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The Effects of Teachers' Sense of Humor on Students' Learning

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ABSTRACT

The present study focused on the effects of teachers' sense of humor on students' learning. For this purpose 25 female students studying in Novin kaj privet English institute and Amane school between the age ranges of 13-18 from Tehran were asked one interview question. The researcher gave some papers to them to write their attitudes toward the teachers' sense of humor. The students mentioned both positive and negative points about the humor. But finally the finding of the study revealed that most students had positive attitudes toward teachers' sense of humor and want the teachers to be more humorist than serious ones.

Keywords: Effects, Humor, Learning.

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INTRODUCTION

Learning is something we all do from the moment of birth, so most of us likely take this very complex process for granted. Although many of us have general sense of what it means to learn, there are often many assumptions involved. Teachers often assume that because they are "teaching", students must be learning. Student assume that because they have read their text and memorized facts, they have learned something. (Karl. R 2000).

There are some important factors which may affect learning such as health, physical development, and nutrition, visual and physical defects, some abnormalities and teachers' personality.

A significant teacher personality characteristic which is to be investigated in the present study is teachers' sense of humor. Evidence indicates that teachers' sense of humor is related positively to increasing EFL learners' intrinsic motivation which is resulting in better academic achievements (Rinninger 2000).

The use of humor to facilitate learning is not a new concept, it seems to be an emergence today as more teachers and educators look for methods to better communicate and help students learn.

Humor can be represented as jokes, puns, riddles, sarcasm, physical antics nonverbal behaviors, cartoons and one-liners (Wanzer et al 2008).

Deiter. R, 2000, in his article searched for some answers to the following questions:

- 1) What is humor?
- 2) Why using humor in the classroom?
- 3) How to use humor in the class room?

Unfortunately, students often consider many of their classes boring, difficult and stressful. Actually, teaching effectively requires imagination and creativity to turn student on by turning negative perceptions off. (Deiter. R 2000).

Humor is one instructional tool that teachers can use in the classroom to increase their effectiveness. Schools are making effort to ensure that their teachers are effective in subject delivery. But unfortunately, some classes are often reluctant to use humor as a teaching tool and there are at least 3 reasons for this:

- 1) Professors are not trained in the use of humor as it is not part of any curriculum.
- 2) Professors often believe that they need to have the skill of a professional comedian to use humor.

3) Professors frequently contend that teaching is serious which they view frivolous. (1998).

In this article researcher wants to investigate the effect of teachers' sense of humor on students' learning from the student's point of view in public schools versus language institutes. In contrast to schools which no humor is used by teachers, teacher's sense of humor is seen in institutes. According to what was mentioned the bellow a research question is here that this research is going to answer.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What's the effects of teachers' sense of humor on students' learning?

METHOD

Participants the participants of this study were 25 female students Studying in Amane School in grade 10. They were also taking classes in Novin kaj privet English institute and the age range of them were between 13-18. The interview question was given to some of them. Others expressed their attitude toward the subject face to face(interview)or by social media.

Instruments

The instruments used in this study were interview questions and social media which students were supposed to talk or write about it around 15-20 minutes. A paper was used to take notes while interviewing.

Procedure

This study began with an interview question,the researcher interviewed students studying in Amane school in grade 10 and Novin kaj privet English institute. Six of them expressed their ideas face to face,fifteen of them by interview question and four send their ideas by social media. All interviews lasted about 20-25 minutes.

RESULT

This study was about teachers' sense of humor on Students learning. It began with interview questions among 25 advanced learners in Novin kaj privet English institute and Amane School. The result showed that more than half of the students had positive points of view toward the teachers' sense of humor. Here, summaries of the students' interview results will be analyzed. They mentioned the following comments in their interviews:

They all agreed that the sense of humor would be really effective on their better learning and more self-confidence. They think that people who are humorist owing to the fact that they have calmness transfer it to others.

Teachers' sense of humor which is mostly used in institutes makes the class interesting and friendlier. In addition, students feel more comfortable also they think that they have no stress and they can speak easily. Actually students remember and love those teachers who have more sense of humor. Sense of humor is not something separated from lesson rather during the class teachers should use sense of humor to mention or explain some memories until students learn and catch the lesson better.

The nature of subjects are different, for instance English is a subject that requires sense of humor and it's good to use updated information by the use of sense of humor. But subjects like math is a serious lesson and it's better to have less sense of humor.

Also teachers' sense of humor is really good for manifestation of creativity. Some of the people think that class room means a vapid and tiresome place that students just study like a machine without having any feelings,but honestly having sense of humor can make the class warm and interesting. In addition ,when a new student comes to a class if in the first meeting teacher or students laugh,he/she feels that is a member of their group. But teachers should have ability to behave students more appropriate and friendlier.

Formal teachers are not approachable and they cause that students have no interest in that class and learning, while students prefer approachable teachers. But unfortunately indulgence in having sense of humor make students rude and careless, actually they may pay little attention to lessons. Some students do not pay attention to lesson if there is humor in the class. In this situations it's better to have no sense of humor.

Unlike schools in institutes there is more sense of humor and because of that students mentioned that they are more interested in institutes. Unhappily at schools, lessons are more than institutes and there is no time for having sense of humor, however in institutes other than to book, they have songs, movies etc. so it increase their motivation for learning.

CONCLUSION

In contrast to negative points, in general students' attitudes toward teachers' sense of humor were positive. There are lots of research in the body of literature which support the results of this study and are in line with it. For example, Elias (2014) and

Smith (2013), Mahdizadeh (2011), Ragheb(2017) supported the results of the present study and proved the positive effects of teachers' sense of humor on students' learning. The result of this study has some implications for teachers to use humor. And it can be good for textbook writers to use humor in the books.

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