

The Application of Instructional Humor in English Grammar Teaching

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Abstract: Instructional humor is an effective teaching auxiliary means. It has the characteristics of vividness, interest, laughter and reflection. The use of instructional humor in junior high school English grammar teaching can create a relaxed and pleasant learning environment, let students learn in happiness, alleviate students' anxiety, stimulate students' interest in learning grammar, let them actively participate in English grammar learning, dare to raise their own questions, and improve the efficiency and quality of English grammar learning. It can also cultivate students' optimistic, positive and humorous personality, and help cultivate a good and harmonious relationship between teachers and students. Teachers can use instructional humor in verbal and nonverbal aspects, modify their language through various rhetorical devices, or integrate humor into simple language to make grammar common and easy to understand, and even use their own facial expressions and body language to show the meaning of humor. However, when using instructional humor, we should also abide by some basic principles to ensure that instructional humor is timely, appropriate and moderate, close to students' life and related to teaching content, so as to ensure the high efficiency of instructional humor and the best effect of grammar teaching.

Key Words: humor; English grammar teaching; application

1 Introduction

As China's comprehensive national strength becomes stronger and stronger, people's demands for all aspects of life have increased. As a critical part of daily life, education has become the focal point of attention. People's demand for education has increasingly shifted from popularity to education quality. In addition, people not only hope to achieve good results of education, but also pay more attention to the psychological experience of the teaching process. Therefore, "teaching in fun" has become a popular idea. To study happily, instructional humor is an important means. Especially for English grammar teaching, because most students think English learning is difficult and boring, it is of vital importance for teachers to use instructional humor in daily teaching in order to arouse and maintain students' interest in learning English grammar.

Before elaborating on instructional humor, we might as well know some definitions of humor. Merriam Webster

dictionary explains humor as follows: (1) a normal functioning bodily semifluid (as the blood or lymph); (2) a secretion (as hormone) that is an excitant of activity; (3) a fluid or juice of an animal or plant, characteristic or habitual disposition or bent; (4) a sudden, unpredictable, or unreasoning inclination; (5) that quality which appeals to a sense if the ludicrous or absurdly appreciating the ludicrous or absurdly incongruous; (6) the mental faculty of discovering, expressing, or appreciating the ludicrous or absurdly incongruous; (7) something that is or is designed to be comical or amusing. From this definition, humor involves a wide range of contents and forms. The comment on humor in China's Xinhua Dictionary is: "words and actions are seemingly relaxed but actually contain profound irony." From this, we can generally understand some characteristics of humor. However, the academic circle has not given a generally accepted definition of instructional humor yet. In his book *The Art of Teaching*, American education research expert Heshut defined humor as one of the

necessary qualities and abilities of an excellent teacher. He specially and systematically studied the problem of humor in teaching, but unfortunately he did not make a more acceptable definition. The instructional humor described by Chinese researcher Lv Guangdan in English Humor mainly refers to language humor, that is, humor created by the variation and use of various elements of language. It includes not only general humorous essays and witty sketches, but also jokes, irony, sarcasm, wit, benmot, epigram puns and humor caused by misreading and misspelling. Jiang Bingqing believes that instructional humor is an educational means to develop ability and impart knowledge to students with interesting, meaningful and enlightening means of expression. It is a form of teaching art to cultivate students' sense of humor and optimistic outlook on life (Jiang, 2007: 168). In my opinion, instructional humor is that teachers use some ingenious and unusual ways to produce humorous effect in their own language, expression and action in class.

2 The Significance of Instructional Humor

Former Soviet educator Svetlov pointed out: "The most important and first assistant of educators is humor." Humor is one of the important means in teachers' teaching, and it also contribute great significance to many aspects of teaching. Teachers' creative use of humor in teaching according to factors such as educational purpose, teaching content, educational object and teaching environment is conducive to activating the classroom atmosphere and enabling students to obtain knowledge in a really relaxed and pleasant atmosphere, which is of great significance to both teachers and students and teaching.

2.1 Significance in Solving the Problems in English Grammar Teaching

We can often see that students consider English grammar learning as a boring thing. However, this troublesome problem can be alleviated by instructional humor. In English grammar teaching, how to stimulate students' learning motivation is a major problem faced by teachers. A humorous English class is an interesting and good class for most students, which

can attract their attention and stimulate their learning motivation. On the contrary, if teachers only explain a certain grammatical content step by step and practice a lot, the classroom will be boring. If the teacher can cite an example close to students' life or in line with students' taste when explaining grammar points, it will be better than just using the outdated examples in textbooks.

Instructional humor is also conducive to attracting students' attention and deepening students' memory. As we all know, there are many similar and indistinguishable points in English grammar. It is easy for students to be confused at first contact. Even if they are temporarily clear, if they can't review in time to deepen their impression, it will also cause memory deviation and mix them up again. Therefore, it is even more troublesome for students to remember if they can't be well separated from each other from the beginning. For example, when learning "in order that" and "in case (that)" in the adverbial clause of purpose, many students can't effectively distinguish the meaning between the two. They will either mix up or remember the two as the same meaning. A teacher said this when talking about this part, "You all know that case has a meaning of 'box'. Can in case also have a meaning of 'in the box'? If we imagine a child hiding in a box, why is he hiding in a box?" The students spoke enthusiastically, "In order not to let others find him!" "Maybe to prevent others from finding him!" At this time, the teacher smiled happily and said, "Yes, students, he hid in the box 'to prevent' (以防) others from finding him. Of course, that is the meaning of 'in case' (以防)!" The students laughed. They not only actively participated in and thought when learning this grammar point, but also firmly remembered the meaning of in case (that). I believe they will be deeply impressed by this grammar point. Whenever they see in case (that), a picture of a child hiding in a box to prevent others from finding him will appear in their mind.

In Chinese English classes, we often see a phenomenon that students will have serious anxiety and even fear about English learning. Anxiety is a common

emotion in second language acquisition classroom. Both learner internal variables and learner external variables had been found to be the sources of FLCA in past anxiety research. When students are exposed to a foreign language, they will inevitably have anxiety because of the strangeness and learning difficulty. In addition to students' internal factors, anxiety will also be affected by the language learning environment. If they learn English in a depressed and dull learning environment, it will only produce greater pressure on students, resulting in anxiety. Oxford (2017) presented a range of strategies that teachers can try to use to alleviate FLCA, including the use of humor to increase learners' flow experiences, agency, hope and optimism. Therefore, the role of instructional humor is shown. If teachers can use instructional humor in class and guide students to laugh, they can ease the tense atmosphere and alleviate students' anxiety, so as to lead students to study happily and achieve good learning results.

2.2 Significance to Teachers' Teaching and Students' Learning

Rosenberg said: "In teaching, humor can provide a relaxed environment, so as to enhance students' participation ability and stimulate students' learning desire." In English learning, creating a relaxed learning atmosphere is conducive to relieving Students' pressure. Many students always feel great pressure in English class, because English learning is difficult. Sometimes they can't understand the teacher's speech, and when the classroom is silent, they will have a depressed mood and feel pressure. This shows how important it is to create a pleasant and relaxed learning environment in English teaching, and instructional humor is a driving force to promote the atmosphere to form. A good humor teaching has a fast diffusion and emotional appeal, which can turn the boring theoretical learning into a pleasant spiritual enjoyment and activate the classroom atmosphere (Hou, 2007: 162). After creating a happy and harmonious classroom atmosphere with the help of instructional humor, students will more actively participate in classroom activities, dare to ask questions to teachers and solve puzzles in time, which is also more beneficial to the communication between

peers and improve the learning quality and effect of English grammar.

Teachers' use of humor in teaching is also conducive to enlightening students' wisdom, cultivating students' sense of humor and shaping students' optimistic character. A. Ziv, a scholar, believes that humor teaching can make students more creative, because humor helps teachers and students find, appreciate and enjoy the fun in the face of teaching tasks that are generally considered monotonous or boring (Ziv, 1980: 159). Humor teaching can not only improve the classroom atmosphere, but also activate students' thinking, promote students' positive thinking, dare to create and inspire students' wisdom. Teachers teaching in a humorous and vivid way is conducive to creating a pleasant learning atmosphere. Atmosphere is a state similar to "magnetic field", and the subject and object in the same "field" are highly infectious. Classroom humor atmosphere is one of them, which has strong diffuse and infectious, and affects the effect of teachers and students' teaching activities (Jiang, 2017: 41). The personality of humor is not innate, but an acquired experience. In Bandura's view, almost all learning phenomena from direct experience can take place directly by observing the behavior and results of others (Bandura, 1989: 15). By creating a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere, teachers can make students infected by their own humorous personality. Students are good at imitating role models. At this time, teachers will play a good exemplary role. When students feel the teacher's humor and the fun of humor, they will unconsciously imitate the teacher's humorous expression and behavior to form their own humorous character. Even their personality will be more open-minded and cheerful. The role models of parents, nannies, tutors and classmates in straightening up their lives must be constantly put in front of children (Comenius, 1999: 168). The more teachers present to students, the more they can guide students to imitate. In class 3, grade 2, grade 2020 of Jia Town Middle School, I found an interesting phenomenon, after the teacher said some interesting thing in the class, the next few days would witness a great trend of imitation, the students would not

only imitate the words or sentences the teacher said, but also adapted them, added their own characteristics in, spoke their own interesting words and thus showed his unique humorous personality. In addition, what makes us happy is that some introverted or dull students will gradually change in the class of humorous teachers. They will slowly dare to express their opinions, become more cheerful and open-minded, and even occasionally shake a clever, making the students laugh. It can be seen that the exemplary role of teachers not only plays a great role in students' learning, but also has positive significance in shaping students' positive personality. In turn, an optimistic and positive personality can promote students' learning initiative and enthusiasm, and indirectly promote students' learning.

The use of humor in teaching is also conducive to improving teachers' sense of teaching achievement. While teachers amuse students with their own language and behavior, they will also be happy physically and mentally. Seeing the smiling faces of the students because of their humor, seeing the students pay more attention to the lesson after laughing, and seeing the students' eyes eager for knowledge, the teacher knows that the students love this class and gain a lot of knowledge from this class. Learning in such a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere, not only the teachers are willing to teach and the students are eager to learn, but also the students easily master the knowledge learned in the classroom. Which teacher will not have a more sense of achievement because of this? I firmly hold that teachers want to get along well with students. Proper use of instructional humor can show students the easygoing personality of teachers. While respecting teachers, students will also love teachers and can't help approaching teachers, which is beneficial to cultivating a harmonious teacher-student relationship, with which teachers can also carry out various teaching activities more smoothly. When both teachers and students go to a class with joy and expectation, I believe this class will not be bad.

3 Present Situation in Jia Town Middle School

3.1 Existing Problems in English Grammar Teaching

In China, the pressure of English grammar teaching is often placed in senior high school, but we must admit that junior high school is also a critical time for students to learn English grammar. At present, in junior high school English teaching, teachers subconsciously pay more attention to the teaching of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and comparatively do not systematically teach basic grammar. Many students are always confused in the learning of English grammar. They know some content, but they can't clearly understand its meaning and the reason. I think it is necessary to systematically teach students some basic grammar based on their listening, speaking, reading and writing ability in the junior high school. Just as we learn Chinese, after we have some basic application ability of Chinese, we will also systematically learn Chinese grammar, so as to further learn Chinese better. In addition, for students who have just started to learn English, it is very difficult for them to form some English language sense through daily listening, speaking, reading and writing without giving them guidance on grammar knowledge. However, in grammar teaching in junior high school, it's of great need for teachers to pay more attention to the crucial role of interest. Because grammar itself has a certain dryness and dullness, for students who come into contact with grammar for the first time, it is easy and reasonable for them to lose interest in grammar learning and resist because they are afraid of difficulties and out of patience.

At present in junior high school, there exists quite a lot problems in English grammar teaching, which deserve our attention. First of all, the form of grammar teaching is single. In grammar teaching, it is inevitable that teachers speak unilaterally and then guide students to carry out mechanical practice. Students are too passive and are in a state of being led by the nose. If students are simply asked to carry out a lot of topic training after teaching a certain knowledge point, or even let students recite some grammar sentence patterns, they often feel bored with the grammar of this form of teaching,

and lose interest in English grammar learning gradually. Secondly, the interaction in grammar teaching is rather few. Teachers often take a lot of teacher-student interactions in listening and speaking class, but it is not reflected in grammar teaching. Grammar teaching only adopts a single form of interaction, which is inseparable from the teachers' teaching concept. In the view of many teachers, as long as students in junior high school can master good listening, speaking and other corresponding communicative skills are enough, and they think grammar teaching in junior high school is too early and unnecessary, so they won't put much energy in grammar teaching. But in fact, junior high school is a quite important stage for students to build a solid foundation for thorough learning of English in senior high school. If teachers can't teach students some of the most important and basic grammar knowledge at this stage, it will be quite disadvantageous to their high school English grammar learning. In addition, grammar teaching in junior high school is too rigid and inflexible. When teachers teach grammar, they unconsciously take it out as a separate part to learn. They rarely connect grammar learning with learning in listening, speaking, reading and writing. So in this case, if they do not commendably integrate the learning of all parts of English, it is difficult to deepen the students' impression of grammar knowledge and it make grammar learning extremely boring.

3.2 The Present Application of Instructional Humor in English Grammar Teaching

At present, more and more college teachers gradually realize the great significance and importance of using humor in teaching, and will actively use instructional humor to assist teaching in the classroom. However, in junior high and senior high school English classroom, it is still rare for teachers to consciously and freely use instructional humor, especially in the former one, the frequency of instructional humor is very low. In the questionnaire survey of 103 junior high school students of grade 2020 in Jia Town middle school, aiming at "Do you like English class? Why?" About 45.91% of the students who said they

liked English class

said that they liked English class because the English teacher was humorous or the English class was lively and interesting. From this point of view, students often prefer humorous and vivid English classes, but in fact, only about 59.22% of students say they like English classes, so we can draw the conclusion that the application of humor in English classes is not high. As we all know, western countries are humorous countries, so teachers use instructional humor more frequently in Western classrooms than in China. Subject to Chinese cultural traditions, a considerable number of teachers hold the stereotypical opinion that they should be serious and cautious in the classroom, especially when teaching key knowledge. If the classroom atmosphere is too relaxed and pleasant, it is not conducive to students to concentrate on learning, this teaching attitude leads most English teachers to choose more serious teaching methods instead of instructional humor in English teaching, especially in grammar teaching. Though some teachers are aware of the significance of instructional humor and want to use instructional humor, it is not easy to use instructional humor freely and appropriately in teaching. Most teachers have not learned and trained in this aspect, do not understand the application methods of humor in English classroom, and do not know how to effectively improve their sense of humor, We can only explore step by step, but we rarely take the initiative to think and design humor before class, so it can be said that teachers' strength in using instructional humor in English classroom does not match their ambition. Moreover, compared with western countries, the research on instructional humor in China started late, is not mature in theory and practice, and is still developing, so it is ineluctable that the application of instructional humor in English classroom teaching is poor.

4 The Application of Instructional Humor in English Grammar Teaching

Every teacher will want to use instructional humor in teaching more or less, but how to use instructional humor appropriately is a big problem. This part aims to describe the application of instructional humor from the aspects of

teachers' words and actions, the design of teaching content, the application of teaching auxiliary tools and the basic principles and specific requirements of the use of instructional humor.

4.1 Verbal and Nonverbal Instructional Humor

When talking about instructional humor, most people's first reaction is about verbal humor, but in fact, instructional humor is not limited to speech. Teachers' expressions and actions are also good means for teachers to show humor.

Firstly, let's discuss the verbal kind of instructional humor in English grammar teaching.

The simplest way of verbal kind of instructional humor is to use existing humorous stories, jokes, limericks and interesting proverbs. Teachers present humorous stories, jokes, limericks and proverbs related to the teaching content to students in a timely manner. By this means, students can not only harvest laughter in humorous stories, but also deepen their impression on what they have learned. For example, when explaining the past perfect tense, I present the students with an English humorous story - "they should be playing at night". A therapist, a priest and an economist go golfing. The group ahead of them is extremely slow, leading to some frustration among the three. Their complaints are overheard, and a man from the group ahead walks over to them. He introduces himself as an aide because the group of golfers he is with is blind! The aide thanks the three in appreciation for their patience for the blind golfers. The priest goes, "Oh no, all my life I've preached for all to be better to my fellow man and here I am complaining about the blind!" The therapist says, "I've been trained my whole life to others and here I am complaining about the blind, shape on me!" the economist says, "Oh no! They should be playing at night." When the students heard this funny little story in the boring classroom, they not only focused their attention, but also were more impressed by the expression of the past perfect tense which frequently appeared in the little story.

In addition to the existing humorous stories, teachers can also show the effect of humor by processing their own

language. For example, add more rhetoric to your speech. Metaphor, personification, irony, pun and exaggeration are all commonly used and easy to use rhetoric. For example, in the first English class with my students in Jia Town Middle School, I gave students five minutes to ask questions freely, as long as they were curious about me. A lively boy asked me what my monthly salary was, which was actually a more private question. So I pretended to meditate a few seconds and finally answered him, "Not much actually... Less than a million a month." Such an answer with ups and downs and a slight sense of humor not only resolved the embarrassment of the question and answer, harvested the laughter of the students, but also virtually narrowed the distance with the students.

Teachers can also combine more contents that are popular nowadays in teaching, such as all kinds of popular words and interesting expressions. Now we are facing the rapid development of the Internet, thus all kinds of online media are filled with everyone's life. Especially the contemporary teenagers are at the age of pursuing the trend. They have a high acceptance of various online buzzwords and like to imitate them in daily life. Therefore, instead of avoiding these in class, teachers might as well integrate them into classroom teaching appropriately, which will achieve better teaching results. For example, when explaining the inverted sentence pattern of as, n. (adj.)+ as / though + subject + copula: put the "predicative" (not be verb) in the copula structure before the subordinate conjunction as / though (not before the subject). The author presents a sentence to the students, "She smiled at me, she must like me." The students will not be unfamiliar with this sentence. At this time, ask the students what word to use to describe people with this idea, and the students will shout out "Puxin!" (普信), which mean ordinary but confident in Chinese, usually refers to a kind of people who is very ordinary but very narcissistic, is one of the popular words on the Internet. At then, it's time to present the students with such a blank filling question: Common _____, he is very confident. Students can easily fill in the correct answer "as he is" on the horizontal line.

Students kept a high degree of attention in the whole process. They learned this part in laughter and were deeply impressed by as inversion. However, teachers should also pay attention to avoid hot words with non-positive orientation when using network buzzwords. They should ensure that the buzzwords they use are in line with the socialist core values and will not guide students to produce bad psychological buzzwords, so as to ensure that their classroom is truly high-quality and positive-oriented.

In addition to these skills, it takes experience to explain the grammatical difficulties with no characteristics in easy to understand language. Sometimes it can only be a sudden idea without skills, but this kind of instructional humor is often more vivid. For example, I have a deep impression on a grammatical point which a student has made a mistake, which is about the word asleep. The student made a sick sentence with asleep, "John falls asleep all night." I didn't correct it directly, but asked with a smile, "John began to sleep for all night... You put John in a state of not sleeping all night. Aren't you a little cruel?" The student soon understood the implication and realized his mistake, he laughed at his mistake too and have no burden about his mistake. Since then, the student has never made this mistake again, and really has a deep understanding of the meaning and usage of the word asleep.

In addition to using verbal instructional humor in teaching, teachers should also take full advantage of nonverbal instructional humor, such as their own facial expressions and body languages. Teachers' facial expressions and body languages must be appropriate, not the more exaggerated the better. Uncontrolled facial expressions and body languages will make teachers look like clowns. The facial expressions and body languages I mentioned refer to the very natural movements and expressions that can be integrated into the interaction with students in teaching, which are closely related to the class. More specifically, the teachers should make the best use of their eyes and smiles, as well as gestures and other body movements. It is better to be relaxed and generous, playful and lovely, which is enough to change the dull

atmosphere of the classroom and mobilize the students' learning enthusiasm. For example, when explaining the differences between various kinds of smiles, teachers can use their facial expressions and laughter to show the differences between grin, chuck, snigger, giggle and other different smiles. I believe it will lead to a wide trend of imitation and also deeply impressed the students.

Teachers can also increase the interaction with students when using instructional humor, so as to make students more integrate into the classroom and create a positive and close classroom atmosphere. For example, when explaining the location words, the teacher can invite the students to draw on the blackboard, maze or map are all good choices, they should mark the starting point as well as the ending point, and then the teacher blindfolded his eyes. After that, the students will give the teacher hints with the location words from the starting point to the ending point. During this process, students can not only activate their thinking, but also firmly grasp the knowledge points of location words, and even cultivate the ability of cooperation. The students gained knowledge and developed their ability in laughter.

4.2 Design of Teaching Contents

For many experienced English teachers, many grammar points have been taught thousands of times and are rooted in the depths of memory. Sometimes when talking about grammar points, it is inevitable to teach them unconsciously according to the previous way of speaking. Sometimes it is OK that it remains unchanged in one or two years. Over time, the explaining words may appear to be old-fashioned and have no new ideas and can no longer attract the attention of new era students. As a matter of fact, teachers should try to make more efforts in the design of grammar points. How to create new ideas out of invariable contents is a great test of teachers' minds. In fact, the best way to have new ideas is to make the grammar points as close to the students' life and interests as possible. For example, when using example sentences to explain and practice a grammar point, the teacher can replace the characters,

places and events in the example sentences with those that are familiar to the students. For example, it is a good way to change the names of the characters in the exercise sentences into the names of the students that teachers teach. By this means, it will be an exciting surprise for the students to do practice every time. They will look forward to whether their names will appear in the practice this time, thus they do the practice with hope and willingness. This will first lay a good psychological foundation, and then carry out the exercises, the effect is twice the result with half the effort.

Another effective method of teacher-student interaction is the exchange of roles between teachers and students. That's to say, let students play the role of teachers, and teachers play the role of students, which can fully mobilize students' enthusiasm. For instance, when explaining grammar points, teachers can deliberately make a mistake that students often make, and let students act as small teachers to correct those mistakes, which is very conducive to students' active participation in the classroom, deepen their memory of grammar points, and help students gain a sense of pride and achievement.

There are many confusing difficulties in English. Teachers should carefully design such grammatical points before explanation. It is best to explain them in plain and easy way. For example, when explaining the difference between hopeful and wishful, teacher Gao Guaili said: "I hope to marry a wife, because I'm old enough, so I should use hopeful at this time, because this desire is practical; I hope to buy a car, but I only have one yuan, so I should use wishful at this time, because this desire is not practical." The students laughed after listening, but at the same time they easily understood the difference between the two words. For another example, when explaining the participle as the prepositive attribute: boiling water and boiled water. If the two are translated into the boiling water and the water which is boiled respectively, the students don't quite understand. So Mr. Gao translated them into the water which is bubbling and the water which has already bubbled and not bubble now respectively. Students can see the

difference between past participle and present participle as attributive at a glance (Gao, 2006: 160).

4.3 Principles and Demands of applying Instructional Humor

Through the above, we have discussed many advantages and methods of instructional humor, but we must make clear that there should be some restrictions on the use of instructional humor. Firstly, we should clearly know that the purpose of using instructional humor is to assist teaching, so we can't use humor just for humor, and we can't use humor only to make students laugh. That can't even be called instructional humor. Therefore, we should ensure that the instructional humor used is closely related to the teaching content. Some researchers have discussed the influence of humor on the understanding and memory of learning materials. The results show that when humor is related to learning materials, it is conducive to students' memory and understanding of learning materials. In addition, if the learning materials are presented in the form of humor, it's obvious that students will have a deeper understanding of the learning content (AbdAli, Ashur, Ghazi, & Muslim, 2016: 52). Therefore, teachers should use instructional humor in teaching pertinently. To grasp the core part of the teaching content, we must ensure that humor is closely related to the teaching content. Secondly, the use of instructional humor should be appropriate and should not be overused. As materialist dialectics says, "Degree" refers to the limit that a thing maintains its own quality and quantity, or the range and scope are the limit that is unified with the quality of a thing, that is, the limit that maintains its own existence. Although the changes within this limit affect the changes of the state and characteristics of a thing, they cannot change the quality of a thing, that is, they cannot destroy the existence of a thing. Beyond this limit, the change of degree and quantity will cause qualitative change, that is, destroy the existence of things and turn this thing into others (Song, 2005). Excessive use of instructional humor will divert students' attention and make their interest drift to other things rather than class content, which will seriously affect the quality of teaching. Using too much instructional

humor is not good. At the same time, using unlimited instructional humor is also quite undesirable. Humor and glib nonsense are totally different things. Some studies have shown that ironic humor will have a destructive impact on the originally harmonious relationship between teachers and students (Sarah, Robert & Lin, 2004: 14). If teachers satirize students to achieve the effect of humor, it will not only antagonize students, but also damage students' self-esteem and learning enthusiasm. Therefore, when using instructional humor, teachers should avoid those words that will hurt students, not show humor in a way of belittling or laughing at others, and put students' self-esteem on the premise, so as to maintain the harmonious teacher-student relationship.

5. Conclusion

If English is compared to a tree, then grammar is the root. We should realize the importance of English grammar teaching in junior high school English teaching. Though grammar has always left the impression that it is rigid and boring, which is the content of students' anxiety, fear and even resistance, instructional humor has lit a light on the dark road of English grammar teaching. Instructional humor has its own unique charm. Compared with other teaching strategies or means, it is more easygoing, more popular and more acceptable. It can effectively relieve the suppressed classroom atmosphere, mobilize students' enthusiasm and participation, and make students study happily. There is much learning of forms and structures of the language in the process of English learning, so it will inevitably appear boring and formatted, but as long as teachers can timely, appropriately and moderately integrate verbal or nonverbal forms of instructional humor into English grammar teaching and carefully design grammar content, then will certainly make the classroom atmosphere relaxed and lively, so as to improve students' interest in learning grammar, achieve good teaching results, lay a solid grammar foundation for students, and be more conducive to their in-depth study in the future. Instructional humor has all kinds of forms and infinite wit, which requires every teacher to seriously study and explore. However, we can't put too much

emphasis and energy on instructional humor, although instructional humor is interesting and effective, it can't solve every problem existing in grammar teaching. Moreover, only in the appropriate time and occasion, an appropriate amount of use of instructional humor can achieve good results, and all this requires a solid theoretical foundation and practical experience as the cornerstone to effectively and accurately grasp them. Therefore, teachers must make more efforts to study and grasp the best point of applied instructional humor. And teachers should combine the actual teaching content when using instructional humor, use instructional humor in a targeted way to prevent the abuse of instructional humor, so as to make instructional humor give full play to its maximum benefits.

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