate in their own practice. The possible questions they may ask themselves include:

- a. What kind of communicative competence do my students need?
- b. What communicative processes might my students meaningfully engage in?

- c. Do my answers to the first two questions make sense when considering communication in the real world around us?

Responding to these questions would hopefully help determine the appropriateness and limitations of communicative language teaching in context (ibid: 58).

4. The Use of Humor in FLT:

In Kurdistan, students start learning English as a foreign language as early as primary stage education. And by the time they enter college, they have had wide exposure to grammar-based approaches. At the college, in English language departments in particular, students are exposed to the target language even more intensively, and they have more than twenty hours exposure to language per week, receiving miscellaneous integrated activities in different lectures: lectures about sentence structure, sentence transformation, paraphrasing, summarizing, paragraph and composition writing, grammar and vocabulary enrichment, conversation...etc. in addition to lectures in different literary genres. In general, and according to some students' feedback, the lectures, especially those about grammar and language structures, are almost boring. The reason is perhaps, among other things, the nature of the lectures being teacher-centered, and that the lectures they receive are roughly mechanical and quite predictable. The teacher presents rules, gives exercises to work on, and administers tests to assess learning. As a result, the English teachers do most of the talking while the students listen, take notes, or give one-word or one-sentence responses. This should not be the case according to the viewpoints of many educationalists and language specialists. For instance, Martin (2000) believes that English language instructors should be careful about monopolizing a class with too much teacher talk; taking more than 15 percent of the time is considered excessive. He states:

"Teacher –centered lessons featuring lectures on sentence structure and how to write effective paragraphs are bound to create passive students who do not take an active role in class"
(Martin 2000:)

Littlewood (2006) also maintains that intrinsic motivation in FLT is of vital importance. He thinks that free curiosity has a more positive effect on learning than necessity and fear. Moreover, he advocates an *inductive* approach to learning since, as he states, "we cannot hope to learn new words we do not know unless we have grasped their meaning by getting to know the things signified"; and if we see intrinsic motivation as most effective, it will be more important to create interesting learning conditions than to rely on external rewards and punishments (Littlewood 2006:501). In the same way, Herrell and Jordan (2008: 2) reassure the role of classroom

environment in supporting FLT. They suggest that meaningful exposure to language is not enough. Learners need opportunities for language interaction which supports their language production; such interaction helps them to move from receptive semantic processing to expressive syntactic processing, i.e. from listening and understanding to forming and producing words and sentences to communicate.

The foregoing discussion highlighted the point that foreign language classes, and in particular English, need to be more interactive to keep students interested in the lessons. The lessons should not be boring; on the contrary, they can be *fun* if teachers supplement the formal lessons with alternative methods and techniques.

The following fun-class activities, I believe, can be regarded as effective teaching tools that may add some fun and excitement to the teaching and learning processes. They can be said to have many positive aspects, including the creation of opportunities for students to communicate in a relaxed, friendly, and cooperative environment. Fun-class activities reduce tension by adding fun and humor to lessons. They add an element of competitiveness that motivates students to participate in class activities. Furthermore, such activities help students internalize and acquire the essential vocabulary, grammar, and other aspects of the target language in an unconscious manner; because they are focused on the message and not the language itself. It is worth mentioning that the fun-class activities presented in this section can be utilized more in *conversation* and *grammar* lessons taught to undergraduate students from different grades.

1. Ice-Breaker Activity:

A. Method:

This activity is based on students telling each other jokes. It can be performed by groups of more than 20 students. The teacher can copy and cut out joke cards, and give each student a card to read through and practice saying their joke quietly. Students are asked to walk around the room telling their joke to up to eight students; these students write down their name, then after hearing the joke, give it a mark out of 10. In the end, the teacher randomly asks one or two students to look at their mark sheet and tell which student's joke they found funniest.

B. Pedagogical value:

This activity can be said to have the advantage of improving students' speaking skill, as well as augmenting their foreign language vocabulary. In addition, retelling the jokes, enables students to overcome their confusion and their fear of talking in the target language.

C. Examples:

1. 'Do you serve foreigners? Asked the man in the pub.
'Of course we do, sir,' replied the barman.
'Right. A pint of beer for me and two foreigners for my crocodile here.'
2. Did you hear about the well-behaved little boy?
Whenever he was good, his dad gave him 10p and a pat on the head.
By the time he was sixteen, he had £786 and a flat head.
3. A farmer was surprised to see his friend playing poker with his sheepdog.
'I know sheepdogs are intelligent,' he said, 'but mine is brilliant'
'Oh, he's not that good,' answered his friend. 'Every time he gets a good hand he wags his tail.'
4. A farmer said to his wife, 'We've been married fifty years. Why don't we kill the chicken tonight?'
His wife said, 'Why kill the chicken. It is not his fault.'
5. The removal man was struggling to get a large wardrobe up the stairs.
'Why don't you get Charlie to help you?' asked the foreman.
The removal man answered, 'he's inside carrying the clothes.'
6. A girl was given some pills by the doctor to help her lose weight before her wedding. A few days later she returned. 'These pills have terrible side effects,' she said. 'They make me feel very aggressive. The other night I actually bit off my boyfriend's ear.'
'Don't worry, that'll only be about 60 calories or so.'
7. 'I have some good news and some bad news,' said the doctor.
'First the good news. You're very sick and have only 24 hours to live'
'You call that good news?' sobbed the patient. 'I have only 24 hours to live? What could be worse than that?'
'I should have told you yesterday' said the doctor.

Note: To help students start conversation, the teacher can write the following prompt on the board:
(Hello, my name's... Can I tell you a joke? Have you heard the one about....?)

2. Matching Pairs Activities:

The activities in this section involve matching pairs of sentences. They generally subsume activities such the use of *jokes*, *strange definitions*...etc. We can sort out the type of activities involved as follows:

2.1 Two-Line Jokes:

A. Method:

This is an activity based on two-line jokes, most of which are of a question and answer format. The questions are almost funny, and they require funny answers. The learners have to match a question with an appropriate answer. The teacher can copy the first and second lines of the jokes separately and hand them out to the students who are divided in pairs. The teacher sets a time-limit and checks orally with the whole class by getting one pair to read out the first part of the joke and another pair to suggest the correct response.

B. Pedagogical Value:

The pedagogical value of this kind of activity is that it enables students to correctly construct English information and yes-no questions, and also familiarizes them with the use of short answers in daily conversations.

C. Examples:

1. What did the big chimney say to the little chimney?

You're too young to smoke.

2. What did the traffic light say to the driver?

Don't look now, I'm changing.

3. What is worse than finding a worm in an apple?

Finding half a worm.

4. Do you know that it takes three sheep to make a sweater?

Really? I didn't even know they could knit.

5. What's the new baby's name?

I don't know. We can't understand a word he says.

6. You smell good. What have you got on?

Clean socks.

7. Do people fall off the Empire State Building often?

No, only once.

8. What did the big telephone say to the little telephone?

You're too young to be engaged.

2.2 'Why...Because' Jokes:

A. Method:

This is similar to the previous activity, but this time it is based on questions starting with the word 'Why' and answers starting with the word 'because...'. Again, the teacher can hand out the lists of jokes to pairs of students or groups of students, and let a group or a pair ask the question with 'why' and the other answer with 'because'.

B. Pedagogical Value:

The significance of such activities can be said to lie in the grammatical aspect of the target language; it helps and enables the student to practice using wh-questions starting with 'why' and answering them with 'because'. Besides, the students will practice structures like 'too + adj. + to +base' involved in the jokes; in addition to receiving a lot of new words which leads to an increase in the number of the vocabularies stored in the students' mind.

C. Examples:

1. Why do birds fly south in winter?
Because it's too far to walk.
2. Why are you jumping up and down?
Because I've just taken some medicine and I forgot to shake the bottle.
3. Why do you call your baby coffee?
Because he keeps us awake at night.
4. Why did the sheep say 'moo' ?
Because it was learning a foreign language.
5. Why did the teacher wear sunglasses?
Because the students were so bright.
6. Why is the letter ' E ' lazy?
Because it is always in bed.
7. Why did the millionaire live in a house without a bathroom?
Because he was filthy rich.
8. Why does your wife have a clean mind?
Because she changes it every few minutes.

2.3 'Daft' Definitions:

A. Method:

This activity is based on matching words and definitions. But the definitions are not the expected ones, i.e. the definitions are made for fun. They define the words postulated in an interesting funny way. The teacher divides the students into groups and instigates them to make a competition, a group raises the word to be defined, the other answers using the funny definition; and they may change roles. Before starting the competition, the teacher should allow the students a limited time to go through the definitions and consider the words in question.

B. Pedagogical Value:

The examples given in this activity show that the value of such activities is that, on the one hand, they enrich students' stock of vocabularies, and, on the other hand, they familiarize students with homophonous forms resulting from the use of weak forms in connected speech. And this implies that the words to be defined are pronounced, not given to students in written forms; and the definitions given to students are not arranged in order. But the teacher, later on, can show the students the written forms and meanwhile explain how certain words are weakened in connected speech.

C. Examples:

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1. adore | entrance to a house |
| 2. afford | a car some people drive |
| 3. arrest | something you take when you're tired |
| 4. address | something worn by girls |
| 5. climate | the only thing you can do with a ladder |

3. Jigsaw Reading Activities:

A. Method:

'Sort Out the Joke' is one of the jigsaw activities for pairs of students. The students have to sort out a mixed up joke. The teacher can explain to the students that the joke can be sorted out by numbering the disordered parts 1-10. A time limit is set, and when the activity is finished, the teacher can check the answers by asking students to read out the joke in the correct order.

B. Pedagogical Value:

In addition to increasing students' vocabulary, such activities provide students with an insight to organize events and sequence them in the correct order. The student has to go through the sentences, understand their meanings, and think of the possible way they could be arranged in order to provide a logical meaning.

C. Example:

Could have told me that the cat was on the roof, the next time that the cat had fallen off the roof and wasn't	-----5-----
'The cat is just fine,' said his neighbor , 'but I	-----9-----
Neighbor to ask about his pet and the neighbor says, 'The cat has died'	-----2-----
think you should know that your mother is on the roof '	-----10-----
A man goes off on a business trip, leaving his cat with his neighbor. A few days later he phones the	-----1-----
new cat and, a few weeks later, set off on another trip. Once again, he left his cat with the same neighbor.	-----7-----
The poor man is very upset and says to his friend,	-----3-----
feeling too well, and so on.'	
When he came home from his business trip he got a	-----6-----
'Couldn't you have broken the news of my cat's death to me more gently? The first time I phoned you	-----4-----
After a few days he phoned and asked, 'How is the cat?'	-----8-----

4. Pelmanism: Waiter Jokes**A. Method**

This is an activity for pairs based on the popular game 'pelmanism' or 'memory' and is based on two-line waiter jokes. The teacher can copy and cut out customer and waiter cards, shuffle them, put them on a desk separately; customer cards on the left side and waiter cards on the right. Students take it in turns, picking up a customer card and reading it aloud; then a waiter card and reading it aloud. The matching pairs, i.e. the correct jokes, are put aside until all the

cards are checked and all the jokes are sorted out. The student with the most matching pairs at the end is the winner.

B. Pedagogical Value:

Again, in addition to increasing the students' stock of vocabularies, this activity can be said to have advantage in relation to the pragmatic aspect of language, i.e. the examples are mostly concerned with 'speaker meaning' which is the area of pragmatics. So, the joke lies in the waiter's misunderstanding of the customer's intended meaning. In this way, students will have an idea about utterances having different interpretations.

C. Examples:

Customer	Waiter
1. Waiter! I can't eat this food Fetch the manager.	It is no use, sir, he won't eat it either
2. Waiter! You've got your thumb in my soup.	That's all right, sir. It is not hot.
3. Do you serve women in this bar?	No, sir, you must bring your own.
4. Waiter! What's this fly doing in my soup?	It looks like the backstroke, sir.
5. Excuse me, will my hamburger be long?	No, sir, it will be round.
6. (looking at steak on his plate) Waiter, didn't you hear me say 'Well done?'	Yes, sir. And I'd like to thank you for your compliment.
7. Waiter! My boiled egg is bad.	Nothing I can do about it, sir. I only laid the table.

Notes: In order to make the best use of the above activities in FLT, the following points are to be considered:

- a. Giving a prize (some marks) to students actively participating in class is considered supportive. The incentive of a prize is claimed to be good for motivation.
- b. The above activities are most effective in student-centered lessons. The teacher's role is mostly giving instructions.
- c. It is advisable that the fun-class activities be pertinent to the language topics being currently studied to help students to better understand the subject taught to them.

- d. It is often helpful to get feedback from students to gauge the effect of the activities being performed.

5. Conclusion:

The present work has mainly dealt with the role of fun-class activities and their effect in supporting the process of learning and teaching foreign languages. It has reviewed the role of the discipline of applied linguistics as a mediator between theory and practice, and has shed light on the common methods of teaching postulated in this discipline to academically improve FLT process. Besides, it has shown the possibility of incorporating fun-class activities in FLT, and explained to what extent they can be best implemented for the benefit of both students and teachers in the foreign language learning situations.

Concerning the insertion of fun-class activities in foreign language lessons, we can conclude that the paper has arrived at the following points:

- a. Learning a foreign language happens best in an interactive and intellectual way.
- b. Humor activities help students apply what they have learned in real context.
- c. Humor activities render the lesson interesting, reduce boredom, and make students feel more relaxed.
- d. Such activities boost self-confidence, and oblige students to use the target language to correct wrong answers and conduct arguments.
- e. Humor activities increase students' vocabulary, and help them to better internalize grammatical structures (such as wh-questions, short answers, and structures like too + adj. + to+ base); and as some activities have shown, they can also be used as a tool to teach topics related to the phonetic, phonological and pragmatic aspects of language. Humor activities make English enjoyable, and reduce students' tardiness and absence in classes.
- f. Humor is not just for a certain level of students, but they can be utilized for different levels of students as a means of livening up their classes and make them look forward to their next English class with enthusiasm.

References

- Brooks, N.(1975). The Meaning of Audiolingual. *The Modern Language Journal*, 54, 234-40. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1975.tb02350.x>
- Darian, S. (1969). Backgrounds of Modern Language Teaching: Sweet, Jespersen, and Palmer. *The Modern Language Journal* 53, 545-50. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1969.tb05000.x>
- Davies and Elder (eds.) (2006). *The Handbook of Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1111/b.9781405138093.2005.00001.x>
- Finch, G. (2005). *Key Concepts in Language and Linguistics*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-230-20445-4>
- Herrell, A. L. and Jordan, M. (2008). *Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners*. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Hunston, S. and Oakey, D. (2010). *Introducing Applied Linguistics: Concepts and Skills*. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203875728>
- Littlewood, W. (2006). Second Language Learning. In Davies and Elder (eds.), *The Handbook of Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Martin, D. (2000). *How to be an Effective FLE Teacher*. Japan: EFL Press.
- Pit Corder, S. (1973). *Introducing Applied Linguistics*. England: Penguin Books.
- van Quirsouw, R. R. (1984). (trans.). *Applied Linguistics and the Learning and Teaching of Foreign Languages*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Rivers, W. (1964). *The Psychologist and the Foreign-Language Teacher*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Stevens, P. (1972). Language Teaching. In Sebeok, T. (ed.), *Current Trends in Linguistics*, Vol. 9, 702-32.
- Titone, R. (1968). *Teaching Foreign Language: A Historical Sketch*. New York: Prentice Hall
- Widdowson, H. G. (2000). *On the Limitations of Linguistics Applied*. *Applied Linguistics*, 21(1), 3-25. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/21.1.3>