

# Teaching Intercultural Understanding using Humor

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## Introduction

Humor, laughter and the social-psychological processes involved, are universal and essential aspects of human culture, communication and evolution. The transferring of humor into laughter requires the processing of stereotypes, logic, expectations and the recognizing of patterns. Failure to do these without precise timing and careful consideration of all elements, will generally result in shock. Nevertheless, whether enjoyable or challenging, humor is a rich source of cultural, linguistic and social information. Humor developed from a human defense mechanism, which rewarded the recognition of unfamiliar or surprising patterns. The relief in surviving an unknown or potentially dangerous situation by discovering abnormal conditions, results in the release of dopamine and a feeling of euphoria. This included laughter and eventually evolved into an enjoyable and benign form of entertainment, communication and relationship building. In this way laughter and the emotions associated with it are very powerful and deeply rooted in a person's being. Although laughter is a mere reaction to external stimulus, the conditions under which it is produced are extremely complicated and involve aspects of higher cognition, psychology, culture, personality, gender, education, background and common sense. As a result, understanding humor is one of the best ways to learn about individual differences, understand various group dynamics and communication styles, and represents the peak of language proficiency and highest levels of intercultural communicative competence. For the purpose of considering the complex variables involved in humor and intercultural understanding, within the limited context of an EFL classroom, this report will provide

four readily adaptable lessons, strategies and resources for using humor in the classroom.

## Rationale

Language teaching and learning are both highly personal and complicated processes, requiring a mastery of a range of both structural and abstract skills. The classroom is traditionally geared towards the structural aspects, such as grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation, while employing teacher-centered methods focusing on repetition, retention, reproduction and quantifiable training. Although these skills are important for knowing a language in theory, they are inadequate in providing the practical tools required for understanding or using a language appropriately. In order for learners to achieve any level of communicative competence, a deeper level of meta-skills and abstract components of language is required. These include awareness of cultural differences, especially flexibility towards varying contexts, expectations, intentions and communication styles. Cultural elements are typically difficult to teach, as the classroom is either a static or artificial context, the teacher ultimately brings their own biases and stereotypes to any lesson and cultural elements will be largely irrelevant to learners, without first-hand experience or a direct connection to the language or target language group. Considering that cultural and communicative aspects of language are essential for communicative competence, how can teachers better develop these skills within a classroom setting? One method which is both practical, relevant and enjoyable is the introduction of humor as both content, communicative tool and teaching strategy. Humor requires all aspects of language, personality and culture in order to be understood. If learners are able

to process humor in another language or culture, it can be inferred that they have achieved a higher level of understanding of that language or culture.

Using humor to teach language and communication need not be a difficult endeavor. Everyone enjoys humor, and one does not need to be funny or a comedian, in order to apply it successfully in the classroom. For the purpose of intercultural communication, failed humor is as important an example as successful humor. All humans laugh, however the reasons for laughter are variable and context/culture specific. It is by analyzing humor, that we can gain insight into the cultural variables and unique communication styles of a particular group. With this goal in mind, the following will describe 4 practical and easily conducted lessons, using humor to raise intercultural understanding in the language classroom. Each lesson will be described and formatted, to provide clear information regarding aims, rational, preparation, procedures and strategies. Materials including worksheets, instructions and other resources are also included in each lesson plan. The lessons are designed to be simple, straight forward and adaptable to most teaching environments, class sizes or language levels.

### **Lesson 1: Understanding Humor for Intercultural Communication**

#### **Aims:**

Interpreting and understanding the nuances and elements of humor across cultures. Developing awareness of individual differences and an understanding of the requirements for a sense of humor.

**Time: Preparation:** 15 minutes

**Class:** 20–45 minutes

**Resources:** Humor analysis and reflection sheets.

#### **Rationale**

Humor is a cross cultural phenomenon however the elements which make it understood or enjoyable are culture specific. In cross cultural communication,

humor is often used as a powerful speech act for breaking the ice, building relationships or diffusing a difficult situation. However, universal, the idea of “funny” is rarely translatable and is highly personal, context and culture specific. As a result many jokes, sarcastic or ironical remarks which may be deeply tied to culture are often unperceived, misunderstood or offensive. The activity described here uses examples of humor in communication and describes ways in which they may be applied to communication and cultural understanding. The goal is to try to use humor to bridge cultures and work as a mutual communication strategy. Skills and strategies developed through this activity include flexibility, creativity and multilevel awareness of individual and cultural differences in communication styles. The first task provides input from various mediums and styles of humor. In the case of English, examples from U.K. Canada, Australia and America are efficient and accessible. It is also interesting and useful to compare these with examples from other English speaking countries in the periphery such as India, Malaysia, or Hong Kong to experience firsthand how cultural differences affect language and communication. The final task requires students to consider their own perceptions of “funny” by analyzing and ranking the examples of humor. In conclusion the factors affecting the success or failure of humor in interpersonal and intercultural settings should be considered and discussed. The purpose of this activity is to promote open mindedness and flexibility towards interaction while exposing students to real life language and situations. By creating opportunities for students to consider humor in context, they are able to reflect on how it is used and form their own conclusions. Cross cultural examples of humor can also provide a sense of curiosity to motivate and facilitate inquiry and interest beyond the classroom.

#### **Procedure**

##### **Screening:**

Students are shown examples of humor from different cultures or languages. These should be short and

simple examples and be representative of the target language or culture.

### Evaluation

Students should evaluate each example giving it a rank on a scale of 1-5. They should also determine the level of "funniness", their level of understanding and the elements which made it funny or not.

### Analysis

Analyze the examples of humor by applying simple questions. Who is involved? What happened? Where did the situation take place? When? What exactly was funny? What was the intended purpose? What was the pattern? Could I recognize the surprise, twist or deviation from logic? Was there a resolution? To develop a complete understanding, learners should compile their own list of key words and key questions about the examples.

### Discussion

Compare interpretations and opinions with other members of the class. Which examples were most popular or least popular? What are some common elements in determining the success or failure of humor? What sort of individual differences are there in the class?

Reflection and Interpretation:

### Resources: Humor Analysis Worksheet

Indicate how funny each example of humor is on the chart below.

Example	Not funny			Very funny		Reason
	1	2	3	4	5	
1)	1	2	3	4	5	
2)	1	2	3	4	5	
3)	1	2	3	4	5	
4)	1	2	3	4	5	
5)	1	2	3	4	5	
6)	1	2	3	4	5	
7)	1	2	3	4	5	
8)	1	2	3	4	5	
9)	1	2	3	4	5	
10)	1	2	3	4	5	

Resources: Interpretation and Analysis Questions

Deconstruct the examples, considering social, cultural and linguistic perspectives. Use questions like those shown in the resource section. Form a basic understanding of the social or communicative elements connected to the example of humor. Try to understand the values and perspectives behind each example of humor. Why was the example funny? How can the humor be understood? Learners should write down their own interpretations which can be shared and discussed.

### Strategies

1. This lesson can be modified for different levels of English proficiency by using visual humor or humor with very simple language (*Chaplin, Mr. Bean, Jackass, Monty Python*).
2. In larger classes this activity can be conducted as pair or group work.
3. If learners find it difficult to understand humor, use a simple example and focus on identifying patterns, stereotypes or deviations in logic or expectations.
4. Students should be told to keep an open mind and pay close attention to all details.
5. As some humor can cross boundaries and taboos, teachers should carefully consider the background and values of all students in the class, to avoid using any examples, which may be inappropriate.

### Humor Analysis Worksheet

Analyze the examples of humor. Consider the criteria listed below.

Background Knowledge					
Keywords					
Expectations/Assumptions					
Turning point/Surprise					
Punch Line					
Resolution					
Difficulties					
Language Specific Information					
Culture Specific Information					
<b>Key Questions</b>					
Which examples of humor were easiest to understand? Why?					
What was the purpose of the humor?					
What was necessary to understand the examples of humor?					
How might the humor be communicated across cultures?					
How can humor be applied to intercultural communication?					

### Lesson 2: Humor Analysis Project

#### Aims

Interpreting and understanding the nuances and elements of humor across cultures. Developing awareness of differences and sensitivity to unfamiliar or changing contexts.

**Time: Preparation:** 15 minutes

**Class:** 20–45 minutes

#### Resources

Humor example presentation worksheet, Reflection and analysis worksheet.

#### Rationale

All humans laugh, but what makes us laugh is highly subjective. Humor is the processing of stereotypes and expectations, therefore it is relevant to intercultural communication. As it reflects cultural and individual values, humor is directly tied to the core elements of culture. By understanding different cultures, humor invariably develops a deeper understanding and appreciation of that culture, its values and perspectives. Unfortunately, humor cannot easily be translated or explained. When dissected, examined or retold, it loses its spontaneity, the key element which makes it interesting or funny. Humor also requires

a surprise or twist in order to be funny. In this way humor and culture shock are the same neurological process. The key difference between humor and shock is a resolution. Something surprising is funny if one can realize that it is non-threatening. As a result, the physiology of laughter, has arisen out of an evolutionary safety mechanism that rewards us for recognizing surprising patterns, which could be potentially dangerous. This illustrates the context specific nature of humor and that if learners can understand humor, they can achieve a higher level of communicative and intercultural competence. Humor uses many aspects of the brain and requires a complete consideration of an audiences background knowledge, personality, gender, as well as socio-cultural variables, in order to be effective or even understood. The activity described here aims to expose students to individual and cultural differences in humor, allowing them to observe, consider and reflect on the criteria, form and function of humor and how it applies to cross cultural understanding. As a predominantly student centered activity, students are expected to provide much of the information and questions, steering the lesson towards their own goals, while the teacher assumes the role of facilitator, guide and mentor.

**Procedure****Introduction**

Teachers should briefly introduce the idea of humor in communication. Focus on the elements required in understanding or producing successful humor. Explain that by understanding humor, one achieves a higher sensitivity to cultural and individual differences as humor utilizes the deepest values, beliefs and perspectives of a group or individual.

**Research**

Before class students should find an example of humor, which they will present and explain to the class. Examples can be any format or media, as long as it can be shown or presented within 2-3 minutes, in the classroom.

**Presentation**

The example of humor is shown or presented to the class. Student should then explain why they felt this example was funny. Highlighting patterns, turning points, surprises, punchlines and explaining any background knowledge.

**Analysis**

Students take notes, make comments and evaluate the example of humor, trying to determine why or if it was funny.

**Discussion**

To process their analysis, students should compare their observations and reviews, to determine commonalities. Do they agree with the explanation of the presenter? Did they find the example funny? What elements were involved in creating the humor?

**Reflection**

Finally, students should consider what they may have learned from the examples of humor. Can they easily identify patterns? What background information was required? Is it specific or generalizable? Why did they laugh at some examples and not at others? How can they generalize these discoveries to improving intercultural communication and understanding individual, social and cultural differences?

**Strategies**

1. This lesson can be modified for different levels of English proficiency by using visual humor or humor with very simple language (Comics, pictures, riddles, puns, jokes or word plays).
2. In larger classes this activity can be conducted as pair or group work.
3. If learners find it difficult to understand humor, use a simple example and focus on identifying patterns, stereotypes or deviations in logic or expectations.
4. Students should be told to keep an open mind and pay close attention to all details.
5. As some humor can cross boundaries and taboos, students should be advised as to what may be considered inappropriate. This is also useful in raising intercultural awareness.

**Resources: Humor Analysis Worksheet**

**Example of Humor**

Trying to determine what makes humor successful, is useful for understanding language and communication strategies, psychology, cognitive processes as well as social, personal or cultural values, beliefs, attitudes and perspectives.

- What is the purpose of *humor*?
- Do you ever use *humor* for communication? Explain or give an example.
- What are some types of *humor*? When are they used?
- What is necessary to understand or enjoy *humor*?
- How might humor be communicated across cultures?

*Find an example of humor from your culture and transcribe or paste it in the space below.*

*Explain briefly why you found this example funny. Consider language, context, patterns, turning point or punchline and resolution.*

**Resources: Evaluation and Analysis of Humor**

**Individual Differences in Humor**

*Indicate how funny each example of humor was on the chart below.*

Example	Not funny		Very funny			Reason
	1	2	3	4	5	
1)	1	2	3	4	5	
2)	1	2	3	4	5	
3)	1	2	3	4	5	
4)	1	2	3	4	5	
5)	1	2	3	4	5	
6)	1	2	3	4	5	
7)	1	2	3	4	5	
8)	1	2	3	4	5	
9)	1	2	3	4	5	
10)	1	2	3	4	5	

What makes it funny?

Is the humor easy for others to understand?

What questions would someone need to ask in order to understand the humor?

### Lesson 3: Exploring Humor through Role Play

#### Aims

Recognizing patterns and criteria for using humor in communicative situations. Developing skills for communication in relationship building.

**Time: Preparation:** 15 minutes

**Class:** 20–45 minutes

#### Resources

Dialogue preparation sheets and explanation.

#### Rationale

Apart from being an enjoyable form of entertainment, humor is a very important and effective part of communication. Humor is often used in relationship building, diffusing tensions, initiating conversation or breaking the ice. However it can be a very risky exchange, if not done carefully or with consideration of the audience. The potential for failure or for possibly offending someone, can be high. A joke can fall flat, a witty remark can be misunderstood or a playful observation could be taken the wrong way. The factors and variables involved in successful humor are vast and complicated, requiring a deeper and complete understanding, of not only language and culture but also, social and personal aspects of communication and identity, such as, background, education, values, or taboos. Humor also requires a surprise or a break in expectations as well as a resolution in order to be successful. In order for there to be a surprise, one must be able to recognize patterns, norms or stereotypes. Without a resolution, humor becomes strange or confusing and can transform into shock. Laughter is the reward for recognizing a surprising pattern. In this way laughter not only brings a pleasant feeling but also reinforces cultural awareness skills and establishes a connection between the speakers, by identifying common points and a sensitivity or awareness of mutual values. Not everyone has a sense of humor and the nuances of humor are very difficult to teach. The best way to develop humor skills, is through experience. However experiencing humor in the real world can be difficult and challenging. This

activity offers students the opportunity to experience and experiment with humor in cross cultural communication, risk free.

#### Procedure

In small groups, students create a role play or dialogue. Each student can assume a role or character, adding conversation and language to a critical incident or communicative scenario. Teachers can guide this activity providing information about how scenarios may be communicated in real life. This performance can be used for discussion or analysis to develop a deeper understanding of the form and purpose of humor.

#### Preparation

In pairs or small groups, students brainstorm a scenario for using humor in communication. Using the preparation worksheet, they should consider as many aspects of the situation as possible and create a critical incident for the occurrence of humor. Considering the purpose, time, place, background, delivery and appropriateness of the exchange.

#### Performance

After preparation and rehearsal, dialogues and role plays are performed in front of the class.

#### Analysis

Following the performance, students should use the humor analysis worksheet to analyze, interpret and evaluate the humor. Aspects to be considered should include; communicative function, patterns and qualities of the utterance or exchange, its appropriateness and overall success.

#### Discussion

Based on their individual analyses, students should engage in discussion and provide comments on the dialogues. Here they should try to determine why or if something was funny. Special attention here should be placed on the effect, in terms of communication, and background knowledge required in order to understand

or process the example of humor.

### Reflection

In conclusion students should internalize what they have learned and experienced. Can they apply the examples of humor to their own lives and communication scenarios? Do they feel comfortable using humor in communication? Have they broadened their understanding of the variables and elements of language, culture, personality and society, involved in using humor? Are they able to recognize the patterns required for using and understanding humor?

### Strategies

1. This lesson can be modified for different levels of

English proficiency by changing the text and the characters who talk to one another.

2. In larger classes this activity can be conducted as pair or group work.
3. If learners find it difficult to identify with the dialogue or scenario, use a simple example from their immediate context. A highly relevant or familiar situation which they may have all experienced or has an obvious interpretation would work best.
4. Students should be told to keep an open mind and pay close attention to all details.
5. Students should also be aware that because of the spontaneous and unexpected nature of humor, it cannot be translated or explained without losing its function.

### Resources: Role Play Worksheets

#### Humor in Communication Role Play Activity

In small groups, plan, produce and perform a dialogue or a role play of a real life situation. The dialogue should be at least 3-5 minutes long and will be performed in front of the class. Dialogues should have an example of humor in communication and should be original. Try to use your own real life experiences.

#### Preparation and description

Title	
Background	
Purpose	
Characters (Who)	
Pattern (What)	
Context (Where)	
Setting (When)	
Surprise (How)	
Resolution (Why)	



**Script**

Character	Dialogue

**Humor Analysis Worksheet**

Criteria	Interpretation				
<b>Example:</b>					
Background Knowledge					
Keywords					
Expectations/Assumptions					
Turning point/Surprise					
Punchline					
Resolution					
Purpose of humor					
Result					

**Lesson 4: Humor in Cross Cultural Marketing****Rationale**

The practical aspects of humor extend beyond being a powerful communicative tool for building relationships or entertaining. Humor is also an effective marketing strategy and technique for creating a strong and lasting message or a positive image of a product. Humor is often used in marketing to be fun, memorable, influential and inspiring. A key benefit of this is that it allows potential customers to let down their defenses and become less apprehensive, more likely to listen, trust and become open to suggestions. As a result, advertising media is often funny in order to entertain, hook or identify with potential consumers. Considering that humor requires higher cognitive understanding as well as cultural knowledge, such marketing can be effective in remaining in viewers memories, creating a connection and positive feeling or generally developing the brand of the product, within a specific target audience. However, if not

done carefully, it can have the opposite effect, by either isolating or offending a potential consumer base. Therefore, humor should focus on supporting a message not just entertaining. The goal of humor in advertising, is not just producing a big laugh or reaction but rather, reaching the audience, promoting the product and delivering a message, by creating a bond, identity or connection. For this purpose, the message, product and humor should all be relevant to the audience. Examples of humor need to be subtle, enhance the goal of the message and return to business once the viewer is hooked. Humorous stories, images or anecdotes have the power to bring people together and create a strong positive bond or identity with the product. As it involves memory and feelings of euphoria, humor is often remembered, retold and quoted. This in itself is powerful in marketing, as the message endures long after the advertisement has ended. For both communicating ideas that spread and motivate, a goal of all marketing, and understanding the intention of a company's message, an awareness of

marketing strategies that apply humor, is an essential skill and requirement, for international media literacy. Like humor, successful marketing requires a deep and comprehensive understanding of the audience. By developing these skills, learners can gain a more complete cultural understanding, necessary for communicating ideas in intercultural exchanges, international business and global marketing.

### **Aims**

To understand how humor can be used to enhance a message or create a connection between groups and across borders for the purpose of creating ideas that spread. Implications for global marketing and international business communication.

**Time: Preparation:** 15-45 minutes

**Class:** 20–90 minutes

### **Resources**

Commercials and advertisements, marketing strategy evaluation worksheet, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

### **Procedure**

#### **Observation**

Students observe 5 examples of promotional media or advertisements on their own. These should be analyzed to determine marketing strategies and how humor is used. In class teachers, can also show several examples of advertisements, which can further be analyzed to show different methods of marketing and humor.

#### **Production**

As a supplemental activity, students can design their own product, company or logo. They can then create an advertisement and consider their target audience and subsequent marketing strategy, as well as what type of humor may or may not be appropriate in supporting their message.

#### **Analysis**

Traditional Marketing often applies Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1970) to target an audience's worries, fears or anxieties. However, this can have

a negative impact by seeming dark, depressing, condescending or even frightening. Humor has a way of taking focus off the severity of some of these elements, by generally make light of them or making the most mundane or serious products, such as tires or insurance, seem interesting. Have students apply Maslow's hierarchy to analyze different media or advertisements. They should consider how humor is used to enhance or diffuse the needs. Are the examples successful or not?

### **Reflection**

In conclusion students can compare, contrast and reflect on individual and cultural differences in communicating ideas, promoting products or delivering a lasting message. All of which are essential elements of global marketing.

### **Strategies**

1. This lesson can be modified for different levels of English proficiency by using simple advertisements or local examples, from their own language.
2. In larger classes this activity can be conducted as pair or group work.
3. If learners find it difficult to understand the message or the humor, use a simple example and focus on identifying patterns, stereotypes or deviations in logic or expectations.
4. Students should be told to keep an open mind and pay close attention to all details.
5. As some marketing is targeted to specific audiences, it can fail to cross cultures. Teachers should carefully consider the background and values of all students in the class and find examples which are appropriate and accessible.

## Resources: Marketing Analysis Worksheet

### Media Survey and Analysis

Choose 5 brands, products or companies you like or are familiar with.

- How do they advertise and market their goods or services? (where, when, how)
- What is the target demographic? (Age, gender, social status, etc...)
- What is the marketing strategy? (fear, anxiety, inadequacy, comparison, humor, etc...)
- Which do you think are most effective? Why? Is the company foreign or domestic?
- How is humor used to support the message or create a connection?

Company/Product/Service	Description	Target Demographic	Date/Time/Source
1)			
<b>Slogan:</b>		<b>Logo:</b>	
<b>Marketing Strategy/Comments:</b>			
Company/Product/Service	Description	Target Demographic	Date/Time/Source
2)			
<b>Slogan:</b>		<b>Logo:</b>	
<b>Marketing Strategy/Comments:</b>			
Company/Product/Service	Description	Target Demographic	Date/Time/Source
3)			
<b>Slogan:</b>		<b>Logo:</b>	
<b>Marketing Strategy/Comments:</b>			
Company/Product/Service	Description	Target Demographic	Date/Time/Source
4)			
<b>Slogan:</b>		<b>Logo:</b>	
<b>Marketing Strategy/Comments:</b>			
Company/Product/Service	Description	Target Demographic	Date/Time/Source
5)			
<b>Slogan:</b>		<b>Logo:</b>	
<b>Marketing Strategy/Comments:</b>			

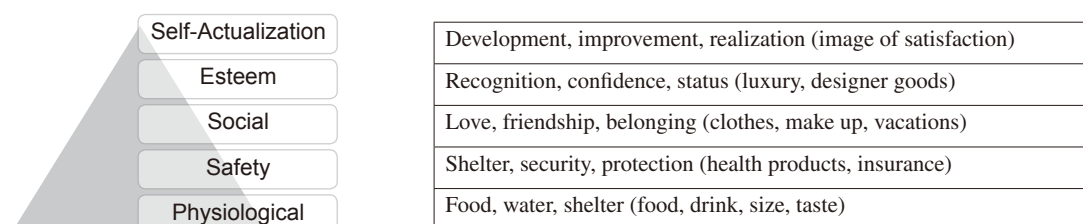
### Global Marketing Strategies

Marketing is both cultural and personal. It works by appealing to people's needs and motivations. In order to successfully market a product or service it is important to understand the context and culture of the target group. There are *4P's of Global Marketing: Product, Place, Promotion, Price* which are a basic guide.


### Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow (1970) highlighted 5 basic needs that humans work to satisfy. Marketing targets these needs through stimulating our fears and desires, promoting consumption. After viewing several ads, consider how they apply to the hierarchy of needs below.

*"Nobody wants to kiss when they are hungry." Dorothea Dix*



**Marketing Project:**

Logo	Slogan	Target	Method
	<i>"I'm eatin' it!"</i>	Young men/women, low income families, students, children.	TV CM, free toys, large portions, discount coupons.
<b>Description</b>	Fast food chain. High saturation ads showing happy, young, healthy people enjoying the food. Use sports players to emphasize health.		

Logo	Slogan	Target	Method
<b>Description</b>			

**Conclusion**

Although laughter is a universal neurological event, what makes us laugh is dependent on many variables and therefore problematic to quantify, generalize or explain in relation to humor. Humor may produce other reactions besides laughter and laughter may not always be a sign of amusement. The challenge of understanding this has been the endless quest of many including jesters, bards, entertainers, writers, comedians, sociologists, psychologists, philosophers and linguists.

Trying to determine the essence behind humor has vast implications for understanding language and communication strategies, psychology and cognitive processes, as well as social, personal or cultural values, beliefs, attitudes and perspectives. The key to understanding these processes and conventions, on either a personal or social level, requires a deeper consideration of the structure and method of humor, in a particular context, timing and intent. Most attempts at humor fail because one or more of these elements are either; misinterpreted, ignored or too ambiguous. As a result, an otherwise amusing quip, joke or anecdote can become embarrassing, nonsensical, inappropriate, offensive or plain meaningless.

The activities and lessons described herein, aim to use humor to raise awareness of cultural differences and build skills required for communicating and negotiating meaning. It is important that students not only consider why or how something is funny but also the reasons why examples of humor fail. Unsuccessful

humor may create some difficult feelings but will result in a deeper understanding and sensitivity to the audience. This is a critical element of intercultural communication and will have a positive effect on learner's future encounters, in terms of awareness of differences, self-confidence, range of communication styles and attitude towards risk. For communication it is important to realize the spontaneity, creativity and fluidity of higher level exchanges like humor. Deep culture, communication styles or humor cannot be easily explained or translated. These need to be experienced in the moment, to be fully understood and appreciated. The conditions required for this, are traditionally difficult to recreate in the classroom. It is hoped that the lessons outlined here, will provide teachers with some practical tools and resources, while allowing learners to explore and experience important elements of intercultural communication in the classroom.

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## 異文化間コミュニケーションとユーモア

ライマン アンドリュー

### 概要

異文化間コミュニケーションの場において、ユーモアはしばしば強力な発話行為として、関係性の構築に大きな影響を与える。笑い、はユニバーサルなものだが、「おもしろさ」の認知は、個人、文脈、文化により異なるものである。したがって、文化的文脈に深く根ざしたジョーク、皮肉やアイロニーは、しばしば理解されず、あるいは誤解され、ときには衝突を生むことすらある。本研究は、文化間の違いを越えるための、あるいは相互理解の戦略として、EFL 授業にコミュニケーションとしてのユーモアを応用する教育的手法を、事例分析を通して明らかにする。したがって、本稿では4つの実践的なレッスン案を提案し、その内容について議論する。本研究の目的は、教師側が学生を文化的な内容に触れられるための手法の提供と、その実践を通じたユーモアを使った異文化間コミュニケーション能力の醸成である。

## Teaching Intercultural Understanding using Humor

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### Abstract

*In cross cultural communication, humor is often used as a powerful speech act in relationship building. Laughter may be universal, but the idea of “funny” is variable from personal, context and culture. As a result many jokes, sarcastic or ironical remarks which may be deeply tied to culture are often unperceived, misunderstood or offensive. This report will explore examples of humor in communication and describe ways in which they may be applied to the EFL classroom, used to bridge cultures and work as a mutual communication strategy. Four practical and readily adaptable lessons for using humor to teach cultural understanding will be introduced and explained. The goal of this report is to provide a means for teachers to expose students to cultural content and develop intercultural communication skills using humor.*

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