

Introduction

Students in technological colleges in Taiwan have been mainly recruited from vocational high schools (VHS hereafter). However, Shih (1999) has found that vocational high school (VHS) students' English learning has long been neglected. Chen's study (2006) has documented that VHS students generally do not show strong motivation to learn English and that their English proficiency has quite often been questioned. Previous studies (Lin, 2003; Shih, 1999) have found many disadvantages (such as materials, teaching methods, and tuition hours) in VHS students' English learning under the current educational policy, and such disadvantages in English might interfere with their advanced learning after their entrance to technological college (Lin, 2003). Lin suggested that, among others, more diverse and multifaceted English learning materials be taken into consideration to improve VHS students' English achievement, and that VHS students' learning motivation and confidence in English learning be enhanced.

In view of the above studies, research on examining and improving technological collegial students' English learning is imperatively needed. Since VHS education has long been neglected (Lin, 2003; Shih, 1999) in Taiwan, it is hoped that some of the disadvantages regarding English learning for these students—after entering technological college—could improve. With its “laughter-producing” characteristic, joke-telling activity may attract students' attention and give them joy during the process, which may encourage them to apply a more intense effort to the learning. However, one point mentioned by Huang (2001) is worth noticing, namely, what teachers perceive as motivating teaching/learning activities may not always be perceived as similarly motivating by students; opinion-discrepancy between teachers and students toward learning activities may exist. The enhancement of students' learning effect may be achieved to a greater extent “if teachers could obtain the knowledge of exactly what activities students are more interested in as well as willing to participate in” (p. 59). Since there seems to be a dearth of studies regarding jokes in relation to technological collegial students' English learning, this study, therefore, aimed to investigate—from students' perspective—whether joke-telling activity facilitates their learning. The results of this study might draw more attention from instructors concerned with improving English teaching and learning in technological colleges in Taiwan. According to the results of this study, teachers might design similar activities to raise their students' English learning motivation. It is hoped that the findings can help technological collegial students become more motivated English learners and enhance their English learning confidence as well as achievements at school.

Literature Review

It has been considered by many that motivation is the key to learning a foreign language well (Brown, 2001; Dörnyei, 1998; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Warden and Lin, 2000). In Taiwan's EFL field, many studies (Chang, 1997; Huang, 2005; Huang, 2004; Kan, 2005; Peng, 2002) have shown that motivation proves to play a determining role in students' English learning in school settings ranging from elementary school, junior high school, vocational high school (or senior high school) to college. In language motivation research, Gardner's motivation theory (Gardner, 1985; Gardner & Lambert, 1972) has been considered the most influential on related studies. Gardner (1985) defines L2 motivation as "the extent to which an individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" (p. 10). Brown (1994) defined motivation as "the extent to which you make choices about goals to pursue and the effort you will devote to that pursuit" (p. 34). Oxford and Shearin (1994) found that motivation is an influential factor that affects language learning and achievements. But what may be some ways of motivating the students in an EFL context?

Previous studies (Chang, 2005; Hsu, 1993) have mentioned that there exists a strong connection between learners' English learning motivation and their English performance. With a growing emphasis on English learning in Taiwan, students' learning motivation needs our close attention. In enhancing learning effectiveness, Chen (2007) has cited what Shatz and LoSchiavo have presented at the 17th annual meeting of American Psychological Society: "Humor can motivate students' interest in learning as well as increase their sense of participation." Mentioned by Shiao et al. (1991), laughter has the effect in arousing students' intellectual curiosity and stimulating students' learning passion. In addition to Lin's studies (1985; 1990) regarding jokes, the results of his investigation (submitted in 1999 by Council for Cultural Affairs) of Taiwanese children's reading interests revealed that jokes and comics are their top two most favorite reading materials. It has been summarized by Chen (2007) that "jokes—in addition to the entertaining function—arouse learning motivation, attract students' attention, help concentrate students' attention, facilitate teacher-students interaction, as well as enhance learning effects" (pp. 147-148).

Dörnyei and Csizer (1998) conducted a survey on 200 teachers and asked them to rate the importance of a set of strategies and to estimate how often they used the strategies in their own teaching. Based on the results, they made a list of "Ten commandments for motivating language learners," among which, strategies two (Create a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the classroom) and six (Make the language classes interesting) seem to be particularly relevant to some related

studies' (Bucaria, 2004; Davies, 2003; Schmitz, 2002; Wang, 1998) advocacy.

In a study investigating whether the 9th-grade students in middle school (the 3rd-grade students in junior high school) had the ability to comprehend and appreciate different types of English jokes and to discriminate between different types of English texts as well, Deng (2003) has found that, among others, most of the students preferred more English humorous texts to be included in English textbooks, teaching humorous texts in class can enhance students' learning motivation in reading, and English teachers providing carefree learning environments can make students learn English more effectively. In her study (Ding, 2007) of motivating junior high school students to read English by reading aloud humorous children's poetry, most of the subjects mentioned that they enjoyed reading humorous poetry, and that they never thought that English learning could be so interesting and could bring about great happiness. As Nemeth (1998) has mentioned, most textbook writers have decided to include funny stories and jokes in their texts. It is suggested that the more amazing, the more laughable a story may be, the more likely will our students remember it, and they will learn new vocabulary much easier.

Definition of Terms

Schmitz (2002), for the purpose of foreign language teaching, divides jokes into three basic categories (although not completely, mutually exclusive and isolated): universal type, cultural type and language type of jokes. In line with Deng's study (2003), Tsai (2004), in a study consisted of 127 senior high students, has found that among the basic categories of jokes, the subjects understood the universal jokes best, followed by the linguistic jokes and then the cultural jokes. In addition, basing on Raskin's Semantic Theory of Humor and Carrell's joke competence and humor competence, the results of Wang's (1998) study, which aimed to investigate whether different types of jokes in English affect English-major freshmen's comprehension and appreciation, have revealed that culture-specific and language-specific jokes are more difficult for the Chinese subjects to understand and appreciate than universal type of jokes.

Universal type

Generally speaking, humor of this type of jokes is based on reality, and is related to worldwide common sense. Theoretically, they retain the original linguistic meaning even after being translated into other languages. Following is an example:

Bad neighbor

A: A newly moved-in neighbor is outrageous. He kept ringing our doorbell last night. And it was twelve o'clock p. m.

B: It's horrible! Did you call the police?

A: No. I just thought of him as lunatic. So I ignored it and continued playing my piano. ---Translated from Lin (2007)

The humor of this joke is based on the character's (A's) lack of self-knowledge, and there are such people in each ethnic group or country.

Cultural type

Cultural type of joke creates the punch line through specific knowledge of certain cultural background. Listeners who lack the knowledge of related cultural terms may fail to understand or appreciate the joke. Following is an example:

Worship us

During Zhong-Yuan Festival¹, my five-year old son curiously asked his grandmother: "Grandma, who are you worshipping today?"

"Silly child, I'm worshipping the good-brothers." Grandma said.

Upon hearing this, my son excitedly said to his elder brother standing nearby: "Aren't we good brothers, Bro? Grandma is worshipping us!" ---Translated from Lin (2007)

At least two points related to Chinese cultural background are in need for people to understand the punch line of the above joke. First, Chinese have the custom of worshipping gods and ghosts. Second, it is a taboo for Chinese to use the word "ghosts" in this context, which is normally replaced by the term "good-brothers."

Linguistic type

The foundation of linguistic type of joke is related to linguistic skills. The ability in understanding this type of joke is dependent on people's knowledge in linguistic ambiguity derived from vocabulary, phonology, grammar or morphemes, etc. The following example related to vocabulary-knowledge in Chinese may clarify the point.

False explanation

Hsiao-Hua is always sleeping in the class. One day, the teacher, who cannot stand it any longer, woke him up and asked him: "Do you know why the rabbit has lost in the race with the turtle?"

Still sleepy, Hsiao-Hua answered: "I don't know."

¹ A festival on the seventh full moon in a lunar year, observed variously as a summer lantern festival and (or) for the commemoration of the dead.

The teacher said in anger: “Because the rabbit dozed off.”

“Oh, I see!” Hsiao-Hua seemed to have a revelation. “Those who haven’t dozed off are turtles!” ---Translated from Lin (2007)

In this joke, Hsiao-Hua evaded the teacher’s blame by not answering the question: “Do you know why the rabbit lost in the race with the turtle?” While by saying “Those who haven’t dozed off are turtles,” Hsiao-Hua has in a way mocked the teacher and the classmates, because in Chinese, “turtle”—in addition to the name of an animal—may be referred to: (1) A husband whose wife is having an affair; (2) Those who are cowards, incompetent or incapable; or (3) The male owner (or servant) of a brothel. The punch line of the above joke lies in the variation of interpretation of the word “turtle.”

Research Questions

By applying joke-telling activity to English conversation classroom in an EFL context, the researcher sought possible answers to the following questions:

1. What effects does the application of joke-telling activity have on English-major students’ English learning?
2. How do English-major students perceive joke-telling activity in English conversation classrooms?
3. What may be an appropriate set of application procedures for joke-telling activity in English-major conversation classrooms?

Methodology

This study intended to investigate the application of joke-telling activity to English conversation classroom by exploring its use and effects as well as its contribution to English learning. The teacher/researcher polled students who have gone through the application of joke-telling activity at the end of the academic year 2010 to 2011. The instrument adopted for the study was a survey designed by the researcher. In addition, subjects’ comments on the application of joke-telling were invited at the end of the survey for the purpose of qualitative enquiry of some possible aspects of issues not revealed from the quantitative investigation.

Participants

The sample of the study consisted of 57 English-majors, including 50 freshmen and 7 non-freshmen (re-taking the course due to their failure in passing it during their freshmen year), from one Applied Foreign Languages Department in central Taiwan. Out of the 57 subjects, 12 were males (about 21%) and 45 were females (about 79%). Students have studied the language for an average of 6 years in vocational high school. All in all, the participants seemed to be a fairly typical

group of university students beginning their first year of language study.

Application Procedures

In line with what (Deng, 2003), Tsai (2004), and Wang (1998) have found that universal type of jokes was easier (than language-specific or cultural type of jokes) for the students to comprehend and appreciate, the teacher/researcher of this study—after familiarizing the subjects with this type of jokes at the beginning of the semester—has asked them to search one² (either from books or on-line resources) for themselves in preparation for the presentation activity at the end of the listening and speaking course in that semester. The subjects were told in advance that: (1) It is possible to present a longer joke or several shorter jokes, as long as it is within the time-limit of two minutes; (2) Ideally, the joke chosen is supposed to be able to generate laughter; and (3) The joke-telling is to be recorded. In order to help students judge if the joke they have found was suitable³, it was required that students hand in the script of the joke at least three weeks before the presentation for the teacher/researcher to review. Other teaching activities that have been done in the course included a self-introduction activity at the beginning of the course and the teaching of a textbook (New Move Ahead, published by Macmillan Publishers Limited, designed to provide intensive practice in listening to and participating in everyday conversations) along with practice of the exercises/activities provided in the book.

Survey Instrument

At the end of the activity, students were asked to do a survey and give their opinions or comments on the activity (in the open-ended part of the survey). It was hoped that the students, having gone through all of the teaching/learning activities in the academic year, would be more objective in providing their perception. For the survey questions, the 7-item scale from Klein (2003) which was commonly used (Kim & Biocca, 1997; Nelson, Yaros, & Keum, 2006) has been adopted. Respondents indicated agreement with statements along a 1 to 7 scale, with 7 = agree very strongly and 1 = disagree very strongly. The survey instrument (see Appendix for Chinese-version) was administered at the end of the activity, and was collected immediately after completion by the subjects. For more accurate results, small gifts were provided.

² Other types of jokes were also acceptable as long as students thought that they were understandable by their classmates. It turned out that around 90% of the jokes presented belonged to the universal type.

³ Some of the students had difficulty in deciding whether the joke was of the right type or suitable level of difficulty. In addition, in the case that some of the students hoped to translate Chinese jokes into English on their own, it was necessary for the teacher to help with their grammar and vocabulary.

Data Analysis

The present study collected the data by questionnaires and chose adequate statistic methods for data processing and analysis. The methods included descriptive analysis and Independent *t*-test. In order to determine the validity of the survey instruments, two experts in the field of research design were invited for a judgmental analysis. It was suggested that some of the items be added to the survey (e. g., the addition of the items on stage manner and self-reported enhancement of confidence in speaking English).

For inter-rater reliability of the open-ended part of answer, two other English instructors of another university were invited to work on the collected data. The constant comparison method (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was used to analyze the written comments of respondents by searching for the meaning of the data as well as the relation between the data and related literature. The procedures adopted for the interpretation of the answers of the open-ended questions were divided into the following stages:

1. Comparing incidents applicable to each category.
2. Integrating categories and their properties.
3. Delimiting the construction.
4. Writing the construction.

Results and Discussions of the Survey

In the part of affective domain, the results revealed that students feel positive about the four items. Among the four items, the two highest rankings have been derived from the two items: “The activity is a pleasant experience for me” (79%), and “The activity facilitates teacher-students interaction as well as interaction among students” (70.2%), suggesting that students particularly feel positive about the activity’s effect in generating pleasure and interaction. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Frequencies of Response to Questions of Affective Domain

Items	Counts		1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
	C	%	C	%	C	%	C	%	C	%	C	%	C	%	C	%
1.Interesting	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	3.51	20	35.09	16	28.07	11	19.30	8	14.04		
2.Interaction	0	0.00	1	1.75	3	5.26	13	22.81	19	33.33	15	26.32	6	10.53		
3.A pleasant experience	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	3.51	10	17.54	20	35.09	16	28.07	9	15.79		
4.Sense of Achievement	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	5.26	16	28.07	22	38.60	12	21.05	4	7.02		

C: Count; %: Percentage

Source of information: present research

In the part about learning effects (Table 2), the results revealed that students feel positive about most of the items, with at least two-thirds of the respondents agreeing to each item. Among the fifteen items, the five ones with the highest percentage of response falling under the categories of 5 to 7 are as follows: “Through the activity, I have had more opportunities in practicing my stage manner” (91.2%), “Through the activity, I have had more opportunities in speaking English” (91.2%), “The activity has positively influenced my English learning”(89.5%), “Through the activity, I have had more opportunities in learning how to overcome my fear” (87.7%) , and “To a certain degree, the activity has enhanced my English-speaking fluency” (87.7%). These results suggest that students particularly feel positive about the activity’s effect in training their stage manner, in producing opportunities for them to speak English, in helping them to overcome their fear, in enhancing their English-speaking fluency, and in positively influencing their English learning. While the percentage of agreement to these fifteen items are overall relatively high, the two lowest rankings have been derived from the following items: “Through the activity, I have been able to learn some grammar” (63.2%), and “Through the activity, my confidence in speaking English has been enhanced to a certain degree” (68.4%), suggesting that students feel less positive about the activity’s effect in enhancing their grammar learning and English-speaking confidence.

Table 2 Frequencies of Response to Questions about Learning Effects

Items	Counts		1	2	3	4	5	6	7					
	C %	C %	C %	C %	C %	C %	C %	C %	C %					
5. sentence structures	0	0.00	1	1.75	2	3.51	14	24.56	21	36.84	13	22.81	6	10.53
6. grammar	0	0.00	1	1.75	3	5.26	17	29.82	20	35.09	11	19.30	5	8.77
7. vocabulary	0	0.00	0	0.00	4	7.02	6	10.53	20	35.09	19	33.33	8	14.04
8. practicing appropriate intonation	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	3.51	6	10.53	18	31.58	19	33.33	12	21.05
9. practicing my stage manner	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	1.75	4	7.02	17	29.82	12	21.05	23	40.35
10. learning how to overcome my fear	0	0.00	1	1.75	2	3.51	4	7.02	16	28.07	13	22.81	21	36.84
11. accurateness of pronunciation	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	1.75	10	17.54	15	26.32	16	28.07	15	26.32
12. foreign culture	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	5.26	9	15.79	13	22.81	17	29.82	15	26.32
13. expression ability	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	10	17.54	26	45.61	13	22.81	8	14.04
14. speaking English	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	3.51	3	5.26	18	31.58	18	31.58	16	28.07
15. listening to others	0	0.00	1	1.75	0	0.00	12	21.05	16	28.07	22	38.60	6	10.53
16. ability in listening to English	0	0.00	1	1.75	1	1.75	15	26.32	20	35.09	15	26.32	5	8.77
17. confidence in speaking English	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	1.75	17	29.82	18	31.58	15	26.32	6	10.53
18. English-speaking fluency	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	1.75	6	10.53	25	43.86	16	28.07	9	15.79
19. positively influenced	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	3.51	4	7.02	19	33.33	19	33.33	13	22.81

C: Count; %: Percentage

Source of information: present research

In the category of “others” (Table 3), the results revealed that students feel positive about most of the items, with at least two-thirds of the respondents agreeing to both of the items (Questions 20 and 21). With the item “Listening to my classmates’ jokes positively influenced my learning”, in a 7-item scale, 68.4% of the response falls under the categories of 5 to 7. With the item “I could understand the jokes presented by my classmates”, 64.9% of the response falls under the categories of 5 to 7.

Among the twelve items, the four highest rankings (over 80%) have been derived from the following items: “I like to hear something funny or hilarious” (93%), followed by “What I think about the best length of joke-telling” (86.8%), “Generally speaking, I like the activity”, (84.2%), and “I think the application procedures of the activity are reasonable” (81.8%). These results suggest that most of the students feel like listening to something funny or hilarious, they enjoy the joke-telling activity, and they think that the application procedures as well as the length of the activity reasonable. Table 3 presents the results.

Table 3 Frequencies of Response to Questions in the “Others” Category

Items	Counts		1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
	C	%	C	%	C	%	C	%	C	%	C	%	C	%	C	%
20. positively influenced	0	0.00	0	0.00	4	7.02	14	24.56	14	24.56	18	31.58	7	12.28		
21. understand the jokes	0	0.00	1	1.75	5	8.77	14	24.56	24	42.11	9	15.79	4	7.02		
22. length of joke	0	0.00	0	0.00	4	7.02	19	33.33	15	26.32	13	22.81	6	10.53		
23. related English information	0	0.00	0	0.00	9	15.79	5	8.77	17	29.82	15	26.32	11	19.30		
24. recording enhanced memorizing	0	0.00	0	0.00	9	15.79	11	19.30	20	35.09	8	14.04	9	15.79		
25. nervous about recording	1	1.75	3	5.26	6	10.53	9	15.79	11	19.30	12	21.05	15	26.32		
26. devoted to a great extent	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	3.51	13	22.81	12	21.05	17	29.82	13	22.81		
27. application procedures reasonable	1	1.82	0	0.00	0	0.00	9	16.36	21	38.18	17	30.91	7	12.73		
28. best length of joke-telling	4	86.7	6	9	7	13.21	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
29. funny or hilarious	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	4	7.02	14	24.56	12	21.05	27	47.37		
30. do it again	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	3.51	12	21.05	17	29.82	12	21.05	14	24.56		
31. like the activity	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	9	15.79	19	33.33	9	15.79	20	35.09		

C: Count; %: Percentage

Source of information: present research

Results of Mean

As can be seen from the mean (ranging from 4.96 to 6.09) of the 31 items, a relatively high agreement to these questions was derived. On the whole, the participants have shown relatively positive perception towards the activity. Among the 31 questions, the five items that gained the highest ratings are as follows:

1. I like to hear something funny or hilarious. (Question 29, $M=6.09$, $SD=1.01$)
2. Through the activity, I have had more opportunities in practicing my stage manner. (Question 9, $M=5.91$, $SD=1.07$)
3. Through the activity, I have had more opportunities in learning how to overcome my fear. (Question 10, $M=5.77$, $SD=1.23$)
4. Through the activity, I have had more opportunities in speaking English. (Question 14, $M=5.75$, $SD=1.04$)
5. Generally speaking, I like the activity. (Question 31, $M=5.70$, $SD=1.12$)

The items that gained relatively lower ratings are as follows:

1. My teacher's recording of the joke presentation enhanced my motivation in memorizing the joke well. (Question 24, $M=4.95$, $SD=1.27$)

This result may suggest that the participants did not highly agree to the statement that their motivation in memorizing the joke was related to the procedure that their presentation was to be recorded. There may have been some other more powerful factors that enhanced the participants' motivation in memorizing the joke, such as the fact that their joke presentation would be scored, etc., which may be in need of more studies in the future.

2. Through the activity, I have been able to learn some grammar. (Question 9, $M=4.91$, $SD=1.11$)

This result may be related to the fact that the content of the joke presented by each student was of short length (two minutes long). The grammar usage or concepts covered in such a short piece of content was limited in quantity.

3. I could understand the jokes presented by my classmates. (Question 10, $M=4.82$, $SD=1.09$)

One phenomenon worth noticing is that, despite the participants' relatively lower rating of this item ($M=4.82$, $SD=1.09$), their rating on Question 15 (Through the activity, I have had more motivation in listening to others' English-speaking) was relatively higher ($M=5.33$, $SD=1.04$), indicating that they agree that they were motivated to listen to others' English-speaking during the activity. This might mean that even though they can't understand others well, they are interested in listening to what others had to say.

Although the mean of each of these three items is not very low, the results seem to suggest that these three statements—in comparison to others in the survey—were not agreed as much by the participants, suggesting that not as many participants highly agree to this activity's procedure of recording the joke presentation in enhancing their motivation in memorizing the joke, and not as many participants highly agree to this activity's effect in facilitating their grammar learning and their understanding of jokes presented by others. Table 4 presents the results.

Table 4 Results of Mean

Item	Mean	Sd
1. I feel that the activity is interesting.	5.05	1.12
2.The activity facilitates teacher-students interaction as well as interaction among students.	5.09	1.14
3. The activity has been a pleasant experience for me.	5.35	1.06
4. I've gained sense of achievement from the activity.	4.96	1.00
5.Through the activity, I have been able to learn some sentence structures not taught in the textbook.	5.07	1.10
6.Through the activity, I have been able to learn some grammar.	4.91	1.11
7.Through the activity, I have been able to learn some vocabulary.	5.37	1.08
8.Through the activity, I have had more opportunities in practicing appropriate intonation.	5.58	1.05
9.Through the activity, I have had more opportunities in practicing my stage manner.	5.91	1.07
10.Through the activity, I have had more opportunities in learning how to overcome my fear.	5.77	1.23
11.During the activity, I paid attention to the accurateness of pronunciation.	5.60	1.12
12.Through the activity, I have learned some foreign culture (e. g., other ways of thinking, or other kinds of attitudes towards different issues).	5.56	1.20
13.Through the activity, my ability of expression has been enhanced to a certain degree.	5.33	0.93
14.Through the activity, I have had more opportunities in speaking English.	5.75	1.04
15.Through the activity, I have had more motivation in listening to others' English-speaking.	5.33	1.04
16.Through the activity, my ability in listening to English has enhanced to a certain degree.	5.09	1.06
17.Through the activity, my confidence in speaking English has enhanced to a certain degree.	5.14	1.03
18.To a certain degree, the activity has enhanced my English-speaking fluency.	5.46	0.95
19.The activity has positively influenced my English learning.	5.65	1.03
20.Listening to my classmates' jokes positively influenced my learning.	5.18	1.15
21.I could understand the jokes presented by my classmates.	4.82	1.09
22.Two minutes' length of joke presentation for each one is reasonable.	4.96	1.13
23.I have looked into a great deal of related English information for the activity.	5.25	1.31
24.My teacher's recording of the joke presentation enhanced my motivation in memorizing the joke well.	4.95	1.27

(Table continues)

(Table continued)

Item	Mean	Sd
25.I feel nervous about my teacher's recording of the joke presentation.	5.14	1.62
26.I devoted myself to the activity to a great extent.	5.46	1.18
27.I think the application procedures of the activity are reasonable.	5.33	1.07
28.What I think about the best length of joke-telling (please circle the best one in the following). (1). two minutes (2). 3-5 minutes (3). 5-7 minutes (4) longer	1.12	0.33
29.I like to hear something funny or hilarious.	6.09	1.01
30.I'd like to do the activity again.	5.42	1.18
31.Generally speaking, I like the activity.	5.70	1.12

Sd: Standard Deviation

Source of information: present research

Results of Independent *t*-Test according to Gender Difference

Since some studies have indicated that gender may cause differences in language learning (Bacon, 1992; Oxford & Crookall, 1989), the researcher conducted independent *t*-test to assess male and female students' perception of the activity. Internal consistency for the survey questions was high, with Cronbach alpha of .963. The researcher used the mean to describe the average, and the standard deviation to describe the variability. Taken together, these two values should give a good picture of the data and help the researcher in understanding the outcome of the propositions. (Gall et al., 1996: p. 178). As shown in Table 5, the male and female participants of this study have shown different perception towards the activity in some aspects. Among the 31 questions, the ten items that have shown statistically significant difference are as follows:

1. I feel that the activity is interesting. (Question 1, $p=0.05$)
2. The activity has been a pleasant experience for me. (Question 3, $p<0.05$)
3. Through the activity, I have been able to learn some sentence structures not taught in the textbook. (Question 5, $p<0.05$)
4. Through the activity, I have been able to learn some grammar. (Question 6, $p <0.1$)
5. Through the activity, I have had more opportunities in practicing appropriate intonation. (Question 8, $p <0.05$)
6. Through the activity, I have had more opportunities in practicing my stage manner. (Question 9, $p<0.05$)
7. Through the activity, I have learned some foreign culture (e. g., other ways of thinking, or other kinds of attitudes towards different issues). (Question 12,

$p<0.05$)

8. Through the activity, my confidence in speaking English has enhanced to a certain degree. (Question 17, $p<0.01$)
9. Two minutes' length of joke presentation for each one is reasonable. (Question 22, $p<0.01$)
10. I think the application procedures of the activity are reasonable. (Question 27, $p<0.05$)

There exists some discrepancy between the male and female participants in their perception of learning sentence structures, grammar, intonation, stage manner and culture through the activity. Opinion differences between male and female participants exist also in the length requirement of the joke presentation as well as application procedures of the activity. Finally, there are differences in their perception towards whether the activity is interesting and creates a pleasant experience for them. .

Table 5 Results of Independent *t*-Test according to Gender Difference

Item		Levene's		t-test for		Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Differ- ence	Std. Error Difference	Confidence	
		Test for		Equality of					Interval of	
		Equality of		Means						the
Variances		F	Sig.	t	df	Difference	Lower	Upper		
interesting	Equal variances assumed	1.12	0.29	-1.96	55.00	0.05**	-0.70	0.36	-1.41	0.01
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.10	19.06	0.05	-0.70	0.33	-1.40	0.00
interaction	Equal variances assumed	0.44	0.51	-0.58	55.00	0.56	-0.22	0.37	-0.96	0.53
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.64	20.06	0.53	-0.22	0.34	-0.92	0.49
a pleasant experience	Equal variances assumed	0.07	0.79	-2.29	55.00	0.03**	-0.76	0.33	-1.43	-0.10
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.24	16.83	0.04	-0.76	0.34	-1.48	-0.04
sense of achievement	Equal variances assumed	0.06	0.81	-1.17	55.00	0.25	-0.38	0.32	-1.03	0.27
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.27	19.53	0.22	-0.38	0.30	-1.00	0.24
sentence structures	Equal variances assumed	0.24	0.62	-2.08	55.00	0.04**	-0.72	0.35	-1.42	-0.03
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.34	20.69	0.03	-0.72	0.31	-1.36	-0.08
grammar	Equal variances assumed	0.21	0.65	-1.78	55.00	0.08*	-0.63	0.35	-1.33	0.08
	Equal variances no assumed			-1.69	16.25	0.11	-0.63	0.37	-1.41	0.16
vocabu- lary	Equal variances assumed	0.01	0.91	-1.34	55.00	0.19	-0.47	0.35	-1.16	0.23
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.23	15.60	0.24	-0.47	0.38	-1.28	0.34
practicing appropriate intonation	Equal variances assumed	1.32	0.25	-2.22	55.00	0.02**	-0.73	0.33	-1.40	-0.07
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.86	14.31	0.08	-0.73	0.39	-1.58	0.11
practicing stage manner	Equal variances assumed	8.01	0.01	-1.94	55.00	0.03**	-0.63	0.34	-1.31	0.06
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.43	13.52	0.18	-0.63	0.44	-1.57	0.32
overcome fear	Equal variances assumed	1.08	0.30	-1.41	55.00	0.16	-0.56	0.39	-1.35	0.24
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.20	14.53	0.25	-0.56	0.46	-1.55	0.44

(Table continues)

(Table continued)

Item		Levene's		t-test for		Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Dif- fer- ence	Std. Error Differ- ence	Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		Equality of Variances		Equality of Means					Lower	Upper
		F	Sig.	t	df					
pronunciation	Equal variances assumed	0.71	0.40	-0.05	55.00	0.96	-0.02	0.37	-0.75	0.72
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.04	15.88	0.97	-0.02	0.39	-0.85	0.82
foreign culture	Equal variances assumed	1.49	0.23	-1.87	55.00	0.07	-0.71	0.38	-1.47	0.05
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.92	14.74	0.03**	-0.71	0.44	-1.65	0.23
expression ability	Equal variances assumed	2.74	0.10	-0.69	55.00	0.49	-0.21	0.30	-0.82	0.40
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.83	23.32	0.41	-0.21	0.25	-0.74	0.31
speaking English	Equal variances assumed	1.31	0.26	-1.60	55.00	0.12	-0.53	0.33	-1.20	0.13
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.39	14.82	0.18	-0.53	0.38	-1.35	0.28
listening to others	Equal variances assumed	3.06	0.09	-1.58	55.00	0.12	-0.53	0.33	-1.20	0.14
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.31	14.17	0.21	-0.53	0.40	-1.39	0.34
ability in listening to English	Equal variances assumed	1.99	0.16	-1.57	55.00	0.12	-0.53	0.34	-1.21	0.15
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.32	14.40	0.21	-0.53	0.40	-1.39	0.33
confidence in speaking English	Equal variances assumed	1.01	0.32	-1.99	55.00	0.00***	-0.60	0.33	-1.25	0.05
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.01	19.71	0.06	-0.60	0.30	-1.22	0.02
fluency	Equal variances assumed	0.76	0.39	-0.85	55.00	0.40	-0.26	0.31	-0.88	0.36
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.90	19.03	0.38	-0.26	0.29	-0.87	0.34
positively influenced	Equal variances assumed	0.26	0.61	-0.88	55.00	0.38	-0.29	0.33	-0.96	0.38
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.80	15.52	0.43	-0.29	0.37	-1.07	0.49

(Table continues)

A Study of Joke-Telling as a Motivating Pedagogical Tool in an EFL Setting

(Table continued)

Item		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df				Lower	Upper
listening to others	Equal variances assumed	1.09	0.30	-1.45	55.00	0.15	-0.54	0.37	-1.28	0.20
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.54	18.75	0.14	-0.54	0.35	-1.27	0.20
length of joke	Equal variances assumed	4.50	0.04	-1.93	55.00	0.06	-0.69	0.36	-1.42	0.03
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.65	31.81	0.00***	-0.69	0.26	-1.23	-0.16
understand the jokes	Equal variances assumed	0.03	0.87	-0.27	55.00	0.79	-0.09	0.36	-0.81	0.62
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.27	18.01	0.79	-0.09	0.35	-0.82	0.63
related English information	Equal variances assumed	0.04	0.83	-2.02	55.00	0.05	-0.84	0.42	-1.67	-0.01
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.98	16.93	0.06	-0.84	0.42	-1.73	0.05
recording enhance memorizing	Equal variances assumed	1.12	0.30	-0.35	55.00	0.73	-0.14	0.42	-0.98	0.69
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.31	15.41	0.76	-0.14	0.46	-1.13	0.84
nervous about recording	Equal variances assumed	0.89	0.35	0.46	55.00	0.65	0.24	0.53	-0.82	1.31
	Equal variances not assumed			0.52	20.87	0.61	0.24	0.47	-0.73	1.22
devoted to a great extent	Equal variances assumed	0.38	0.54	-1.24	55.00	0.22	-0.47	0.38	-1.24	0.29
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.14	15.71	0.27	-0.47	0.41	-1.35	0.41
application procedures reasonable	Equal variances assumed	1.20	0.28	-2.19	55.00	0.03**	-0.74	0.34	-1.42	-0.06
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.71	13.55	0.11	-0.74	0.43	-1.67	0.19
funny or hilarious	Equal variances assumed	3.49	0.07	-1.32	55.00	0.19	-0.43	0.32	-1.08	0.22
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.13	14.67	0.28	-0.43	0.38	-1.23	0.38

(Table continues)

(Table continued)

Item		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df				Lower	Upper
do it again	Equal variances assumed	0.56	0.46	-0.84	55.00	0.41	-0.32	0.38	-1.09	0.45
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.88	18.40	0.39	-0.32	0.37	-1.09	0.45
like the activity	Equal variances assumed	0.54	0.47	-0.41	55.00	0.68	-0.15	0.37	-0.88	0.58
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.42	18.01	0.68	-0.15	0.36	-0.90	0.60

*p<0.1 **<0.05 ***p<0.01

Sd: Standard Deviation

Source of information: present research

Results of the Subjects' Opinions/Comments

Of the 57 participants, responses (written as open-ended answer at the end of the survey) ranged from 150 to 400 words, and were an average of 150 words in length. Responses were often interrelated and overlapping. In this section, detailed presentation and explanations of the subjects' opinions and comments will be introduced. Of the 57 subjects, if more than 9 (one-sixths) persons have similar ideas about one particular issue, it will be put in an independent category. There are ten categories in total. Table 6 summarizes the main categories of participants' comments towards this activity.

Table 6 Resulting Categories of Participants' Comments

Item	Opinions/comments	Frequency
1	Training of facing different challenges on the stage	35
2	Training of oral ability	30
3	Advancement of English-listening ability	28
4	Learning from others	25
5	Vocabulary enhancement	24
6	Understanding of jokes from different cultures	22
7	Learning how to make one's speech better and lively	20
8	Trial of different ways of giving a speech	20
9	Application of jokes to making friends in the future	15
10	Adopting other ways of giving a speech	9

Note: N=57

Source of information: present research

The following discussion proceeds with the order of the ranking of consensus, that is, those opinions that are mentioned by more subjects are to be discussed first.

Training of facing different challenges on the stage

35 students wrote that they appreciate the opportunity of having been trained to face different challenges on the stage. They said that they have learned appropriate stage manner and have learned to overcome fear through more preparation. They would welcome more opportunities in doing similar activities even though they feel nervous both before and during the activity. One of the students said:

Generally speaking, we have fear when we have to speak on the stage, and our teacher had to record our speech, which made us feel even more nervous. However, I believe that we'll be less fearful in the future when speaking on the stage if we could survive this two-minute joke-telling.

This seems to be in line with the survey result of Question 25 (I feel nervous about my teacher's recording of the joke presentation.) where 66.7% of the participants' response falls under the categories of 5 to 7; the relatively high rating might reveal students' nervous feeling about their speech being recorded. However, judging from the open-ended comment, they seem to believe that they could become less fearful in the future when speaking on the stage. This seems to imply that even though students may feel nervous or fearful about this activity or its procedure, they still regard it as helpful to them.

Training of oral ability

30 students expressed that this activity was helpful to the training of their oral ability. Some related excerpts are as follows:

We needed to use the right intonation for jokes containing dialogues. And we needed to sort of play the role when speaking the line.

Joke-telling is the most 'comprehensive' training method, through which we could realize the use of proper English intonation. In order to make people laugh, we needed to put in some change of intonation. Jokes that contain dialogues are particularly helpful in training us to learn the right intonation to express things correctly.

I hope to have more similar activities in the future. I am not competent in speaking English, and more opportunities in doing this kind of English exercise will enhance my ability.

Advancement of English-listening ability

28 students wrote that this activity was helpful to their English-listening.

We could enhance our English listening ability while listening to our classmates telling their jokes. English learning is not just about memorizing vocabulary and

listening to CDs.

Learning from others

25 students agreed that through this activity, they were able to learn from other classmates' in some aspects.

Through listening to my classmates' joke-telling, I've learned that they have many strengths that I don't have, such as their firm stage manner, clear pronunciation, and good control of intonation.

Today's joke-telling on the stage is a very meaningful activity, because I have learned a lot from it as well as others' joke content. Furthermore, I asked some of my classmates to listen to my joke-telling many times beforehand, and they helped me to correct my pronunciation, especially that of prepositions.

Vocabulary enhancement

24 students said that this activity was of help to their vocabulary learning.

In preparation for this activity, I did a lot of searching and read a great deal of English jokes every day, which enhanced my English vocabulary and sped up my progress in English.

I've learned more colloquial expressions and spoken language not covered in text books.

Understanding of jokes from different cultures

22 students mentioned that this activity has an advantage related to cultural aspect. Some related excerpts are as follows:

This activity not only enhanced our English ability, but also let us understand the humor of people from other countries. It is sometimes related to local culture of western countries.

I have learned that not all the jokes of one country can be transferred to another country. It is related to the difference in language and culture.

Learning how to make one's speech better and lively

20 students expressed that they have learned how to present a joke through intonation and body movements. They thought that speech through joke-telling attracts audience's attention as well as facilitates students' learning in the interaction between the presenter and the audience. They said they had to pay attention to present the joke in a lively way so as to generate the "loudest" laughter.

I think joke-telling is more challenging than giving common speeches, which require only control of volume and time, fluency and clear expression of thoughts, and eye contact between the speaker and the judges. Telling jokes on the stage is not so simple, in addition to the above mentioned requirements, you need to be able to make people laugh, and you need to make the speech "lively."

Trial of different ways of giving a speech

20 students felt that this activity is different from other kinds of presentations.

We were given a chance to try out a new way of giving a speech; we had the experience of telling Chinese jokes to others in our daily life, but we have never done that in English. I think this activity is worth doing in the future because it is closer to our real life, it enhances our speech-giving ability, as well as letting us learn through various ways. Even though it is more challenging and the preparation took us a lot of trouble.

Application of jokes to making friends in the future

15 students thought that this training is good because they might be able to use the jokes in their future life or work place. Being ready for telling some jokes may be useful in the occasions when introduced to new friends, or when chatting with foreigners to "make the atmosphere better".

Adopting other ways of giving a speech

9 students thought that jokes could be "subjective" in nature, some may think they are funny, while others may not think so. They suggested that other types of speech related to the content of textbook be exercised.

Conclusions

This study aimed to investigate students' perspective toward joke-telling activity in English conversation classrooms. Regarding the research question: What effects does the application of joke-telling activity have on English-major students' English learning? The results revealed that students particularly feel positive about the activity's effect in training their stage manner, in producing opportunities for them to speak English, in enhancing their English-speaking fluency, and in positively influencing their English learning. While the percentage of agreement to the fifteen items about learning effects are overall relatively high, the two lowest rankings suggest that the students feel relatively less positive about the activity's effect in enhancing their grammar learning and English-speaking confidence. Regarding the aspect of grammar learning, it may be related to the fact that the content of the joke presented by each student was of short length (two minutes long). The grammar usage or concepts covered in such a short piece of content was limited in quantity. Similarly, in the aspect of English-speaking confidence, while the participants (87.7%) felt that their English-speaking fluency was enhanced, it was probably referred to the fluency experienced from telling "that" particular joke only. The participants may not feel so confident when speaking English in other contexts.

Regarding the research question: How do English-major students perceive joke-telling activity in English conversation classrooms? The results of descriptive analysis suggest that students particularly feel positive about the activity's strength in generating pleasure and interaction. Most of the students feel like listening to something funny or hilarious, they enjoy the joke-telling activity, and they expressed that the activity is of value in helping them overcome their fear in speaking English. The students, generally speaking, have looked into a great deal of related English information for the activity, and seem to have devoted themselves to it to a great extent. This seems to be in line with what Dörnyei (1998) has suggested, "motivation is responsible for why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity, and how hard they are going to pursue it" (p. 8).

While it seems that on the whole, the participants have shown relatively positive (See Table 4) perception towards the activity, there exists some discrepancy between the male and female participants in their perception of learning sentence structures, grammar, intonation, stage manner and culture through the activity. Opinion differences between male and female participants exist also in the length requirement of the joke presentation as well as application procedures of the activity. Finally, there are differences in their perception towards whether the activity is interesting and creates a pleasant experience for them. The

above results seem to be in line with previous studies (Huang, 2004; Lin, 2007; Tang, 1989), which have indicated that English learning attitude and motivation may vary due to gender difference; in Tang's study (sampling three provincial senior high school in I-Lan County) investigating whether there were any correlations among the selected factors—English learning motivation, attitude, and teacher-student interaction, it was found that female learners tend to (1) have more positive attitude towards English curriculum; (2) appreciate their instructors' teaching techniques more; and (3) agree more to the fact that their instructors are warm and encouraging. Lu (1981) has found that girls' learning attitude is better than boys', and that teachers' authority promotes boys' learning motivation more than girls'.

Regarding the research question: What may be an appropriate set of application procedures for joke-telling activity in English-major classrooms? The results have suggested that most of the students perceive the length (2 minutes) and the application procedures of the activity (as executed in this conversation class) as reasonable, while they did not highly agree to the statement that their motivation in memorizing the joke was related to the procedure that their presentation was to be recorded. There may have been some other factors that are more powerful in enhancing the participants' motivation in memorizing the joke, such as the fact that their joke presentation would be scored, etc., which may be in need of more studies in the future.

The results of the open-ended questions echoed the findings from the survey in the aspects of learning of on-stage performance (Training of facing different challenges on the stage and stage manner), oral ability training (Learning how to make one's speech better and lively; Trial of different ways of giving a speech; Adopting other ways of giving a speech), vocabulary enhancement, listening ability advancement and foreign culture learning (Understanding of jokes from different cultures).

It may be understandable that in an EFL context where there is scarcely the need in using English for survival, it is relatively difficult to greatly enhance students' listening and speaking ability in a semester's (about four months) time, no matter what kind of teaching methodology is adopted. However, the enhancement of learning motivation might be possible if language classes could be made more interesting. After all, within the language learning process, learners' motivation is assigned a prominent role. In other words, learners must be motivated to learn. (Liao, 2009; Strambi & Bouvet, 2003, p. 83).

Implications

Enhance students' self-confidence

The finding of Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1994) has suggested that English achievement is related significantly to self-confidence. It seems that our students' fear (Hsu, 2001; Lin and Warden, 1998) in speaking English has long been a major factor causing their reluctance in actively participating in relevant practice, which may in turn result in poorer level of English competence, and which may in turn result in higher level of anxiety in English learning. In other words, a vicious circle may be formed. Although present study's result about confidence enhancement is not as high as those of many other items (only 68.4% of the subjects agree to the statement that "Through the activity, my confidence in speaking English has been enhanced to a certain degree."), this percentage still represents nearly two-thirds of the subjects. One would suggest that anything that gives our students an opportunity for self-expression, or anything that can be done to make English learning process less threatening, more interesting, as well as confidence-enhancing should be welcomed as proper teaching activity.

The present study's findings about the participants' positive perception about joke-telling activity in the aspects of oral ability training, vocabulary and listening ability advancement may be useful to what previous studies (Harlow and Muyskens, 1994; Kao, 2009; Lin, 1996; Lindenau, 1987; Phillips, 1992; Sy, 1995) have pointed out: language learners are quite interested in acquiring speaking/listening ability, which is, after all, the fundamental tool for every day communication. In order to achieve the goal of producing more English-speaking and English-listening opportunities for students in an EFL context, one could also adopt a more oral-test oriented approach (such as joke-telling activity) for evaluation purpose. As has been found by Hsu (2001), about 58% of VHS students spend less than two hours per week on English learning after school. It is hard to imagine that these students—after entering technological college—would spend more time on English. While conducting oral-tests may involve more work load on the students' part and is probably more time-consuming⁴ for them, it may—in the long run—prove to be worthwhile. One of the options is to adopt activities similar to the following, e.g., the teacher could ask (at the beginning of the semester) each group of the students to prepare for an English song or an English speech for a singing- or speech-contest later between the groups.

Incorporate the element of joy into the learning process

As some of the strengths in the present study's practice that have been highly

⁴As the result of *Mean* on item 23 ($M=5.25$) has shown, students agreed that they had looked into a great deal of related English information for the activity.

valued by the subjects (61.4% of participants regard this activity as interesting, 79% regard it as a pleasant experience for them), the element of joy in language learning has been considered important by either learners of the present study (“93% of subjects agree that they like to hear something funny or hilarious”) or previous studies (Chen, 2007; MacIntyre et al., 1998). And in a research (Gilrard, 1977) investigating the perspectives of 1000 students (aged 12 to 17) regarding what they think constitute the qualifications of a good English teacher, “making the course interesting” was ranked the highest among the top ten categories. As an EFL teacher we might be always short of useful, humorous materials. Some thing that we can do when we buy a magazine or download Internet files is that funny news and jokes be located for later use in class. While it may not result in effective learning outcome to let our students learn in an “all joy and no work” situation, it is definitely necessary for our students to, at certain points of the learning process, experience some kind of joy created by language-related activities, so that students could perceive language learning as pleasurable as well as useful. However, one thing to remember is that learning effect could better be achieved under the practice that certain evaluation procedures (such as video-taping students’ performance in front of audience or executing publicly announced/explained evaluation criteria for students’ performance) be administered for keeping joy and facilitative pressure in balance.

Limitation

More varieties of subjects, e. g., more subjects of higher grades and subjects from other universities should have been included in this study for more reliable results. After all, the author’s personal teaching style might have yielded some variables. While the above consideration is of great importance, the researcher was obliged to study her own students first before trying to persuade teachers of other teaching units to try out this activity.

Future Research

The present study has revealed that there exists some opinion-discrepancy between the male and female participants in their perception of learning through the activity. While it is observable that there are always more female students in an EFL class, it might still be worthwhile to investigate—in the future—what other activities are more welcomed by male students.

References

English Part

- Bacon, S. M. (1992). The relationship between gender comprehension, processing strategies, and cognitive and affective response in foreign language listening. *The Modern Language Journal*, 76(2), 160-178.
- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy, Second edition*. NY: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.
- Brown, H. D. (1994). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Bucaria, C. (2004). Lexical and syntactic ambiguity as a source of humor: The case of newspaper headlines. *Humor*, 17(3), 279-309.
- Chang, H-H. (2005). The relationship between extrinsic/intrinsic motivation and language learning strategies among college students of English in Taiwan. Unpublished master's thesis, Ming Chuan University, Taiwan.
- Chang, S. F. (1997). Taiwanese English learners' learning motivation and language learning strategies. *Taiwanese English Learners' Learning*, 111-128.
- Chang, Y. J. (1997). A study of English learning motivation and strategies in relation to the English learning achievement of junior high school students in Taiwan. Unpublished master's thesis of National Kaohsiung Normal University, Taiwan.
- Chen, C-L. (2007). A study of modern jokes. Unpublished master's thesis. National Taichung University, Taiwan.
- Chen, M-L. (2006). Vocational high school students' English learning motivation and their English learning behaviors. Unpublished master's thesis. Tunghai University, Taiwan.
- Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z. & Noels, K. A. (1994). Motivation, self-confidence, and group cohesion in the foreign language classroom. *Language Learning*, 44(3), 417-448.
- Davies, C. E. (2003). How English-learners joke with native speakers: An interactional sociolinguistic perspective on humor as collaborative discourse across cultures. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 35(9), 1361-1385.
- Deng, A-L. (2003). An analysis of junior high school students' comprehension and appreciation of English jokes and their evaluation of texts. Unpublished master's thesis. National Kaohsiung Normal University, Taiwan.

- Ding, W-Y. (2007). Motivating junior high school students to read English by reading aloud Shel Silverstein's humorous children's poetry. Unpublished master's thesis. National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan.
- Dörnyei, Z., (1998). Motivation in second and foreign language learning. *Language Teaching*, 31, 117-135.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Csizer, K. (1998). Ten commandments for motivating language learners: Results of an empirical study. *Language Teaching Research*, 2, 203-229.
- Gall, M. D., Borg, W. R., & Gall, J. P. (1996). *Educational Research: An Introduction*. Longman Publishers USA.
- Gardner, R. C. (1985). *The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery: Technical Report*. London, ON: University of Western Ontario.
- Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. E. (1972). Attitudes and motivation in second language learning. Newbury House: Rowley, MA.
- Gilrard, N. W. (1977). Teacher influence, student attitudes and achievements, Final report. Cooperative research project No.397, Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minn.
- Harlow, L. L. & Muyskens, J. A. (1994). Priorities for intermediate-level language instruction. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78(2), 141-154.
- Huang, H. (2001). Chinese university foreign language students' anxiety about reading in English. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Washington, Washington State.
- Huang, H. W. (2005). The relationship between learning motivation and speaking anxiety among EFL non-English major freshmen in Taiwan. Unpublished master's thesis, Chaoyang University of Technology, Taiwan.
- Huang, Y. C. (2004). A study of Taiwan's university freshmen's English learning motivation, willingness to communicate, and frequency of communication in freshman English classes. Unpublished master's thesis, Tunghai University, Taichung, Taiwan.
- Kan, H. F. (2005). A study on the English learning motivation of Taiwanese students from grades 3 to 9. Unpublished master's thesis. National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan: Taipei.
- Kao, C-L. (2009). The action research of using Skype to improve the speaking ability of vocational high school students. Unpublished master's thesis. National Dong Hwa University, Taiwan.
- Kim, T., & Biocca, F. (1997). Telepresence via television: Two dimensions of

- telepresence may have different connections to memory and persuasion.[1].
Journal of Computer Mediated Communication, 3(2).
- Klein, L. (2003). Creating virtual product experiences: The role of telepresence.
Journal of Interactive Marketing, 17(1), 41-55.
- Liao, W. Y. (2009). A study of the motivation, attitudes, self-efficacy, and achievements in English learning of vocational high school students in metropolitan Taipei. Unpublished master's thesis. National Dong Hwa University, Taiwan.
- Lin, H. J. (1996). The study of students' survey in the methodology for English instruction. *Journal of Chaoyang University of Technology*, 107-124.
- Lin, H. J. & Warden, C. A. (1998). Different attitudes among non-English major EFL students. *The Internet TESL Journal*, [On-line] ,
<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/Articles/Warden-Difference/>, (October).
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Lindenau, S. E. (1987). Issues and answers in foreign language learning: Are students and teachers saying the same thing? *Journal of Educational Techniques and Technologies*, 20, 57-61.
- MacIntyre, P. D., Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z. & Noels, K. A. (1998). Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. *The Modern Language Journal*, 82(4), 545-562.
- Nelson, M., Keum, H., & Yaros, R. (2004). Advertainment or adcreep? Game players' attitudes toward advertising and product placements in computer games. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 5(1), 3-21.
- Nemeth, E. (1998). Ervin's ESL Net: Humor in the English Classroom. Retrieved October 9, 2003, from
http://angolsuli.education.directnic.com/h_frame.htm
- Oxford, R. L., & Crookall, D. (1989). Research on language learning strategies; Methods, findings, and instructional issues. *Modern Language Journal*, 73, 404-419.
- Oxford, R. L., & Shearin, J. (1994). Language learning motivation: Expanding the theoretical framework. *Modern Language Journal*, 78, 12-28.
- Peng, I. N. (2002). EFL motivation and strategies use among Taiwanese senior high school learners. Unpublished master's thesis. National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan: Taipei.
- Phillips, E. M. (1992). The effects of language anxiety on students' oral test

- performance and attitudes. *The Modern Language Journal*, 76(1): 14-25.
- Ross, A. (1998). *The Language of Humor*. London: Routledge.
- Schmitz, J. R. (2002). Humor as a pedagogical tool in foreign language and translation courses. *Humor*, 15(1), 89-113.
- Strambi, A & Bouvet, E. (2003). Flexibility and interaction at a distance: A mixed-mode environment for language learning. *Language Learning & Technology*, 7(3), 81-102.
- Sy, B. M. (1995). Gender differences, perceptions on foreign language learning and language learning strategies. Conference presentation, Twelfth Annual R.O.C. TEFL Conference, May 20th.
- Tsai, C. W. (2004). The effects of gender, English proficiency, and joke types on Taiwanese senior high students' English joke comprehension. Unpublished master's thesis. National Kaohsiung Normal University, Taiwan.
- Wang, C. Y. (1998). Did You Get It? A Linguistic Analysis of Chinese Students' Comprehension and Appreciation of Jokes in English. Unpublished master's thesis. National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan.
- Warden, C. A., & Lin, H. J. (2000). Existence of integrative motivation in an Asian EFL setting. *Foreign Language Annals*, 3(5), 535-547.
- Yang, S. Y. (2011). A case study of motivation of EFL students' vocabulary strategy use. Unpublished master's thesis. Chaoyang University of Technology, Taiwan.

Chinese Part

- 林文寶。〈笑話研究〉。《台東師專學報》第13期，頁57-121，民國七十四年。
- 林文寶。〈雖屬小道，不無學問—閒話笑話〉。《國文天地》第5卷第10期，頁16-18，民國七十九年。
- 徐貞美。〈如何提高國中低成就學生學習英語的動機與效果〉。《人文及社會學科教學通訊》，頁6-14，民國八十二年。
- 林立涓。〈日籍學生對中文笑話的辨認與理解〉。高雄師範大學華語文教學研究所碩士論文，民國九十六年。
- 林茂松。〈中華民國高中高職英文教學現況比較研究〉。《中華民國第十二屆英語文教學研討會論文集》，頁59-80，民國九十二年。
- 施玉惠。〈四技二專英文考試對高職英文教學之影響〉。《中華民國第九屆英語文教學研討會論文集》，頁586-649，民國八十八年。

- 唐璽惠。〈高中生英語學習動機態度師生互動親子關係與英語科成就之相關研究〉。《教育學刊》第8期，頁331-362，民國七十八年。
- 許育楨。〈導入學習型組織對學生英語文學習成就影響之研究-以高職英文科教師為例〉。國立台灣科技大學管理研究所碩士論文，民國九十年。
- 黃澄龍。〈怎樣才能引起學生聽課的興趣〉。《文理通識學術論壇》，頁281-284，民國七十九年。
- 盧美貴。〈國小教師教導方式與學生學習行為之關係〉。《教育研究集刊》第23卷第6期，頁199-207，民國七十年。
- 蕭颯、王文欽、徐智策。《幽默心理學》。台北：智慧大學出版社，民國八十年。

Appendix

Survey Questions (Chinese Version)

關於情意方面的影響

1. 您覺得本活動很有趣。
2. 對於師生間及同學間之互動有助益。
3. 您覺得本活動對您而言是一種愉快的經驗。
4. 您獲得成就感。

關於學習效果方面

5. 您能夠學到一些課本上沒有的句型。
6. 您能夠學到一些文法。
7. 您能夠學到一些單字。
8. 您有多一點機會練習恰當的語調。
9. 您有多一點機會練習上台講話的台風。
10. 您有多一點機會學習克服膽怯。
11. 您注意到發音及咬字的正確。
12. 您學到一些外國人的文化（如外國人的思考方式、對事情的態度等）。
13. 您的表達能力有略為提升。
14. 您有多一點機會練習說英文。
15. 您有多一點聽別人說英文的動機。
16. 您的聽英文的能力有略為提升。
17. 您的說英文的自信心有略為提升。
18. 您覺得本活動有略為提升對您說英文的流利度。
19. 您覺得本活動對您的英語學習有正面的影響。

關於其他人報告的笑話

20. 您認為聆聽其他人的報告對於您的學習有正面的影響。
21. 您能夠了解其他人的報告。

其它

22. 您對笑話兩分鐘的長度覺得合理。
23. 您曾參考許多相關之英文資訊。
24. 老師要對報告加以錄音，您覺得可加強您將笑話背熟的動機。
25. 老師要對報告加以錄音，您覺得很緊張。
26. 您對本活動投入的程度有多少？
27. 您對本活動的施行步驟覺得合理。
28. 您覺得講笑話的時間長度最好是（請圈選）
(1). 2 分鐘 (2). 3-5 分鐘 (3). 5-7 分鐘 (4). 更長
29. 您喜歡聽到好笑、好玩的事物。
30. 您願意再做一次本活動。
31. 大體而言，您喜歡本活動。