

THÔNG TIN VỀ LUẬN ÁN TIẾN SĨ

1. **Họ và tên nghiên cứu sinh:** Trần Thị Ái Hoa
2. **Giới tính:** Nữ
3. **Ngày sinh:** 06.06.1966
4. **Nơi sinh:** Võ Dạ, Huế.
5. **Quyết định công nhận nghiên cứu sinh số:** 1077/SĐH của Giám đốc Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội ngày 09 tháng 11 năm 2009.
6. **Các thay đổi trong quá trình đào tạo:**
 - Đổi tên đề tài 02 lần
 - Gia hạn thêm 02 năm và tạm ngừng 01 năm
7. **Tên đề tài luận án:** Developing tour guide students' ability to make sense of humour in English jokes through authentic materials (*Phát triển khả năng hiểu tính hài hước trong các truyện cười tiếng Anh của sinh viên ngành hướng dẫn du lịch qua tài liệu nguyên gốc*)
8. **Chuyên ngành:** Lý luận và phương pháp dạy học tiếng Anh
9. **Mã số:** 09 04 80 08
10. **Cán bộ hướng dẫn khoa học:**
 - Cán bộ hướng dẫn 1: PGS.TS. Nguyễn Phương Nga
 - Cán bộ hướng dẫn 2: GS. TS. Tô Thị Thu Hương
11. **Tóm tắt các kết quả mới của luận án:**

Các phát hiện từ giai đoạn sơ bộ đã cung cấp các tiêu chuẩn hữu ích cho việc lựa chọn và điều chỉnh các tài liệu đích thực cho sinh viên hướng dẫn viên du lịch như các loại truyện cười tiếng Anh thích hợp để sử dụng trong lớp học tiếng Anh và các hoạt động hướng dẫn du lịch, ở cấp độ sơ cấp và tiền trung cấp: ngắn và khoảng 200 từ. Các truyện cười bao gồm ba thể loại đơn giản của hài hước bằng lời nói: từ, câu và đoạn văn thích hợp với các nội dung về ngôn ngữ, văn hoá và thực tế dưới dạng các truyện ngắn vui nhộn, câu đố và một và hai câu hài hước gồm một hoặc hai câu. Tập tài liệu nguyên gốc này được xây dựng dựa trên năng lực đã được lựa chọn bao gồm các câu chuyện cười tiếng Anh nguyên gốc. Song song đó,

một sự giao thoa của ba đường hướng: năng lực hài hước, quá trình học ngôn ngữ và năng lực ngữ dụng đã được áp dụng để thúc đẩy việc thực hiện các tài liệu nguyên gốc đạt được thành công. Như vậy, việc tập trung vào ba kỹ năng chính của ngôn ngữ là nói, nghe và đọc, học sinh đã học những câu chuyện cười theo cặp, nhóm với các nhiệm vụ thực tế và sự phạm với sự trợ giúp trực quan, hoạt hình, hình ảnh, tay nghề, báo, tạp chí, Âm thanh, video và thầy dạy là người nước ngoài nói tiếng Anh trong giai đoạn can thiệp. Kết quả của giai đoạn can thiệp cho thấy rằng sinh viên năm cuối ngành hướng dẫn du lịch đã có thể nhận ra, hiểu và cảm nhận hài hước trong truyện cười tiếng Anh và hơn thế nữa, nhiều người trong số họ có thể kể lại câu chuyện hài hước thành công.

Mặc dù nghiên cứu này không mang tính đại diện cho phạm vi rộng trong cả nước nhưng nó đã góp phần chứng minh rằng hài hước có thể được đào tạo. Vì vậy, nghiên cứu đã thách thức quan niệm truyền thống rằng tính hài hước là bẩm sinh và không thể huấn luyện hài hước, đặc biệt là đối với các sinh viên hướng dẫn du lịch Việt Nam học tiếng Anh như một ngoại ngữ. Nghiên cứu cho thấy, qua đào tạo, sinh viên hướng dẫn du lịch học tiếng Anh như một ngoại ngữ trong nghiên cứu có thể phát triển khả năng hiểu được sự hài hước và có thể kể. Hơn nữa việc đào tạo đó vừa giúp họ phát triển năng lực ngôn ngữ và năng lực giao tiếp có sử dụng hài hước. Đây là đóng góp mới của đề tài.

12. Khả năng ứng dụng trong thực tiễn

Kết quả nghiên cứu đã khẳng định được người học tiếng Anh là ngoại ngữ có khả năng hiểu hài hước trong truyện cười tiếng Anh qua đào tạo. Đặc biệt nghiên cứu đã xác định được một tài liệu giảng dạy tiếng Anh dành riêng cho sinh viên ngành hướng dẫn du lịch để không chỉ phát triển cho họ kỹ năng ngôn ngữ mà còn phát triển kỹ năng giao tiếp của người hướng dẫn viên du lịch cùng với những hiểu biết sâu hơn về sự hài hước, dí dỏm của các truyện cười trong giao tiếp của các khách du lịch nói tiếng Anh và hơn nữa là khách du lịch đến từ các nước nói tiếng Anh trên thế giới.

13. Những hướng nghiên cứu tiếp theo

Đề xuất hướng nghiên cứu tiếp theo là cần mở rộng nghiên cứu trên phạm vi rộng hơn bộ sưu tập các truyện cười có tính hài hước phức tạp hơn, có nghiên cứu sâu hơn về ảnh hưởng của năng lực văn hoá-xã hội đối với năng lực hài hước ở cấp độ cao hơn là đánh giá và sáng tạo của hướng dẫn viên du lịch quốc tế.

14. Các công trình đã công bố có liên quan đến luận án:

1. Giới thiệu mô hình biên soạn giáo trình tiếng Anh chuyên ngành dựa trên đường hướng lấy hoạt động học làm trung tâm. Tạp chí khoa học của Đại học Sư phạm Hà Nội, Volume 60, Number 1, 2015, tr. 123-130.
2. Yếu tố hài hước trong truyện cười tiếng Anh: Từ văn bản đến ứng dụng cho lớp học ngoại ngữ. Tạp chí khoa học của Đại học Sư phạm Hà Nội, Volume 60, Number 2, 2015, tr. 138-147.

Hà Nội, ngày 10 tháng 8 năm 2017

Nghiên cứu sinh

Trần Thị Ái Hoa

INFORMATION ON DOCTORAL THESIS

1. **Full name:** Tran Thi Ai Hoa
2. **Sex:** Female
3. **Date of birth:** June, 6th 1966
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5. **Admission decision number:** 1077/QĐ-ĐHNN according to the Decision of the Director of Hanoi National University, dated on November, 09th 2009
6. **Changes in academic process:**
 - Two-time thesis title change
 - Two-year extension and one-year adjournment
7. **Official thesis title:** Developing tour guide students' ability to make sense of humour in English jokes through authentic materials (*Phát triển khả năng hiểu tính hài hước trong các truyện cười tiếng Anh của sinh viên ngành hướng dẫn du lịch qua tài liệu nguyên gốc*)
8. **Major:** English Language Teaching Methodology
9. **Code:** 09 04 80 08
10. **Supervisors:**
 - Supervisor 1: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Phuong Nga
 - Supervisor 2: Dr. To Thi Thu Huong
11. **Summary of the new findings of the thesis:**

The findings from the preliminary phase provided useful criteria for selection and adaptation of authentic materials for tour guide students, such as the appropriate types and topics of English jokes for using in the English language classroom and tour guiding practice including canned jokes at elementary and pre-intermediate level: short and about 200 words long; covering the three simple types of verbal humour: incongruous word, sentence and discourse similar to linguistic, cultural and reality-based jokes in the form of funny short stories, riddles and one-and-two liners. A set of authentic materials based on competency was then selected consisting of authentic English jokes. In parallel, an interface of humour competence, language learning process and pragmatic competence were

applied to propel the implementation of the proposed authentic materials to success. As such, focusing on the three macro skills of speaking, listening and reading, the students learn jokes in pairs, groups with real-world and pedagogical tasks with the assistance of visual aids, cartoons, pictures, hand-outs, newspapers, magazines, audio, video, etc. in the intervention phase. The results of the intervention phase showed that the TGU students could recognize, understand and appreciate the humour in English jokes and more than that many of them could recite full joke story successfully.

Although this study does not make a generalization for a wide range of application in the whole country, it has demonstrated that sense of humor can be trained. Thus, the study has challenged the traditional conception that sense of humour is in-born and it is impossible to train humour, especially for Vietnamese tour guide students who learn English as a foreign language. The study has shown that, through training, the tour guide students who learn English as a foreign language in the study can develop their ability to comprehend humor and recite English jokes. Furthermore, being able to make sense of humour in English jokes has helped these students develop their language and communication skills with humour which in turns could help improve their English language learning. This is a new contribution of the present study.

12. Practical applicability, if any:

Though this study does not aim at generalizing the findings to the whole context of Vietnam, it is supposedly meaningful in some aspects. It contributes to enriching the theories on English language teaching methods and skills that are integrated with the student's understanding of the elements that make up humor in literature and literary documents. Practically speaking, the results of the study have provided a special set of English language teaching - learning materials for tour guide students to not only develop their ability to make sense of humour in English jokes, but also to develop their communication skills in the realm of humour in order to communicate with English-speaking tourists and especially tourists from English speaking countries in the world.

13. Further research directions, if any:

It is suggested that further studies use a much broader collection of authentic jokes which contain more complex humour elements such as incongruous genre and incongruous world (Obrst, 2012) in the Linguistic humour structure spectrum so that the impacts of socio-cultural competence would be deeply explored in relation to higher levels of humour competence-performance, i.e. evaluation and creation of international tour guides.

14. Thesis-related publications:

1. Giới thiệu mô hình biên soạn giáo trình tiếng Anh chuyên ngành dựa trên đường hướng lấy hoạt động học làm trung tâm. Tạp chí khoa học của Đại học Sư phạm Hà Nội, Volume 60, Number 1, 2015, tr. 123-130.
2. Yếu tố hài hước trong truyện cười tiếng Anh: Từ văn bản đến ứng dụng cho lớp học ngoại ngữ. Tạp chí khoa học của Đại học Sư phạm Hà Nội, Volume 60, Number 2, 2015, tr. 138-147.

Hanoi, August 10th 2017

PhD Candidate

Tran Thi Ai Hoa

**VIETNAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, HANOI
UNIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

TRẦN THỊ ÁI HOA

**DEVELOPING TOUR GUIDE STUDENTS' ABILITY TO MAKE SENSE
OF HUMOUR IN ENGLISH JOKES THROUGH
AUTHENTIC MATERIALS**

*Phát triển khả năng hiểu tính hài hước trong các truyện cười tiếng Anh
của sinh viên ngành hướng dẫn du lịch qua tài liệu nguyên gốc*

Major: English Language Teaching Methodology

Code: 09 04 80 08

SUMMARY OF PHD DISSERTATION

HÀ NỘI-2018

This dissertation has been carried out at Vietnam National University, Hanoi.
University of Languages and International Studies.

Supervisors: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Phuong Nga
Dr. To Thi Thu Huong

The thesis will be defended at the Board of Examiners of University of Languages and
International Studies – Vietnam University, Hanoi at on
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INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale

Humour is an essential element in our life and having a sense of humour nearly means enjoying life. Funny people may make a good impression on others by reducing social distance during interactions perhaps conveying greater social warmth, individuals who have a sense of humour may also gain health benefits, and humour acting as an important mechanism for life's tribulations, decreasing stress and improving performance at workplace (Provine, 2000; McGhee, 2002; Moran et al, 2014).

The benefits of humour at a workplace are that the happy environment of working will make employees to be more loyal and productive. Tactful jokes may create healthy working environment increasing people's liking and going to work. This is true with some previous studies that people who have fun on the job are more creative, more productive, better decision-makers, and get along better with co-workers. Therefore, in the field of tourism, humour is necessary, especially in the job of tour guides where humour is inevitably delivered and appreciated, the relationship is accordingly improved and there comes a nice trip (Howard, Twiches & Smith, 2001; Woodside, 2007; Anderson, 2007; Pearce and Pabel, 2015).

In reality, there are many cases for the effectiveness of using humour in tour guiding practice (Meged, 2010). However, Vietnamese tour guides can use little humour when communicating with foreign tourists who speak English during their trips. That is because they do not have any lessons of making sense of humour or telling jokes in English at college or university. College English language programs for tour guides have mostly focused on improving the quality of training with good curriculum, syllabus and materials of English and American cultures, tourism geography, cross cultures and English language skills. Moreover, most students at provincial colleges are not much competent at English and or self-confident to communicate with foreign tourists in English since they do not have opportunity to contact with foreigners and they are quite timid.

Nevertheless, humour is not a rarity in the field of tourism for EFL learners in Viet Nam's education and policies. According to the Curriculum Guidelines for English Training in Tourism Vocational Training in Viet Nam (2009: 9) the English proficiency for Tour Guide is required from low standard at 625 to high standard at 700 points which is equivalent to the level between B1 and B2 of the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference, 2011) and says that at C1 learners "can use language flexibly and effectively, including emotional,

allusive and joking usage.” Moreover, professional regulations of English levels for international tour guides (MoCST, 2009) decide that tour guides are supposed to be able to tell funny stories or quizzes for foreign tourists in the long journey. Thus, this study has been carried out to meet such requirements and help tour guide students be well-prepared for their future job.

One last but not least thing to pave the way for the present study is that two studies concluding humour can be taught and developed for EFL learners and humour is closely related with tourism. Pham (2014) has a systematic investigation on the use of humour in the EFL classroom at universities in the context of Viet Nam. His findings reveal that humour can be trained and integrated in language syllabi through needed good consideration on a scientific and systematic way. In parallel, Fabel (2014) has comprehensive examinations of humour in the field of tourism in Australia. Fabel (2014) explored the multifaceted construct of humour in a naturalistic way and among multiple tourism audience. Humour plays important role in creating enjoyable and engaging tourism experiences.

Thus, for the above justifiable reasons, the present study has been carried out to help tour guide students be accessible to humour and well-prepared for their future job.

2. Significance of the study

This study is significant in many aspects as it endeavors to make following contributions.

(1) This study discovers the extent to which authentic materials (AM) can help develop tour guide students’ ability to make sense of humour in English jokes in the light of the theories of humour, pragmatic competence and humour competence.

(2) The findings of this study contribute to the process of promoting a workforce of professional tour guides for Khanh Hoa province who not only have a good sense of L2 humour but also can use it in communication via English with foreign tourists visiting the province.

(3) This study brings benefits to EFL students in improving their communicative competence by raising their awareness of the importance of understanding English jokes and providing them with strategies and methods to enhance their ability to interpret humour in English jokes.

(4) The results of the study are beneficial to English language instructors in introducing English jokes into their English language classroom, providing them with methods of integrating teaching humour in English jokes into other syllabi such as the language one and

cross-cultural one, designing authenticity into the teaching materials and adapting authentic materials to suit their students' need in making sense of English humor. This is a new contribution of the present study as an evidence to confirm the fact that humour can be trained.

3. Research aims and objectives

The overall goal of the study is to help improve Vietnamese student's ability to make sense of humor in English jokes through the use of authentic English materials. The study elicits aims and objectives.

Aims

- (1) To identify appropriate English authentic materials that can introduce authentic English jokes into English language classes for tour guide students at a university in Vietnam.
- (2) To explore the extent to which the students' ability to understand, interpret the humour and recite authentic English jokes for use in subsequent future jobs as international tour guides.

Objectives

- (1) To attain the opinions of tour guides, tour guide students, teachers and tourists about needs of learning humour in English jokes via authentic materials.
- (2) To grasp criteria and strategies for selecting and using the authentic materials appropriate for the experimental course on making sense of humour in English jokes as an intervention.
- (3) To deal with the internal and external difficulties that tour guide students encounter in understanding and interpreting humour in English jokes in the suggested authentic materials.
- (4) To pursue methods/ strategies to help develop students' ability in making sense of humour in English jokes through authentic materials alongside the instructional aim of developing students' communicative competence.
- (5) To demonstrate the students' ability to make sense of humour before and after taking the intervention course as evidence of the intervention effectiveness.

4. Research context

KhanhHoa University stemming from two colleges: NhaTrang Teacher's Training College and Nha Trang College of Art, Culture and Tourism and was upgraded to the status of a university on 1/8/2016 following the Government decision. The Faculty of Foreign Language in the university provides a cohort of tour guide (TG) graduates whose major is English for the workplace every year. According to Regulations on Foreign Language Skills for

International Tour Guides ratified by the Minister of Sport, Culture and Tourism in Decision No. 1417/QĐ-BVHTTDL on 14 April 2009, one of the specialized skills in communication is that international tour guides have to be able to tell jokes and quizzes in English.

However, up to now, in Vietnam, there have not been any particular programs or syllabus to help the tour guide students to develop their ability to make sense of humour in English jokes. Thus, it is urgently needed to enhance the ability to make sense of humour in English jokes for the TG students at Khanh Hoa University to strengthen their professional capacity in accordance with the requirement of the job at today workplace. The current study is a timely attempt to meet that need.

5. Scope of the study

The target population comprises the students whose major is English for tourism and whose future professional jobs were tour guides, foreign tourists, teachers of English for tourism in Nha Trang City and Khanh Hoa University's college undergraduates. Verbal humour was studied for proposed authentic materials. The focus of the study is on making sense of humour in English jokes, both on humour interpretation and joke recitation.

6. Research questions

The research questions that the present study sought to answer are as follows.

1. What are the criteria and strategies for selecting appropriate authentic materials to help develop Khanh Hoa University tour guide students' ability to make sense of humour in English jokes?
2. What problems do the tour guide students face in comprehending and telling English jokes?
3. To what extent do the EFL tour guide students make sense of humour in English jokes through the authentic materials?

7. Key terms and definitions

7.1. Humour

Humour is the (i) "quality of being amusing or comic"; and (ii) "ability to appreciate things, situations or people that are comic, ability to be amused" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Encyclopedic, 1992: 442).

7.2. Sense of humour

Sense of humour is understood with reference to both humour creation and humour appreciation (Eysenck, 1972). It is regarded as a mood, a frame of mind, a virtue, a talent and personality trait (Ruch, 1998).

7.3. Cognitive-perceptual processes in humour

To produce humour, an individual needs to mentally process information coming from the environment or from memory, playing with ideas, words, or actions in a creative way, and

thereby generating a witty verbal utterance or a comical nonverbal action that is perceived by others to be funny (Martin, 2007).

7.4. Humour comprehension, humour appreciation and humour competence

Humor comprehension is the ability to perceive relationships or ideas in incongruous ways (Ziv, 1984). Humour appreciation is the ability to understand and get pleasure from humorous messages (Ziv, 1984). Humour competence is the ability of the native speaker to pass judgements as to the funniness of a text (Raskin, 1985).

7.5. (Canned) jokes

A canned joke is “a humorous short text repeated (almost) verbatim whose content is usually irrelevant to, and dissociated from, the conversation and is geared towards amusement” (Dyrel, 2009: 11).

7.6. Pragmatic competence

Pragmatic competence (PC) is the ability to understand language in context or to interpret the message of interlocutor as it was intended (Canale & Swain, 1980; Bachman, 1990).

7.7. “Make sense of” and “Tour guide students’ ability to make sense of humour in English jokes”

“Make sense of” means understand, appreciate and comprehend (Colin dictionary, 2016, HarperCollins Publisher). “Tour guide students’ ability to make sense of humour in English jokes” refers to two main competencies: (1) Interpreting the humour in English jokes (recognizing, comprehending and appreciating) & (2) Reciting English jokes (agreeing and reciting – the lowest level of humour production).

7.8. Authentic materials, authentic texts, authentic English jokes

Authentic materials are any texts written by native English speakers for native English speakers” (Heitler, 2005). An authentic text is a stretch of real language, produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and design to convey a real message of some sort (Morrow, 1977). Authentic English jokes are the original joke texts produced by and for native English-speaking people since “they can only meet grammatically well-formed and syntactically complete sentences” (Euler, 1991).

8. Study componential schema

The schema consists of two main components or phases:

(1) Phase 1: A materials selection process conducted into two stages namely Stage 1 – Needs analysis and difficulties specification; Stage 2 – proposed authentic materials verification and piloting. The findings from Phase 1 address research questions 1 and 2.

(2) Phase 2: An intervention - Explicit instruction. The findings from Phase 2 address research question 3.

9. Structure of the study

The thesis is divided into three parts and three chapters. Introduction is the first part for the background, the development of the study which consists of three chapters and conclusion summaries the study.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Humour and its importance in tourism

Humour is an umbrella term that covers all the synonyms and overlapping meaning of humour and humour-related subjects not only in neutral and positive format such as comic, ridicule, irony, mirth, laughable, jolly, funny, ludicrous, merry, etc. but also on negative forms such as sarcasm, satire and ridicule as well (Ruch, 1996; Attardo, 2014). The 20th and 21st century see a series of studies on humour topic towards positive outcomes of using humour in health, education and the workplace (Fabel, 2014).

1.1.1. Sense of humour

Sense of humour (SOH) is a person's ability to perceive humour (Chapman, 2007) and rather than that, SOH is a personality trait to refer to one's "humour-related behaviour"(Nicolson, 1946). Moreover, SOS is with reference to both humour appreciation and humour performance. Making sense of humour thus helps a person first understand and discover the fun of an object or a humorous stimulus to appreciate it, and then be able to recite and create humour. Tour guides are the ones who are supposed to have the best SOH. One of the six characteristics of great tour guide (Rezdy.com, 2016) mentions that hiring someone who can tell a good joke at the right time is ideal because a tour guide with a good sense of humour will be able to put customers at ease and allow them to truly relax as they enjoy their tours and activities.

1.1.2. Classification of humour

According to a criterion of language and non-language convey, it is divided into verbal and non-verbal humour (Ermida, 1968). In tourism, verbal humour is popular and acceptable. Hence, in the present study, term "verbal humour" is used and "verbal" means "connected to words and their use" for its origin from the Latin word "verbum" meaning "a word" (Dyner, 2009).

Styles indicate the ways to express humour. There are two groups of styles of humour which are called in four names as affiliative, self-enhancing, self-defeating and aggressive (Martin et al., 2003; Stieger et al., 2011; Gignac et al., 2014). Affiliative and self-enhancing styles which are characterized by making humorous comments and telling jokes and funny anecdotes in order to amuse others and to facilitate relationships are suitable for amusement in tourism. Types refer to the form or message of humour. Types of humour are varied and overlapped in naming (Raskin, 1985; Hay, 1995; Alexander, 1997; Bryant et al, 1980; Long

and Graesser, 1988; Norrick, 2003). Under Alexander's (1997) criteria, joke, gag, epigram and puns are in one group to be ranked in the characteristics of being intentional and conscious, benevolent or non-benevolent and the most part wit and amusement. This group belongs to verbal humour and in the style of affiliative and self-enhancing humour which is properly and essentially used in tourism.

1.1.3. Humour research and the field of the present study

The fields of humour research are numerous and interdisciplinary (Figure 1.1) (Ritchie, 2011; Dynel, 2013, Attardo, 2014). Studies on humour in the contexts of education in Viet Nam (Pham, 2014) and of tourism in Australia (Fabel, 2014) have paved the causeway for the present study. Humour is studied in the form of English jokes learned by EFL learners and used for English-speaking tourists in the job of tourguiding. It is really an interface of education, linguistics and tourism on humour research background (Figure 1.1). One special thing is that both the fields of education and linguistics are studied in an integrated way in the domain of tourism.

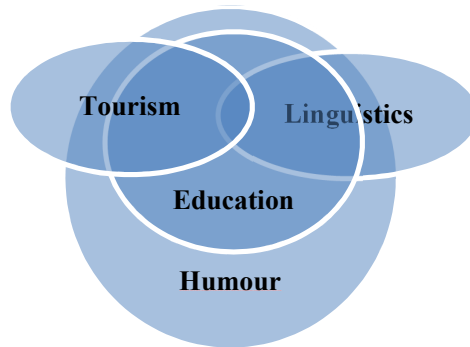


Figure 1.1. Research field of the present study

1.2. Humour in English jokes

1.2.1. English canned joke

An English joke consists of a setup and a punch line. The setup, which includes all but the last sentence, creates in the listener a particular set of expectations about how the situation should be interpreted. The punch line suddenly shifts the meaning in an unexpected and playful way, thus creating the perception of non-serious incongruity that is necessary for humour to occur (Ritchie, 2004; Martin, 2007). Jokes used in this present study are written in the English language for English-speaking people and learners of English as L2/FL.

1.2.2. The ambiguity in jokes

The incongruity-resolution is made up of a significant masking device named ambiguity (Raskin, 1985; Wulf, 2010). Chiaro (1992) examines the verbal techniques of jokes and

claims that the humorous effect in jokes is created by the technical uses of ambiguities. Ambiguities are differently classified by many researchers and some are overlapped and vague in classification. The classification of ambiguities creates names of jokes: word-based, cultural and reality-based jokes.

1.3. Making sense of humour in English jokes

1.3.1. Concepts of making sense of humour in English jokes

According to dictionary of Colin (2016 by HarperCollins Publisher), the expression of “make sense of” has its synonyms as “understanding”, “appreciating” and “comprehending”. Then expression “*making sense of humour in English jokes*” entails both the meaning of understanding and comprehending or leads to appreciating the humour incorporated in English jokes. Thus the ability to make sense of humour in English jokes means a competence of grasping or interpreting the nature and the meaning of humour in English jokes or appreciating it. However, the aim of tour guide students to understand and appreciate humour is served for their future professional career. Thus “*developing the ability to make sense of humour in English joke*” is to help enhance tour guide students’ professional competence that when they comprehend and appreciate the humour in English jokes, they can tell jokes to foreign tourists in their tour-guiding job in the future.

1.3.2. Concepts of humour comprehension and humour appreciation

Humor comprehension is described as the ability to perceive relationships or ideas in incongruous ways, whereas humor appreciation is defined as the ability to understand and get pleasure from humorous messages (Ziv, 1984). Raskin (1985) asserts that ability to interpret a joke is dependent upon the ease with which one can switch between bona-fide communication and non-bona-fide communication.

1.3.3. Humour competence and pragmatic competence

The “*ability to make sense of humour in English jokes*” for EFL tour guide students should be induced by the interface of humour competence (Raskin, 1985; Chiaro, 1992; Hay, 2001) and pragmatic competence (Bachman, 1990) (Table 1.1). In order to be able to appreciate the humour in English jokes, EFL learners need to have the ability to recognize it is a joke, comprehend the humour language then agree with the philosophy of the joke content and finally appreciate it and finally recite in appropriate manner and context.

Thus, based on the models of humour competence and pragmatic competence, EFL learners ought to have knowledge of linguistics, semantics, socio-culture and illocutionary acts. Hence, a series of six competencies (Table 1.1) should be used as the standard to measure ELT tour guide students’ ability to make sense of humour in English jokes.

Table 1.1: *EFL TG Sts’ ability to make sense of humour in English jokes*

No	Competencies	System of competence
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1.	To recognize the linguistic elements (vocabulary and the grammar...) in the English text of jokes	Linguistic competence
2.	To understand and interpret the ambiguities, the implicature and presupposition in English jokes	Semantic competence Socio-cultural competence
3.	To appreciate and determine the appropriateness of the jokes in context	Socio-cultural competence
4.	To tell a full joke with good pronunciation in appropriate context	Illocutionary competence
5.	To tell a full joke with good pronunciation and gesture in appropriate contexts	
6.	To tell a good full joke and make people laugh	

1.4. Authentic materials for developing FL students' ability to make sense of humour in English jokes

1.4.1. Using authentic materials in developing humour competence

The materials which are used for developing tour guide students' ability to make sense of humour must be sure of authenticity in the cases of text, task and learners. Four types of authenticity are taken into consideration: authenticity of text, authenticity of learners, authenticity of the tasks, authenticity of the classroom (Breen, 1985: 67). The criteria for selecting authentic materials are suitability, exploitability and readability.

1.4.2. Competency-based approach to authentic materials

Competency-based approach (CBE) is advisable for the authentic materials in the case of developing humour competence for tour guide students. The nature of developing the ability to make sense of humour in English jokes for tour guide students is to serve their workplace skills. Hence, the process of teaching humour for developing the ability to make sense of humour for tour guide students through authentic materials should comprise two steps as follows.

Step 1: Comprehending and interpreting the humour in English jokes

Step 2: Analyzing the humorous situations, combining with tour guiding targets and telling jokes

1.4.3. Needs for learning L2 humour through authentic materials

Needs are to be analyzed and discovered for collecting authentic English jokes for the materials. The most guideline when claiming the needs analysis consists of two aspects namely target situation needs and learning needs (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). Target needs refer to "what the learner needs to do in the target situation" and "learning needs refer to what the learner needs to do in order to learn" (Hutchinson and Waters: 1987:54).

1.5. Studies on humour competence and humour appreciation

1.5.1. Previous studies in other countries

Humour competence has been popularly studied in many countries in the world both in degree names of Bachelor of Art (B.A) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D). A summary of 8 typical studies (Table 1.2) provide valuable results and advantageous background for the present study. It can be stated that humour competence can be taught.

Table 1.2. *Summary of the previous studies on humour competence*

No	Study	Degree	Teaching goal	Proficiency	L1	Research goal (Humour competence)	Design	Assessment/ Procedure/ instrument
1	C. Li & I. C. Chen (2006)	B.A	Jokes	Freshmen	Chinese	Comprehension	T-test	Questionnaire Joke tests
2	Baldwin E.(2007)	Ph.D	Jokes, film clips, cartoons	undergraduate students	English and non-English	Perception	Experiment T-test	Questionnaire/ Comprehension questions
3	Welo, A. (2009)	B.A	Jokes	Forth year students	Thai	Comprehension		Questionnaire
4	Wulf, D. (2010)	Ph.D	Joke categories	Advanced English	Non-English	Appreciation	Curriculum	Classroom-based
5	Schnell, Z.(2010)	Ph.D	Jokes	Advanced English	English	Perception	Quasi-experimental	Pre & post tests
6	Geddert, M. (2012)	Ph.D	Reading materials (Jokes)	Multi-groups	English Chinese Punjabi	Recognition	Preliminary Survey	investigation/ Questionnaire
7	Hodson, R.J(2014)	Ph.D	Humorous texts	Advanced English	Japanese	Appreciation	Experimenta l groups	Follow-up joke ratings
8	Semiz,O. (2014)	B.A	Puns	Intermediate English	Turkish	Comprehension	Quant.	Joke tests

1.5.2. Review of previous studies in Viet Nam

In Viet Nam, humour and English jokes has been accepted and used by many teachers in the English classroom. There are some articles mainly on the internet speaking about the way to use humour in the English language classroom. However, very few studies have been done on the use of humour in classroom or humour comprehension and appreciation. It is sure to say that Vietnamese studies on humour just began at the beginning of the 2000s.

1.6. Chapter conclusion and theoretical framework

This chapter has presented the review of the literature about an introduction of the topic of humour, humour in English jokes, making sense of humour in English jokes, authentic materials for making

sense of humour in English jokes and review of relevant previous studies to provide the theoretical background for the present study as presented in Figure 1.2.

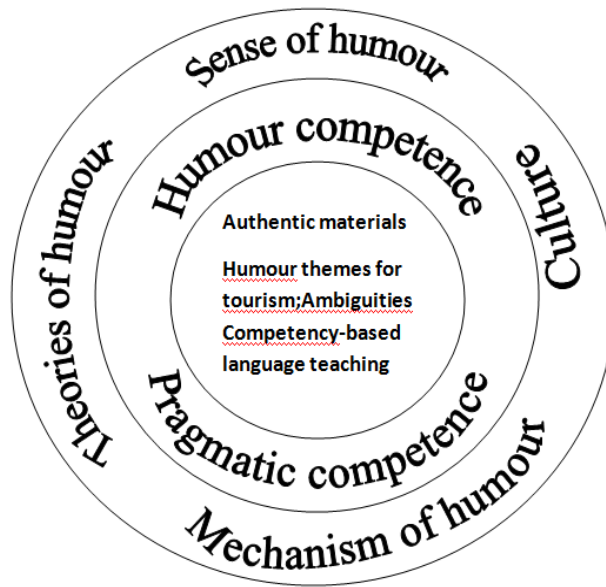


Figure 1.2. The present study theoretical framework

The appreciation of humour in canned English jokes which contain the characteristics of verbal humour, theories of humour, mechanism of humour, semantic and pragmatic perspectives is the top of the framework. Humour competence is considered as a means to convey necessary elements such as linguistic competence and cultural competence to help develop the ability to appreciate humour in English can jokes. Regarding teaching humour competence, a kind of proposed authentic materials is used as an intervention with authentic English humorous texts and methods of teaching. This is the core part of the theoretical framework for the enhancement of tour guide students' ability to make sense of humour in English jokes. The proposed materials would be built on the basis of the criteria for authentic text selection in which there are Fabel's humour themes for tourism and semantic and pragmatic ambiguities as the grounding. The proposed materials are selected on the guideline of competency-based approach (Richards, 2006). Fabel's themes of humour would be applied for discovering the factual humour themes used in Viet Nam's tourism context. Accordingly, the tour guide students' ability is expressed through both humour competence and performance.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology of the present study. The chapter begins with the research context and design, then research questions and then presentation of the two phases of the research with data collection and analysis in each stage.

2.1. Research design

Following Creswell and Clark's (2011) guideline, the present study employed a sequential explanatory mixed methods design which involved the collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data. The priority was given to the quantitative data and the analyses were integrated during the interpretation phase of the study. The present study consisted of two phases: the preliminary study for needs analysis (NA) to select a kind of authentic materials and the piloting study as an intervention for finding the outcomes.

Phase 1 consists of needs analysis, problem identification and materials verification. It was designed to collect perceptions, attitudes and opinions regarding the utility of humour English from real tour guides with international tour guiding missions, humour preference from the international tourists, intention of teaching humour from teachers of English for tourism and humour comprehension from tour guide students for a kind of authentic materials. Data collection approaches qualitative and quantitative paradigms.

Phase 2 is the intervention. This phase of the study addressed the extent of the effectiveness of the proposed materials used in the intervention. An explanatory sequential mixed methods design was used, and it involved collecting quantitative data first and then explaining the quantitative results with in-depth qualitative data. In this exploratory follow-up, the plan was to explore the rate of humour comprehension and appreciation of TG undergraduates before and after the intervention to cross check with the pre/post-tests.

The qualitative data results were attributed to the qualitative data and the two kinds of data were incorporated. Mixed methods research was suitably employed when the researcher wanted to validate the findings obtained from other methods or wants to continuously regard a research question from different angles to discover potential contradictions.

2.2. Phase 1 –Authentic materials selection and verification

The first phase of the present study aims at answering two research questions No 1& 2:

(1) *What are the criteria and strategies for selecting appropriate authentic materials to help develop KhanhHoa University tour guide students' ability to make sense of humour in English jokes?* And (2) *What problems do the tour guide students face in comprehending and telling English jokes?*

This phase consist of two stages which are Needs Analysis (NA) and Materials Verification (MV). Each stage is summarized with specific description regarding its participants and sampling, data collection instruments and procedure, and data analysis.

2.2.1. Stage 1 - Needs analysis and problem specification

To serve the purpose of the NA, four groups of participants were recruited: tour guides (TG), foreign tourists (FT), teachers of English for tourism (TEFT), tour guide students (TGS) to provide a broad picture of needs in learning English jokes and humour for tour guide undergraduates. Survey questionnaire, interview and observation were conducted for NA – the first stage of the research to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Audio recorder was used to record the interviews and observations. The data collected and analyzed for NA involved both quantitative from questionnaires and qualitative from interviews and observations. Firstly, quantitative data were collected from 184 questionnaires from the four groups of stakeholders and analyzed by SPSS software version 24 for descriptive statistics reported in graphs and figures. Secondly, qualitative data were gathered through the interviews and observation and coded into groups and themes. After that both types of data were merged for answers to the two research questions.

2.2.2. Stage 2 - Materials verification and piloting

The authentic materials were selected upon the major findings of the NA and were put into verification for use in the intervention. The participants who were invited to the evaluation were three teachers, two tour guides and two foreign tourists (one Englishman and one American) who took part in the survey questionnaire and the semi-structured interview in the NA. In parallel with the verification of the proposed materials, a pilot course using the material was offered.

2.3. Phase 2: Intervention

The intervention in the present study aimed at answering research question No 3: *To what extent do the authentic materials enhance the ability of making sense of humour in English jokes for the tour guide students?*

Participants were the ones non-randomly selected taking the course as a treatment group. This non-random selection was sampled to ensure adequate representation in the final sample. The quantity of sample comprising 20 students in fact according to the statistics could not represent for a whole number of the students who were TG undergraduates at Khanh Hoa University. However, in this study, the participants were used as a sample for the course for a comparison of their level of humour appreciation before and after the treatment.

An interview was conducted to clarify the results of the post-test. The participants were interviewed in order to capture their comprehension of the English jokes they read in the post-test and at the same time their feelings and opinions about the materials, and were asked if they considered the class had helped them understand the humor in English jokes or if it had

allowed them to learn foreign culture in the target language or culture. The interviews were done the week after classes had ended.

The descriptive data from the questionnaires were reported in frequency distribution, percentages of responses and means. Responses were analysed, interpreted and described. Humour interpretation was investigated in respondents belonging to the different items in the questionnaire. Thus, the t-test (two tailed) was used to determine differences if there were two sections (for example: after and before).

Finally, a joke-telling contest was organized with the participation of the TGUs who had experienced the course. This contest was aimed at measuring the capacity of the students' telling English jokes to foreign tourists. The measurement was done on a valuating table with ranging scales of two criteria: performance and joke funniness.

2.4. Significance of quantitative data and qualitative data integration

A two-phase sequential design provided data to be collected first and used statistical analysis to determine which findings to augment in the next phase. The data were accordingly characterized of both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data were measurably formulated from facts and uncovered the phenomenon of the needs of learning English jokes with comprehensive paper surveys conducted. In parallel, qualitative data were rallied from individual interviews to provide confirmation for the results. These two phases occur through the research procedure of the study.

2.4.1. Validity

Validity was seen as the soundness and cogency of the data. In other words, the qualitative data were to be honest, deep and rich and the scope of the data was achieved.

2.4.2. Reliability

The present study is in favour of fidelity to real life, context and situation specificity, authenticity, comprehensiveness, detail, honesty, depth of response and meaningfulness to the respondents.

2.5. Chapter conclusion

This chapter has described the whole methodology of the present study. With the objective to develop tour guide students' ability to make sense of humour in English jokes through authentic materials, the present study was done on the basis of sequential explanatory mixed methods design. It encompassed two phases: (1) surveys to analyze needs, selecting jokes and proposing authentic humorous materials and specifying problems for treatment; and (2) an intervention within a pre-posttest experiment to assess the effectiveness of the treatment.

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the data analysis, results and discussions from the respondents of the two phases: (1) surveys to analyze needs, selecting jokes and proposing authentic humorous materials and specifying problems for treatment; and (2) an intervention within a pre-posttest experiment to assess the effectiveness of the treatment.

3.1. Phase 1 - Summary of results

This first phase of the present study, consisting of two stages, namely Needs Analysis (NA) and Material Verification (MV) and piloting, supplied answers to the first and second research questions: (1) *What are the criteria and strategies for selecting appropriate authentic materials to help develop Khanh Hoa University tour guide students' ability to make sense of humour in English jokes?* (2) *What problems do tour guide students face in comprehending and telling English jokes?*

(1) Needs analysis

Results of the analyses of these data help to prepare the proposed materials for developing the tour guide students' ability to make sense of humour in English jokes. All the results of the survey questionnaire were analyzed in tables and charts. Results from the interviews and observation were collected and analyzed in topics and themes.

(2) Data from the difficulties in comprehending and telling jokes resulted in criteria and strategies to guide the syllabus of the materials (Table 3.1 and Table 3.2).

Table 3.1. *Criteria for selecting the authentic materials*

1	Suitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Joke topics: properly used in classroom and in tourism- Joke language levels: elementary and pre-intermediate- Joke length: one-two liners, quizzes, 200-300 word episodes
2	Exploitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Culture: holiday, college, work, sport, horse-riding, absentmindedness- Ambiguities: linguistic and propositional- Ethnicity: locality, religion, tourism- Source: readings, cartoons, audios, videos, English-speaking natives
3	Readability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Satisfaction: good for training curriculum; communicative- Variety: various and popular to students and tourism- High quality: authentic jokes written by and for natives- Logic: word-based, culture-based and reality-based jokes

Table 3.2. *Strategies for selecting the authentic materials*

1	Orderliness	Recognition – comprehension – Agreement – Appreciation – Reciting
2	Cognition	- Making sense of linguistic, cultural and universal jokes - Being aware of cultures and social lifestyles - Problem-solving activities
3	Authenticity	- Authentic joke texts - Authentic tasks: Real-life tour guiding situations - Authentic teaching and learning sources: videos, audios

It could come to a decision on a collection of the English jokes for the authentic materials. The jokes were short, funny and understandable. They were canned jokes which consisted of a set-up and a punch line. The types of jokes were linguistic-based, cultural and reality-based ones. Topics of the jokes were various but supportive for tourists and students. A kind of authentic materials was readily made following the criteria and strategies.

(3) The Proposed Authentic Materials

The followings are the main elements of the proposed set of materials: the aims and objectives, the syllabus and the proposed materials.

- Aims: The materials are supposed

(i) To familiarise TGUs with different types of English jokes that they may use in their future tour guiding job;

- (ii) To enhance TGUs' awareness of differing cultures through English jokes.

- Objectives: After learning with the proposed materials, TGUs will

(i) Be able to remember, understand and interpret humour in the jokes representing the three main types of English jokes namely linguistic, cultural and reality-based jokes that could amuse English speaking tourists;

(ii) Be able to appropriately retell these types of English jokes to amuse people from different cultural backgrounds.

- Syllabus (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1. *English joke syllabus*

Units	Aims and Objectives	Humorous Language focus	Tasks	Activities	Cultural Awareness
Unit 1: What is the joke?	- Aim: Getting the joke.	- Opposite scripts	- Exchanging opinions.	- Listening to jokes.	Vietnamese folk tales

	- Objective: be able to use verbal language fluently.	- Humour ambiguity: linguistics, culture and reality. - Punch line	- Cracking jokes in groups. - Rearranging funny stories.	- Describing cartoons. - Listening to funny stories.	and humorous culture
Unit 2: What kind of flower do you have between your nose and your mouth?	- Aim: Getting the joke. - Objective: be able to use verbal language fluently.	Puns Homophone Homonymy Polysemy	- Matching: Minimal pairs - Role play - Joking in groups	- Listening to Minimal pairs. - Telling Knock-knock game jokes. - Playing puns in the English phonetics.	Humour of Asian cultures
Unit 2: The well and the sick	- Aim: Comprehending jokes - Objective: Be able to discover and use the resolution of the incongruity	Lexis Syntax Semantics	- Listening for comprehension - Joking in groups - Take-turning - Asking and answering	- Listening to Riddles - Telling Riddles, One-and-two liners, Short stories	Jewish jokes Irish jokes Australian humour
Unit 3: Mother's Day	- Aim: Appreciating jokes. - Objective: Be able to use verbal language and non-verbal language in humour performance.	Cultural jokes	- Jigsaw - Role play - Problem-solving - Decision making	- Listening to Cultural jokes. - Telling funny stories.	English and American humour
Unit 4: I'd like a hamburger and a milkshake, please.	- Aim: Comprehending jokes. - Objective: Be able to integrate into cultural	Reality-based jokes	- Listening for comprehension - Questions and answers - Information Gap	- Listening to anecdotes - Telling anecdotes and funny stories	Why women aren't funny

	humorous groups		Problem-solving Discussion		
Unit 5: Absentmindedness	- Aim: Reciting jokes - Objective: Be able to interpret a humorous text fluently to the right audience at appropriate time and place	Short funny stories	- Matching - Completing stories - Cloze tests - Role play - Problem-solving - Decision making	- Telling and hearing funny stories	Reality diversity and cultural shocks: the blond, the monk, the black, the mother-in-law, the region

▪ **Timing**

Each unit takes 2 hours and a half (60m/h) which is similar to 3 periods. Each period lasts 50 minutes, which is the current time duration for credit time learning (MoET, 2007). Thus the whole time is 15 periods which is similar to one credit.

3.2. Phase two –Summary of results

This second phase of the present study named intervention provided answers to research question No 3: *To what extent do the EFL tour guide students make sense of humour in English jokes through the authentic materials?*

(1) Pre-post tests of humour interpretation in English joke

Ambiguities of the English jokes were recognized and understood by TGU students. The subjects' responses were remarkably significant in the posttest (T1) compared to that in the pretest (T2). Regarding the mean score of overall performance of learners, the result after the treatment was much greater than that before the treatment. The value of mean indicates that the difference between pretest (T1) and posttest (T2) was significant in statistics for all the jokes with the value of 7.3750 in T2 compared with the mean value of 2.3000 in T1 and that

the treatment was effective with such great progress (Figure 3.1& 3.2). Therefore, it can be seen that most of the subjects could interpret the humour in the twelve English jokes.

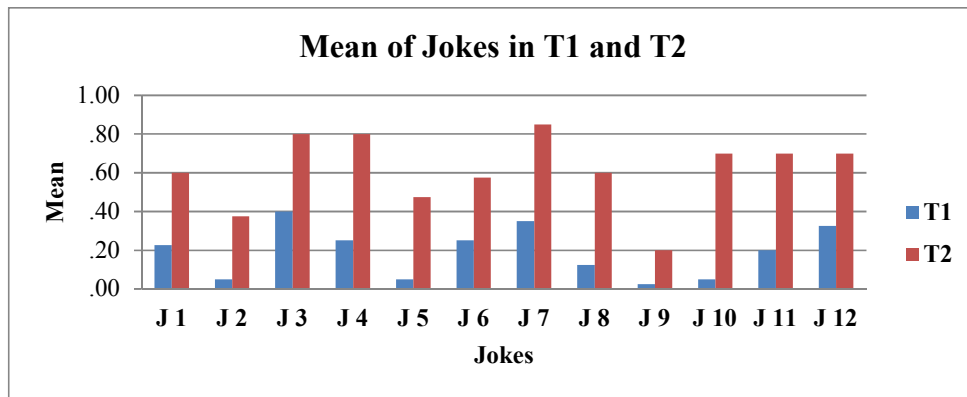


Figure 3.1. Mean of jokes in T1 & T2

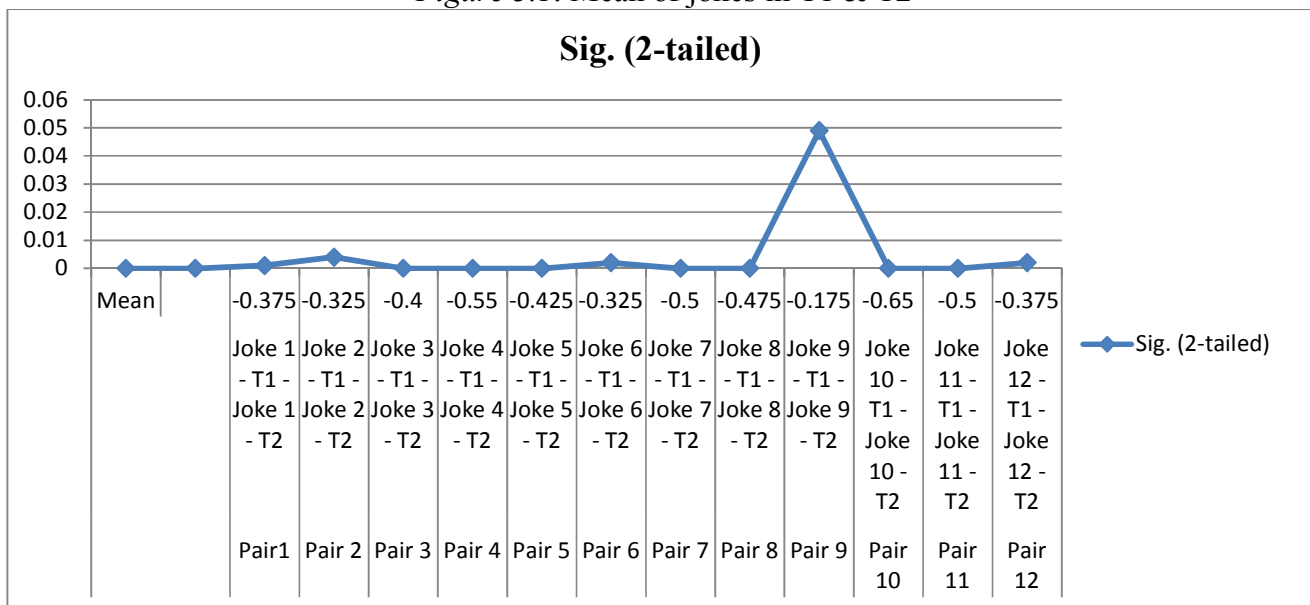


Figure 3.2. Sig. (2-tailed)

Much progress could be highly proved in ambiguities regarding mostly linguistics and pragmatics rather little progress was made in some ambiguities of morpheme and culture (Table 3.2), which indicated that the students could identify or both identify and explain the humour of the jokes after the treatment. The result in T2 was clearly evident for the effectiveness of the intervention though the effects were a little different across the jokes of the test.

Table 3.2. Achievement of competencies

NO	COMPETENCY	ACHIEVEMENT	AMBIGUITY
(1)	To recognize the linguistic elements (vocabulary and the grammar...) in the English text of jokes	Highly	Linguistic Pragmatic
		Fairly	Cultural

(2)	To understand and interpret the ambiguities in jokes	Highly	Linguistic
		Fairly	Morphology Cultural
(3)	To appreciate and determine the appropriateness of the jokes in context	Highly	Pragmatic
		Fairly	Morphology
		Little	Cultural

(2) Pre-post test about difficulties

It is clear that there has been a significant reduction in the level of difficulties: ambiguity, meaning of words, structure, word pronunciation, culture, length and context of the jokes in the tests (T1) and (T2). As for the difficulty in interpreting the ambiguities, over 90% of participants found linguistic jokes difficult or very difficult initially but this has been reduced to 40% after the intervention.

(3) Results of test of performing jokes

The contest showed significant results. There were six TGUs fell in the range of funny and very funny in the fun degree and good and very good in the quality degree. These six students at first before the course did not know anything about English jokes and humour and even found it difficult to understand them, but later at that time they could tell good jokes and the audience laughed happily when hearing their jokes. Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.4 below release the improvement.

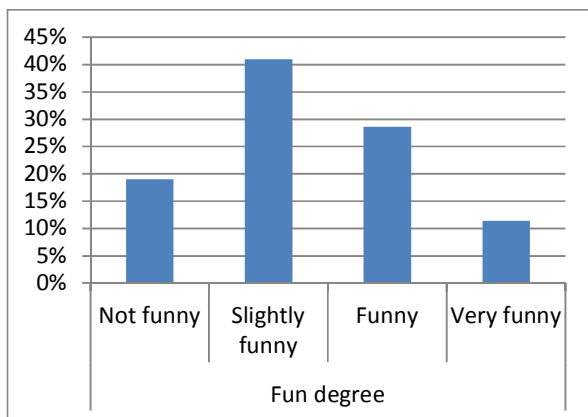


Figure 3.3. Fun degree

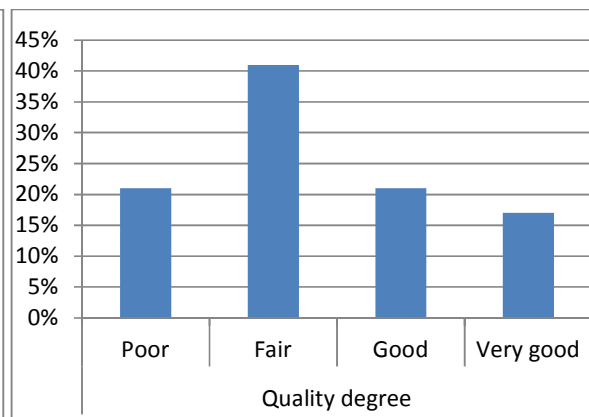


Figure 3.4. Quality degree

3.3. Discussion

3.3.1. Application of the authentic materials: benefits and challenges

In terms of benefits, first of all, there is one very important issue that must be considered when discussing the authentic materials, namely the way in which the jokes were written by the English people for English people and the ones were actually used in classroom context. One more important thing was that joking with foreign tourists, TGU students had to join in the group and found the identity. When it came to the advantages of using authentic materials, findings released that they were significant both from the obvious pedagogical perspective, and from a psychological one, as they helped students become more confident, once they realized that they could “survive” in a real cultures of the target humorous language. They were more assured and satisfied with learning comprehending, appreciating and reciting English jokes.

One other advantage worth considering is that authentic materials help students kept up with the “living” language of humour. Genuine materials presented the TGU students to text types and language styles, which they will not normally come across in textbooks, helping them acquire more complex knowledge of the language in humour. Moreover, authentic materials were selected under the competency-based approach, so they exposed the TGU students to a very large range of activities that were acceptable for developing tour guides’ capacity of tour guiding such as the skills of telling jokes and amusing people with jokes and joking. Last, but not least, these materials may prove to have an intrinsic educational value (Harmer, 1983) as they help the students be informed and learn more about that particular culture.

3.3.2. Application of humour competence model

The achievement of the present study is that it has proved the ability to make sense of humour in English jokes can be developed for tour guide students. The data in the pretest shows that the number of students who could appreciate jokes was very low. But after learning, there was a dramatic change in posttest results. The results of post-intervention showed a positive effect in teaching by using the proposed authentic materials.

3.3.3. Role of pragmatic competence

Notably, the TGU students could be able *to interpret cultural references and figures of speech* which are related with the interpretation of cultural and figurative meanings in the jokes in the post-test. As Bachman’s (1990) defines sociolinguistic competence refers to the ability to perform the language functions in appropriate ways for various language use contexts. Thus, in order to help TGU students to be confident and courageous for joking with foreign tourists and reciting English jokes in the joke-telling contest, the proposed authentic materials were assembled with cultural jokes, ethnic jokes and pieces of reading on cultures of the countries whose people have commonly travelled to Viet Nam and Khanh Hoa province.

3.3.4. Role of teaching methods to the proposed authentic materials

The teaching methods or the ways how to use the proposed materials in classroom play a crucial role in enhancing the TGU students' ability to make sense of humour in English jokes. The application of teaching techniques to the original materials of humorous language such as question-and-answer, the communication between learner and foreigner, and role play were used throughout the learning process. Especially, the method of role play or simulative games in which the students were divided into two groups, tour guide group and tourist group for practice attracted the students' participants and intensify the learning effectiveness.

3.4. Chapter conclusion

This chapter has presented the results of the data collected and analysed in the two phases of the study, preliminary and intervention. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods with data collection instruments of questionnaire, tests and interview questions was employed so that the collected data provided a comprehensive picture of the facts. The data were described and analysed by using the SPSS with the results in the forms of percentage in chart and means of T-test.

CONCLUSION

1. Recapitulation

1.1. Answer to research question 1

The proposed authentic materials which were selected were followed a set of criteria for selection and adaptation for tour guide students, such as the appropriate types and topics of English jokes for using in the English language classroom and tour guiding practice. Based on the results from tourists' favourite types and topics, the jokes were selected from comic books, internet, newspaper, etc. Criteria for jokes selection were set up. The jokes were written for English-speaking people. They belonged to the style self-enhancing humour and suitably used for the language teaching in classroom. The language, grammar and length were right for learners at pre-intermediate and intermediate level of English. The jokes were in the three categories of linguistic, cultural and reality-based ones with such linguistic ambiguities as homophone, morpheme, polysemy, syntax, pragmatic ambiguities as locution, illocution, perlocution, relevance, maxims of quality, quantity, relation and manner, and cultural ambiguities.

1.2. Answer to research question 2

It is clear that there has been a significant reduction in the level of difficulties: ambiguity, meaning of words, structure, word pronunciation, culture, length and context of the jokes between the results of pre tests and post test. Although improvement was seen in all three type of humor, reality based jokes were proved the easiest to understand both at the beginning and

the end of the intervention while cultural humor was quite difficult to understand originally in spite of a similar positive change in levels of understanding.

1.3. Answer to research question 3

The answer to the second research question was that the TGU students could recognize, understand and appreciate the humour in English jokes and more than that many of them could recite full joke story successful. The following is the achievement of the competencies.

Humour perception competencies

(1) Not to recognize the linguistic elements in English joke texts (0 mark):

Sharply decreased (Joke 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12)

(2) To recognize and understand the humour ambiguities (0.5 mark):

Highly increased (Jokes 1,3,4,5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12)

(3) To interpret the humour ambiguity (1 mark):

Highly increased (Jokes 1,3,4,5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12)

Except for Joke 2 being a morphology and Joke 9 being a culture-based got fairly few students interpreting the funny points.

Humour performance competencies

(4) To tell a full joke with good pronunciation in appropriate contexts:

More than 40%.

(5) To tell a full joke with good pronunciation and gesture in appropriate contexts:

Between 20% and 28%.

(6) To tell a full joke and make people laugh: More than 10%.

The total of (4), (5) and (6) was more than 70% with six out of 15 students reached “very good” and “very funny” degrees at Competency No (6).

2. Implications

2.1. Methodological implications

The present study used mixed research methods as a contribution to the literature of research methodologies for pragmatic studies. It was a design to follow an explanatory sequential approach in which the quantitative methods were emergently sequential with the qualitative ones (Creswell and Clark, 2011). Actually, it was a process in which quantitative findings firstly explored with a large samples and numbers and then qualitative ones were done for better addition and preference. From this initial exploration, the second approach with qualitative findings was used to develop assessment measures that could be administered to a smaller sample. In the tentative planned qualitative approach, interviews and observations data were collected.

2.2. Theoretical implication

The theoretical framework for developing tour guide students’ ability to make sense of humour in English jokes accommodates the researcher with a significant practice in the

present study. The framework is a stacked system which is made up of authentic materials, humour competence and humour appreciation. The authentic materials works as a central supplying an empirical source, humour competence is overlapped as level 2 providing means and humour appreciation is as the highest development of the system. The framework addresses that canned English jokes carries the characteristics of verbal humour so for appreciating this kind of humour or its incongruity, it is necessary to catch up not only the knowledge of humour such as theories of humour, mechanism of humour, semantic and pragmatic perspectives.

2.3. Pedagogical implication

The present study has made a remarkable contribution to pedagogical implication. It inspired the TGU students that it is advantageous to be able to appreciate humour and telling jokes at future workplace. Results showed that most of the students were happy and very happy with playing jokes with friends in groups and sharing jokes with each other in class. The final results presented that most of the TGUs could appreciate humour in English jokes and could retell jokes to foreign tourists.

3. Limitations

The 20 TGU students randomly selected for the intervention study to develop the ability to sense jokes were with the hope that they would have good foreign language skills. However, in spite of being undergraduates and their required language skill capacity being equivalent to the B1 level in terms of foreign language competence, the students in fact could mostly be good at grammar and one-third were pretty reliable at speaking while the remaining ones were very weak at language skills. This fact diminished the capacity of appreciating humour in English jokes.

4. Suggestions for further studies

There are two suggestions for further studies. One is that there should be a collection of authentic jokes which contain more complex humour such as incongruous genre and incongruous world in the Linguistic humour structure spectrum by Obrst (2012). The other is that it is advisable to have a deep look into the role of socio-cultural competence in joke performance and creation in the workplace of tour guides, international tour guides in particular.

In conclusion, it has demonstrated that humor can be trained. The study has challenged the traditional conception that sense of humour is in-born and it is impossible to train humour, especially for Vietnamese tour guide students who learn English as a foreign language. The study has shown that, through training, the tour guide students who learn English as a foreign language in the study can develop their ability to comprehend humor and recite English jokes. Furthermore, being able to make sense of humour in English jokes has helped these students develop their language and communication skills with humour which in turns could help

improve their English language learning through English jokes. This is a new contribution of the present study. Eventually, the study has achieved a real breakthrough in training a highly-skilled workforce in the tourist industry of Khanh Hoa province.

RESEARCHER'S PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO THE THESIS

1. Giới thiệu mô hình biên soạn giáo trình tiếng Anh chuyên ngành dựa trên đường hướng lấy hoạt động học làm trung tâm. Tạp chí khoa học của Đại học Sư phạm Hà Nội, Volume 60, Number 1, 2015, tr. 123-130.
2. Yếu tố hài hước trong truyện cười tiếng Anh: Từ văn bản đến ứng dụng cho lớp học ngoại ngữ. Tạp chí khoa học của Đại học Sư phạm Hà Nội, Volume 60, Number 2, 2015, tr. 138-147.