

Incorporating Humor As A Strategy In Teaching Speaking At Indonesian EFL Classroom

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to explore the lecturer's incorporation of humor in teaching speaking skills at Universitas Iqra Buru and to find out the constraints encountered by the lecturer in teaching speaking skills through humor at Universitas Iqra Buru.. This research applied the descriptive qualitative design. In the English education department, there were six lecturers, and then the researcher used a purposive sampling technique with criteria; the lecturers who taught speaking skills used humor strategies, so the researcher got one lecturer who met the requirements. Then, in the class where the lecturer taught, there were seventeen students. The research instruments were observation, interviews, and documentation. This research showed that the lecturer included humor in teaching speaking skills during learning, namely at the beginning of the lesson, then in the middle of the lesson, and at the end of the lesson. According to students, teaching using humor is very effective, comfortable, not stressful, eliminates anxiety, can understand the material presented by the lecturer, reduces stress and stiffness in receiving material, and keeps students focused.

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1. Introduction

One of the competencies that teachers must master is pedagogic competence, which is the ability to manage to learn. According to Tosepu (2017), teachers can master various methods, strategies, and learning competencies. The following are some of the pedagogic competencies that a teacher must possess: (1) mastering student characteristics, (2) mastering learning theory and learning principles, (3) curriculum development, (4) creating an educational atmosphere, (5) developing student potential (6) communication with students (7) assessment and evaluation.

One effort to apply the learning model transformative, as a form of pedagogy that is not frozen and rigid namely with humorin pedagogy (joking in learning). Humor in pedagogy is a practical method and technique pedagogy to break up the classroom atmosphere which usually tends to be frozen and boring. Why humor in pedagogy is it important, especially for students today? Novick et al., (2002) provide important notes for educators, there are differences that must be paid attention to by the academic world, students in the global era and the industrial era 4.0 are different with students in the previous decade. These differences include: the emotional and behavioral problems they experience depression, stress and lack of readiness to learn in the range longer time. This all confirms that the current is strong globalization, the era of disruption, the post-truth era, and the implementation of the industrial era 4.0.

There are exciting challenges for teachers to perform optimally in teaching. Humor is one of the methods and strategies needed for teachers to perform well (Tosepu, 2017). A lecturer is not a comedian, and this is very different from the profession of a comedian. However, this does not mean that teaching does not have elements of humor or joke (Kholisin & Agung Subekti, 2023; Aswad et al., 2019; Rahman & Weda, 2018); Dalyan et al., 2023). During the lesson, the lecturer can present lectures interspersed with stories humor, and jokes. The aim is to create a learning atmosphere for students so that it isn't too monotonous and stiff.

In the era of Education 4.0, teachers are required to have two kinds of abilities. On the one hand, we must be flexible to adapt to the winds of change (Rahman et al., 2019; Hasnia et al., 2022; Sahib et al., 2021; Yassi et al., 2023). On the other hand, we must have a high spirit of dedication and professionalism. The first requires creative power. The second requires character power. Lecturers must be able to create active and fun teaching and learning and foster a creative mind for their students (Tosepu, 2017). In recent years, in Munoz's (2005) view, using humor in the classroom

forms the language's cultural framework by offering the material's tone, expression, and context, thereby increasing students' cultural knowledge. Humor has emerged as a powerful tool in education in general and second language learning in particular. Latiff & Daud (2013) by changing how teachers teach and convey information in EFL classrooms. As stated by Ravichand (2013), using humor can reduce tension, minimize boredom, and arouse interest due to its relaxing and tension-reducing effect, humanizing effect on the teacher's image, and the effect of increasing students' interest and pleasure. Researchers have proposed various techniques for use in language classes. Pham (2014) believes that to have humor, language teachers can incorporate jokes, funny stories, and comments into their teaching. Pham believes this is one of the best humor techniques for language teaching. Motlagh et al. (2014) also suggest some humor techniques that can be used in language classes. They mention humor, use funny gestures, and draw funny pictures on the board. They claim this technique can change the classroom atmosphere and generate funnier student ideas and expressions. Next is Al-Duleimi & Aziz (2016), titled "Humor as EFL Learning-Teaching Strategy". It has been suggested that humor is beneficial in the classroom because it enhances social bonding between teacher and students, information salience, and recall and retention. The current study attempts to test some assumptions about humor as a pedagogical tool. Results have shown that using Humor to teach material significantly improves students' overall performance. This study validates that humor can maximize learning outcomes in a college classroom.

According to Farnia and Mohammadi, (2020), the results of the study revealed that the use of Humor in the classroom is considered practical and valuable and has direct and indirect contributions to language classes, such as relieving students' anxiety, not creating distance between teachers and students, and creating a comfortable atmosphere. Another finding shows that students prefer humor. The reason behind this fact is that they feel more comfortable with humor than any other strategy. In addition, the effect of humor on increasing their ability to learn and helping them to do their best is more than puns and rhymes (Najafi et al., 2021). In addition, Humor in EFL classes encourages better learning and makes students feel relaxed in class. It also encourages students to be involved in the lesson. Furthermore, using humor builds good relations between teachers and students (Alemi et al., 2021).

Based on the findings of the preview study related to the above, the researcher saw that the results of previous research, on average, discussed student interest as well as the impact of students when teachers teach using humor strategies in class, then tried to test several assumptions about humor as a pedagogical tool. What differentiates this research from previous research is that this research aims to explore lecturers by examining how lecturers apply and include humor in teaching speaking skills at Universitas Iqra Buru and what constraints do lecturer face in teaching speaking skills through humor at Universitas Iqra Buru.

2. Methodology

To conduct research, the researcher has used qualitative methods in the context of descriptive design. This research has been held for three months, from January to March 2023. This research was conducted at the Department of English, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Iqra Buru. The research site was chosen at this university for careful consideration of what to do and in a situation where research on teaching English using humor strategy had yet to be conducted. The subject of this research is the lecturers who taught speaking skills and used humor strategies, so the researcher got one lecturer who met the requirements. Then, in the class where the lecturer taught, there were seventeen students. The researcher has used three instruments to obtain the data. There are observation, interview, and documentation. The researcher used data condensation procedures, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification to analyze the data (Miles et al., 2018).

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. The Lecturer's Incorporation of Humor in Teaching Speaking Skill at Universitas Iqra Buru

In this section, data is taken from the results of analysis result of classroom observation transcriptions and result observation guides. Then, the results of the analysis are presented below:

Based on the observation transcription and observation guide for the first meeting, the researcher focused on the lecturer, including humor in learning. The lecturer begins the lesson by opening the class and greeting the students. Then, the lecturer uses the target language, mother tongue, and Indonesian in the learning process. After that, the lecturer warms up by asking the students several questions about the topics that will be discussed with the students in class, and the lecturer checks the students' attendance. Lecturers convey learning objectives to students. At the beginning of this lesson, the lecturer did not provide a little humor to the students before starting the main lesson. After that, the lecturer explains the learning topic and the lecturer explains in detail the formal and informal greeting material to

the students. Then, in the learning process, there is a reciprocal process between the lecturer and students in learning. The Lecturer provided humor to students in the middle of learning so that it is not monotonous, and by using humor, it can relieve anxiety and tension, relieve stress, strengthen relationships between lecturer and students, and improve students' moods. Humor was provided by the lecturer in the middle of the lesson. Humor in the middle of learning can be explained as follows:

The word Hello is used for someone older or respectable; don't say, Hi Mr, Hi Mr. **"Every day, Iqra Buru University students say, Hi Mr. Hi Mr, nanti Mr. Seng Mister"** (Seng Mister is Ambon language which means don't care). The humor above shows that the lecturer explains the use of Hello and Hi, then the lecturer relates it to Iqra Buru University students who often use the Hi greeting to the lecturer or older people from students, and the lecturer has continued the sentence **"Nanti Mr. Seng Mister"**

Yes, saying goodbye to someone before going to sleep, say good night. There are also lovely words to meet you or friendly to know you. If we are acquaintances, we will say nice to meet or get to know you. **"Kan pasti kita say Hallo dulu, baru nice to meet you. Masa belum bilang hello lai sudah bilang nice to meet you."** The humor above shows that the lecturer explained to the students about farewell greetings before going to bed and greetings when meeting someone new for the first time. Then the lecturer spontaneously used Ambonese and said, **"Say hello first, then nice to meet you. Not yet saying hello, already welcomed, nice to meet you,"** what made the students laugh at this humor was the emphasis on the sentence using Ambonese.

The lecturer explained that the expression How are you? is just a greeting or small talk. Small talk with you guys so you don't get tense. There are also expressions of What's up and what's new. Both two words are used for formal or informal expressions. So, do you want to use what's up or what's new! It's up to you. Then the lecturer asks the students which is the correct mention of whats or whots? The students answer, What!. After that, the lecturer asks again, **"kenapa whats? Karena lampu 5 watt!"** The lecturer equated the word what with the watts of power in a lamp. The lecturer's question made the students laugh.

The lecturer asked which is the correct mention of whats or whots? Then students answer whats. The lecturer replied kenapa whats? Karena lampu 5 watt? Hearing the lecturer's words made all the students laugh. After that, the lecturer explained that the correct pronunciation is whats, so this spelling depends on the smooth mention and is not hampered. Then the lecturer said to the students, **"Ini kan ada gigi yang patah tadi malam jadi bicara ini tagae sedikit-sedikit"**, all the students laughed because the lecturer made it at the expense of oneself humor.

The lecturer explained to the students that if you want to be close to a younger girl, use the greeting Hi, **"tapi kalau yang lebih tua jangan, nanti dibilang belum bisa goda tante-tante su mau pi goda tante-tante"**. The students who heard the lecturer's explanation made the students laugh.

The lecturer explained that if someone asks us how are you today? We also keep saying I'm fine, too general, saying I feel marvelous so that sounds extraordinary. The lecturer said **"Jadi ini sudah materi kita tentang greetings dan saya akan membuat kalian menjadi kriting"**. After hearing the lecturer say "I'm going to get you curly", all the students laughed.

After that, the lecturer allows students to ask questions related to the learning topics being taught, the lecturer gives tests to students, and the lecturer concludes the material taught. Then, the lecturer provides humor to the students before closing the lesson with rhymes, such as:

"Jalan-jalan ke kota namlea, Jangan lupa beli minyak kayu putih, Salam undur diri dari saya, Cukup sekian dan terima kasih".

Then, the researcher focused on the students based on the observation guide. Students participate in class during the learning process. Reciprocity occurs between the lecturer and students. After that, students ask the lecturer about material they need help understanding. Students receive the material well and are relaxed, and the lecturer used humor to make students

laugh, thereby increasing students' interest in learning and increasing social ties between lecturer and students. Then, students answer the lecturer's questions when the lecturer asks questions, and students take the test seriously.

Based on the observation transcription and observation guide for the second meeting, the researcher focused on the lecturer. The lecturer begins the lesson by opening the class and greeting the students. Then, the lecturer uses the target language, mother tongue, and Indonesian in the learning process. The lecturer asks how the students are doing and then gives a little humor to the students before starting the main lesson with a motivational sentence:

The lecturer greeted the students and asked how they were doing. After that, the lecturer gave motivational words before starting the lesson. The lecturer said that **"Semua tidak ada yang instan, nyatanya mie instan juga butuh proses agar layak untuk di makan"**. Students hearing this motivational sentence made them all laugh. The essence of the sentence explains that all processes are not instantaneous. If we want to achieve something we want, such as ideals, then proceed. Because all processes are not instantaneous, all need to struggle.

Then, the lecturer warms up by asking the students several questions about the topics that will be discussed with the students in class, and the lecturer checks the students' attendance. The lecturer conveyed learning objectives to students. After that, the lecturer explains the learning topic and the lecturer explains in detail the likes and dislikes of the students. Then in the learning process, there is a reciprocal process between the lecturer and students in learning. The lecturer provided humor to students in the middle of learning so that it was not monotonous. Humor in the middle of learning can be explained as follows:

The lecturer explained that if we master the expressions of like and dislike, we will use more vocabulary than we are used to. Because so far, we have used I like, I like only. I like monkeys, and I'm like monkeys. What's the difference between I like monkeys and I'm like monkeys? Then Rama explained the difference between I like monkey and I'm like a monkey. After that, the lecturer said, " If I say Safri is like a monkey, is that good or not? **"Bagus itu, kalau ada yang bilang I like a monkey, Alhamdulillah seng apa-apa to, beta seng merasa kalau beta adalah monyet, jadi beta seng usah marah. Kalau marah berarti betul beta adalah monyet"**.

The lecturer conveyed to Safri that he is like a human. **"Pilih mana safri seperti manusia atau safri seperti monyet? Kalau safri seperti monyet, berarti safri itu manusia cuma sedikit seperti monyet"**. This statement made all the students laugh because the lecturer used a simile by comparing Safri to a human being, just a little like a monkey.

The lecturer explained that we learned the words in elementary school and junior high school, and then the lecturer continued the sentence: if you love, then love. Love doesn't need to be expressed because girls need it, so say love. If you haven't said love, a girl won't believe it. Love is a taboo thing to express. Then the lecturer explained that **"Tidak usah bilang cinta-cinta itu.. Love is bullshit. Apa artinya bulshit? Bul itu benteng, shit itu tai (kotoran), jadi bulshit itu tai benteng"**.

Students who listened to the sentence made the students laugh out loud. After that, one of the students named Safri continued the discussion; he said **"Love is tai karbou"** suddenly making all the students laugh again.

Rama asked the lecturer if there was a formula for making sentences that express likes. The lecturer wrote on the whiteboard. Safri asked the lecturer. What is that, sir? Then the lecturer answered, **"Beta kan su minta maaf berkali-kali kalau beta pung tulisan seng bae. Kamong su tau beta pung tulisan ini to kayak ayam cakar tanah (Kalian sudah tau kan tulisan saya ini seperti ayam cakar tanah)"**. The lecturer's sentences made all the students laugh because he compared his writing to that of a ground-clawed chicken, which meant that the lecturer's writing was very bad.

Safri say the lecturer that **"Mr tulisan seng bae, Mr baru sadar. Mr seng pernah belajar menulis indah kah!"** Safri's words made the lecturer and all the students laugh because Safri created a funny atmosphere.

The lecturer asks students to make sentences that express their likes and dislikes to them. When it was Malani's turn, she said that "I like you, because you make us feel closer to you", and the lecturer answered "**Yang penting jang suka batulbatul to Malani**". The lecturer's answer make all the students laugh, hearing that sensitive sentence. What Malani meant was that she likes lecturer, because in class the lecturer makes all students feel closer to him.

The lecturer said, "**Ini kamong pung teman Intan sering pakai jam tapi mati itu dia pung jam**" Hearing the lecturer's words made all the students laugh. The lecturer told the students that the clock Intan was using was a dead clock.

After that, the lecturer invites students to ask questions regarding the learning topics being taught, the lecturer gives tests to students, and the lecturer concludes the material taught. Then, the lecturer provides humor to the students before closing the lesson with a rhyme:

"Jalan-jalan ke kota namlea, Jangan lupa beli minyak kayu putih, Salam undur diri dari saya, Cukup sekian dan terima kasih".

Then, the researcher focused on the students based on the observation guide. Students participate in class during the learning process. Reciprocity occurs between lecturer and students. After that, students ask the lecturer about material they need help understanding. Students receive the material well and are relaxed, and lecturer use humor to make students laugh, there by increasing students' interest in learning and increasing social ties between lecturer and students. Then, students answer the lecturer's questions when the lecturer asks questions, and students take the test seriously.

3.2. The Constraints of Teaching Speaking Skill through Humor

In this section, data is taken from the results of class observation transcription analysis and interview transcripts lecturer. Then, the results of the analysis are presented below:

From the results of the analysis of lecturer transcript observations and interview transcripts, researchers found that the obstacles faced by lecturer were, First, there is a lack of humor material appropriate to the learning topic. The lecturer uses humor strategies in class in an autodidactic/spontaneous way (directly) using objects or even the subjects (students) being taught. When the lecturer explained the material and saw an opportunity to use humor, humor spontaneously emerged.

Second, the autodidactic humor that the lecturer spreads in class must be used carefully. Humor will be said to be good and able to support learning if it has the suitable material, target, time, situation, and delivery method. The lecturer's dose of humor in teaching and learning activities must be appropriate to avoid confusion during learning. Still, this humor can refresh students' teaching and learning activities, making them enthusiastic about learning. Spontaneous conversational humor takes many forms, and many other words describe it, such as banter, innuendo, and joke. The lecturer's carries out humor in learning by using words, language, short stories, social events, life experiences, jokes, or word games, which can create a cheerful, relaxed, and enjoyable learning atmosphere that can encourage students to laugh.

3.3. Discussion

Data about how the lecturer incorporated humor into speaking skills at Iqra Buru University, data obtained from the results of transcript analysis of observation recordings and observation guides, then the researcher will discuss the findings as follows: These findings prove that the lecturer includes humor before starting the core of learning, then the lecturer includes humor to students in the middle of learning and the lecturer includes humor to students before closing the lesson. The lecturer include humor in class autodidactically/spontaneously (directly) using objects or even subjects (students) being taught. When the lecturer explains the material and sees an opportunity to be able to use humor, humor spontaneously appears so that with this strategy students feel motivated, and enthusiastic in receiving lessons. Following Darmansyah's (2010) statement that the learning strategy is fun with Humor, namely at the initial meeting, during strategic breaks and at the end of the learning session. (1) Initial Meeting. Usually, students already have a perception of their teacher from the beginning of the meeting. The humor strategy at the initial meeting is to insert Humor in the first introduction, introduce yourself and respond to student introductions, for example playing around with funny

things. (2) Strategic breaks are taken approximately 3-5 minutes after learning last approximately 30 minutes or one hour of class. Humor strategies that can be used during strategic breaks, for example, short funny stories with direct narrative, witty writing and pictures, speaking accents using other regional accents, through body movements (faces), and Humor using body language (3) End of Learning Session or at the end of the lesson, humor techniques that can be used, for example by imitation. For instance, you imitate the words of television poets, funny presenters and comedians. Additionally, you can use limericks to end learning meetings. In accordance with Tosepu (2022) includes humor in teaching. The first step is to insert humor in the first introduction. This will create a fresh atmosphere and give the impression that the lecturer likes humor. After that there is a strategic break, this is necessary because if students are taught the material continuously there will be a decrease in concentration. A strategic pause is a short break of \pm 2-3 minutes during the ongoing learning process in order to restore students' concentration. Closing the lesson in a pleasant atmosphere is a must, so that students do not have the burden of facing the next meeting. In accordance with Wahyuni & Naim, (2019) that students are very interested in and support the use of humor used by teachers in class interactions, with humor students feel more motivated and enthusiastic in learning English. Then students who are given fun learning strategies accompanied by humor or include humor in learning have good learning outcomes compared to students who are not given fun learning strategies accompanied by humor (Adisty, 2019). It can be concluded that the lecturer's goal is to include humor strategies in learning because students feel more motivated, enthusiastic, refreshed minds, and enthusiastic in speaking English lessons.

In this section, data is taken from the results of class observation transcript analysis. Then, the researcher will discuss the findings as follows: The findings from the results of the observation analysis of the transcripts of the researcher found that the constraints faced by Mr AN were the lack of humor material that was appropriate to the learning topic. The humor that Mr AN uses is self-taught/spontaneous. This finding is also discussed in his book Tosepu (2022) Lecturer Humor and Learning, that humor is connected with the material being taught, perhaps this is the most difficult idea to implement because not all material that lecturer teach students can be inserted with humor, especially for lecturer who lack used to articulating. But if the lecturer is able to do it, humor that is connected to the subject matter can be believed to be a form of reinforcement that can help students digest and store information better in their long-term memory system.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the researcher came to the conclusion incorporating humor as a strategy for teaching speaking in Indonesian EFL classrooms and the constraints of teaching speaking skill through humor. The lecturer include humor in teaching speaking skills during learning, namely at the beginning, for example humor by lecturer in the beginning, the lecturer says "Semua tidak ada yang instan, nyatanya mie instan juga butuh proses agar layak untuk di makan", the essence of the sentence explains that all processes are not instantaneous. If we want to achieve something we want, such as ideals, then proceed, because all processes are not instantaneous, all need to struggle. Then in the middle, for example "kenapa whats? Karena lampu 5 watt!!", the lecturer equated the word what with the watts of power in a lamp. and at the end, for example "Jalan-jalan ke kota namlea, Jangan lupa beli minyak kayu putih Salam undur diri dari saya, Cukup sekian dan terima kasih". Then, the constraint in teaching speaking skills through humor faced by lecturer needed to include humor material appropriate for the learning topic. The humor that lecturer uses is self-taught/spontaneous.

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