

# *Application of Education Humour Art in English Classroom Teaching of Middle Schools in China ---Laughter in Class*

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**Abstract:** Education humor is different from general humor. It should not only have the general characteristics of humor, entertain others in a witty and special way, but also be rich in educational significance, so as to “teaching in fun”. By observing of English classes in two middle schools of China, the authors discuss the application of education humor art that is a great test of teachers' professional quality and educational wit. The study points out that the art can create a relaxed and pleasant classroom learning atmosphere so that students can actively understand knowledge in laughter and enjoy mastering the true meaning of learning. However, it can be seen that grasping some small incidents in the classroom and making them part of the class and promoting teaching and learning requires teachers' high professional quality and responsibility. Education humour play an important role in class and the use of this art is to show teachers' personal charm.

## **1. Introduction**

On the definition of teaching humor, different experts and scholars express their views and enrich its interpretation from various angles. Some think that classroom teaching humor means that teachers apply humor to the actual classroom teaching process, mobilize students' emotions with “ its unique charm and influence”, and the artistic effect of teaching can also be improved in students' knowledge (Ren Zhihui, 2017, p123-124). Weng Qianming (2021, p17-19) puts forward, “teaching humor should be both in spirit and form, its form is humor, and spirit is education”. It can not only give people a pleasant feeling, but also give them some educational gains. According to Zhang Baochen (2001) teaching humor is that teachers use funny and humorous language and funny posture to show the teaching content of this class to students while activating the classroom learning atmosphere, reveal the truth and promote students' understanding and perception. In general, from the above different definitions, we can roughly summarize some characteristics of teaching humor: the combination of form and spirit, the combination of seriousness and humour, and the realization of epiphany.

## **2. Function of Humorous Art in Classroom Teaching**

In classroom teaching, teaching humor can have a variety of different functions and play an

important role in actual situations. It can be divided into the following six types (Li Rumi, 2009):

### **2.1 To Activate the Classroom Atmosphere**

Humor has rapid dispersion and strong emotional infection and mobilization ability. Through teaching humor, teachers can fill the classroom with laughter and make the classroom atmosphere always active. In an active and harmonious classroom atmosphere, students are more likely to be driven by teachers' emotions, actively participate in various classroom activities, and build the classroom more vivid and distinctive together with teachers.

### **2.2 To Harmonize Relationship between Teachers and Students**

There are many differences between teachers and students, which leads to understanding obstacles, tension and even opposition. Teaching humor can subtly ease the relationship between them, dilute contradictions, eliminate estrangement, shorten the distance between teachers and students, and create appropriate atmosphere conditions for the elimination of misunderstanding (Sun Junru & Chen Chunrong, 2018). Through teaching humor, teachers can show their personal charm, not only appear amiable and gentle, let students dare to approach, but also full of wisdom, and attract students to approach teachers unconsciously, so as to improve effects of teaching and learning.

### **2.3 To Maintain Classroom Discipline**

Classroom discipline can not be maintained only by strict rules and regulations, and teaching humor is a good and clever way. In face of students' undisciplined behaviors in the classroom, teachers do not take the way of severe reprimand, but use a humorous sentence to make students realize the misconduct of their own behavior without affecting the overall teaching progress in the classroom.

### **2.4 To Open Students' Minds**

Students' attention and concentration time is limited, and in the long teaching time, humor can dispel students' sense of fatigue and boredom, so as to focus more on the classroom. And because of the unique educational nature of teaching humor, students can think actively and get inspiration after laughing.

### **2.5 To Improve Students' Personality**

Humor is a positive attitude towards life. Classroom teaching humor will have a subtle impact on students, let them gradually develop a cheerful and optimistic attitude towards life, enhance students' sense of humor, be good at discovering small interests in life, and then cultivate students' sound personality.

### **2.6 To Stimulate Students' Thirst for Knowledge**

In the process of classroom teaching, a humorous example of the teacher can arouse the students' desire for knowledge, deepen the mastery and understanding of knowledge, make the students be willing to listen to the class, increase the fun of learning, mobilize the enthusiasm of learning, deepen the learning motivation, strengthen the desire for knowledge, and complete the integration of knowledge while enjoying the class.

### 3. Application of Humorous Art in English Classroom Teaching

#### 3.1 Harmonious Teacher-Student Relationship

Harmonious classroom and teacher-student relationship are particularly important for English teaching. The actual teaching scene of this time is the final review stage of a class in a junior middle school, and the teaching content is revision. Before the class, the teacher paid much attention to the students' learning state, and according to the situation at that time (some students slept on the table and some students looked around), broke the slightly dull classroom atmosphere in the form of ridicule and humor teaching, and pulled the students with lax attention back to the classroom, which not only successfully relaxed the classroom atmosphere, but also regulated the classroom discipline. The application of the humorous naturally regulates the harmonious relationship between teachers and students.

Here is one application of education humour. As soon as the bell rang, several students still lay on the table and did not prepare for class. Some students noticed that someone was sitting in the back of the class. They were curious and turned back frequently. The teacher looked at the students who looked back and the students who slept, smiled and said, "that's your senior students of previous sessions. They have not slept very well these days. Today, they especially came to listen to my English class to have good sleep!" For a moment, the class laughed, and the students who were lying on their stomach were sitting upright. After the laughter, the whole class immediately get ready for the coming class. Although this is a revision class without interesting activities, the students' learning state is naturally driven by the use of teachers' teaching humor art.

#### 3.2 Good Classroom Discipline

Maintaining classroom discipline has always been a problem for teachers, and some emergencies in the classroom also need to be solved in time. In the face of students' undisciplined behaviors in the classroom, teachers do not take the way of severe reprimand, but use a humorous sentence to make students realize the misconduct of their own behavior without affecting the overall teaching progress in the classroom. Here is another example. When the teacher was in class, the audio player broke down, and some students were gloating and making noise. At this time, the teacher did not severely criticize or let go, but asked "Are you happy? Who is happy?" Taking advantage of the gap to solve the problem calmly and quickly, she started playing the audio and asked "Are you still happy?" This is also a humorous euphemism to remind children to get ready for class.

What we should pay more attention is the learning in the classroom. While quickly dealing with audio problems, the teacher maintains the classroom order, so it does not affect the progress of classroom teaching, but also regulates and disciplines the class. Through the successful application of humor art, a possible teaching accident is turned into a thoughtful episode, which makes the relatively stable classroom teaching more vivid with small twists and turns.

#### 3.3 Sound Mental Personality

Timely teaching humor can activate the classroom atmosphere, arouse students' interest, and let students actively participate in the classroom at once. At the same time, it can help students learn unconsciously. In the vocabulary teaching, It is important for teachers to grasp the educational opportunity to use learned words and sentence patterns to express their views. In one class the teacher was leading the students to review the vocabulary. When reviewing the word "handsome", a boy was quite excited and asked himself, causing the surrounding students to cover their mouths and laugh. Then the teacher noticed and asked the class, "Who is the most handsome boy in our

class?”, Many students coaxed and said, “Of course it is the boy who was shouting the word”, but the teacher smiled and deliberately replied with “Just so so” to disagree with the students, and asked the boy “Who do you think is handsome? Why?”, He was a little embarrassed and replied, “Mr. Wang is handsome because he is talk and has big eyes.”

Then the teacher took advantage of this answer to continue to give full play to teaching humor and educational wit, and asked several students to describe the teacher with the learned words respectively, while the rest of the students guessed and used the image metaphor method. has created Thus a relaxed and pleasant classroom interaction environment was created and promoted learning. It is good for learners’ mental health and develop good personality (Li Qinglin, 2018). Every student actively thinks and uses what he has learned to express his views, which makes the vocabulary review form vivid and rich, and students are more willing to participate. At the same time, the teacher deliberately exaggerated his actions and expressions, mixed with a few humorous words to describe some teachers, making the whole process more interesting. It is necessary for teachers to be good at discovering small interests in life, so as to cultivate students' sound personality, help students gradually have a cheerful and optimistic attitude and cultivate a sense of humor in learning and life. However, it can be seen that grasping some small incidents in the classroom and making them part of the class and promoting teaching requires teachers' high professional quality and responsibility. And it is also a good way to adjust the humorous atmosphere in the classroom and show teachers' personal charm.

#### 4. Conclusion

Through the analysis of the art of teaching humor and the field investigation of junior middle school English classroom, we can truly realize its role, that is, to adjust the classroom atmosphere and promote the harmonious relationship between the teacher and students. We can also establish contact with the content of teaching knowledge to open students' mind, improve students' personality and stimulate students' thirst for knowledge (Zhang Jiali, 2020). Therefore, humor in classroom teaching is an art worth learning and using by all middle school English teachers. Although the concept is simple it is not easy to master, teachers had better have a certain accumulation of knowledge, consciously adjust the classroom atmosphere, be rich in teaching wit, and make good use of actions and language to achieve unexpected “laughter” effects in order to enable students to learn, understand and master knowledge in a classroom full of laughter.

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