Teaching with Humor: Reflections on Its Relevance in Pedagogical Practice

Abílio Lourenço[1], Sergio Dominguez-Lara[2] & Sabina Valente[3]

[1] University of Minho, Portugal

[2] FCCTP Research Institute, University of San Martín de Porres, Peru

[3] CARE — Research Center on Health and Social Sciences, Portalegre Polytechnic University, Portalegre, Portugal

Correspondence: Abílio Lourenço, University of Minho, Portugal.

Abstract

This study focuses on an affective dimension of pedagogical practices in the classroom—humor—to foster more human and emotional interactions. Through a literature review, it reflects on how humor can be an effective tool in teaching and learning, helping to create more positive environments conducive to educational development. This knowledge is valuable for structuring initial teacher training programs, and equipping educators to integrate humor intentionally and strategically. Humor, as a form of social interaction, is important in fostering closer interpersonal relationships and creating a positive classroom climate. Teaching with humor can strengthen these relationships, facilitate student learning, and significantly contribute to academic success. Additionally, the intentional use of humor aligns with the principles of educational sustainability, fostering a more inclusive, emotionally balanced, and collaborative learning environment that promotes the well-being of both students and teachers. The creation of sustainable educational spaces, grounded in trust, respect, and empathy, has a direct impact on building more cohesive and resilient communities. The conclusions highlight the need for teachers to consider humor as a pedagogical tool that can reduce interpersonal barriers and foster an environment of trust, respect, and collaboration. In this context, initial teacher training assumes a strategic role in providing educators with the necessary skills to apply humor in teaching effectively. Thus, it is emphasized that humor not only enhances the teaching and learning process but also plays a crucial role in building a more emotionally balanced, cooperative, and self-regulated society. Therefore, humor is presented as a crucial element in promoting sustainable pedagogical practices, contributing to the strengthening of social and emotional values essential for sustainable development.

Keywords: humor, learning, school/academic environment, academic environment, interpersonal interactions, teacher training, educational sustainability

1. Introduction

Humor, as an affective and social phenomenon, plays a significant role in daily life by providing stress relief and creating moments of relaxation. In educational settings, humor proves to be a

valuable tool, capable of capturing students' attention, facilitating the learning of complex concepts, and fostering a more welcoming and inclusive environment (Pozsonyi & Soulstein, 2019). Nevertheless, reaching a consensus on the definition of humor remains a challenge, as it takes on different meanings depending on the context in which it is applied (Ngai, 2025). It is a phenomenon that is highly dependent on the environment and audience, potentially leading to unexpected or even unintended interpretations (Kim & Plester, 2019).

According to Martin and Ford (2018), humor is multifaceted, encompassing anything that is expressed or performed and elicits laughter or pleasure in others. This perspective highlights humor as both a social and mental phenomenon, involving cognitive and psychological processes, as well as an emotional response that reflects the enjoyment of something amusing (Li, 2025). In summary, humor involves the interaction between social, psychological, and emotional dimensions, making it a complex and subjective experience (Bartzik et al., 2021; Girão, 2021).

Although most studies focus on the individual effects of humor, Gheorghe and Curșeu (2024) observe a growing interest in investigating it as a social and group phenomenon. However, findings remain varied, and challenges arise in conceptualising and measuring humor in collective contexts. These aspects are particularly important in educational settings, where humor can influence both individual development and social dynamics, aligning with the principles of educational sustainability, which promote an inclusive and collaborative environment (Erdoğdu & Çakıroğlu, 2021).

The effectiveness of humor in teaching depends on various contextual factors, such as the classroom environment, the teacher-student relationship, and the individual needs of learners. While humor offers clear benefits, such as increasing motivation and facilitating learning, it is essential to understand its limitations and how it can be applied effectively (Chen et al., 2023). The use of humor should be context-sensitive, respecting students' cultural and emotional differences and aligning with educational objectives (Jiang et al., 2019). This reflection aims to explore how humor can positively impact teaching and learning—not only by enhancing student engagement but also by fostering more positive interactions between teachers and students, contributing to a more collaborative and inclusive learning environment.

Several studies, such as those by Martin and Ford (2018), indicate that humor is deeply connected to interpersonal relationships, serving as both a psychological reinforcement and a communication facilitator. However, as noted by Attardo (2020), not all types of humor are suitable for the classroom environment, requiring careful use to avoid negative effects on academic performance. The literature on the subject suggests that humor, when applied intentionally, can foster a healthier and more productive learning environment, enhancing motivation and strengthening social connections (Boydstun et al., 2023). Moreover, it highlights that humor in the classroom can improve student engagement and reduce stress (Ellingson, 2018; Jeder, 2015).

This study aims to reflect on the importance of humor as a central element in pedagogical practices, highlighting its relevance for educational sustainability. With proper training, teachers can integrate humor constructively, fostering emotionally balanced and collaborative teaching. Thus, humor goes beyond being a mere pedagogical technique, becoming an essential pillar for sustainable development in the school environment, positively impacting the well-being of both students and educators.

2. Theoretical Rationale

The significance of humor in the school environment is closely linked to its impact on interpersonal relationships, students' well-being, and the promotion of a collaborative learning atmosphere, aligning with the principles of educational sustainability. The theoretical rationale for humor highlights its essential role in social interactions, particularly in academic contexts, where it serves as an integral part of a teaching strategy that can energise learning—provided it is applied under appropriate conditions (Boydstun et al., 2023; Gheorghe & Curșeu, 2024; Martin & Ford, 2018).

Lourenço and Valente (2021) highlight that affective and cognitive aspects are inseparable in the learning process, with affective interaction being essential for student engagement and educational success. They argue that a lack of affective engagement can lead to hostile or ineffective responses in student-teacher relationships, ultimately harming the learning environment. In this context, humor can play a

crucial role in creating a more emotionally balanced atmosphere, fostering more positive interactions.

Humor in pedagogical practices, according to Lourenço and Valente (2021), has the potential to generate both positive and negative affective impacts on the teacher-student relationship. When used constructively, humor can strengthen the bond between educator and student, creating a welcoming and stimulating environment for the learning process (Erdoğdu & Çakıroğlu, 2021). The literature highlights that humor contributes to student motivation and engagement, facilitating the understanding of complex content and promoting closeness between those involved in the educational process (Attardo, 2020; Martin & Ford, 2018).

In a context of greater social awareness, a deeper understanding of the role of humor in education becomes essential. The metacognitive approach to the use of humor in teaching is crucial, as it can increase student interest, reduce tension, and improve the effectiveness of learning activities. According to Embalzado and Sajampun (2020), humor has been linked to positive psychological and physiological effects, such as stress reduction and the improvement of interpersonal relationships.

The impact of humor on student motivation has been widely investigated. Studies indicate that the use of humor in classroom activities contributes to increased student engagement in tasks, boosts their confidence, and generally facilitates learning (Nashruddin & Alam, 2021; Cho et al., 2019). The literature also reveals that, when applied appropriately, humor can reduce stress and increase students' attention, creating a more productive and healthy learning environment (Iivari et al., 2020; Jeder, 2015).

However, despite the benefits demonstrated in various studies, there is a duality of opinions regarding the inclusion of humor in pedagogical practices. Some studies, such as the one by Wu et al. (2021), suggest that humor can, in certain situations, distract students or be perceived negatively, impairing focus on learning tasks. In this regard, research by Masek et al. (2019) reveals that integrating humor into the learning process can distract students during task completion. Attardo (2020) also warns against the misuse of humor, emphasizing that not all types of humor are suitable for the educational context and may interfere with students'

academic performance.

On the other hand, a study conducted by Embalzado and Sajampun (2020) with higher education students shows that the use of humor in the learning process not only enhances student engagement but also contributes to creating a more emotionally positive and less tense environment. In this regard, research by Miller et al. (2017) highlights that appropriately integrated humor fosters active learning methods, creates more relaxed classroom environments, significantly boosts student engagement in understanding content, and increases interest in studying different subjects.

In relation to educational sustainability, the strategic use of humor can be seen as a way to create a more inclusive, collaborative, and emotionally balanced learning environment. According to Martin and Ford (2018), humor is directly linked to interpersonal relationships and can be an essential factor in promoting a healthy teaching environment, acting as a kind of reinforcement for the psyche (Esi, 2017). When integrated into pedagogical interactions in a reflective and context-sensitive manner, humor can help reduce tensions, improve student performance, and create an atmosphere conducive to learning.

However, to ensure that humor is effective and does not cause negative effects, it is essential for teachers to have proper training to integrate humor constructively into their pedagogical practices. The literature suggests that humor, when used reflectively and with pedagogical intent, can have a positive impact on both student development and the school environment, serving as a pillar for educational sustainability (Boydstun et al., 2023; Gheorghe & Curşeu, 2024).

Humor has proven to be a valuable tool in teaching, contributing to motivation, interaction, and learning effectiveness. Studies such as those by Bakar (2019) highlight the importance of incorporating humor, whether spontaneous or planned, into lessons, noting that it can significantly increase student engagement. According to the author, humor reduces the tension associated with the learning process and stimulates more effective thinking skills, creating a lighter and more conducive environment for teaching.

On the other hand, Jeder (2015) explores how humor, by capturing students' attention, not

only improves social interaction with teachers and peers but also reduces anxiety in the classroom. The author highlights the positive impact of humor on the closeness of the teacher-student relationship, emphasizing that a relaxed environment fosters more lasting motivation to learn.

Complementarily, Embalzado and Sajampun (2020) suggest that the quality of interactions between students is significantly improved when humor is present in the teaching process. According to Iivari et al. (2020), humor combines academic seriousness with a pleasant environment, showing that this form of emotional intelligence contributes to ideal learning conditions and prolonged attention.

Student perception is also crucial. Asiedu-Addo et al. (2017) emphasize that the way students perceive their classes and teachers directly affects their interest in learning. These authors warn of the negative impact of unfavorable perceptions, which can demotivate students and decrease their engagement with certain subjects. In this context, humor emerges as a strategy to transform these negative perceptions, making lessons more engaging and stimulating a love for learning.

Additionally, Esi (2017) highlights that humor can be an effective way to combat boredom and lack of motivation in lessons, often caused by undynamic teaching methods. However, the author warns about the need for caution in its use, avoiding exaggerations, irony, or strategies that could lead to misunderstandings. When used appropriately, humor not only makes activities more enjoyable but also promotes effectiveness in teaching (Pérez-Bonet et al., 2021).

Overall, all these studies reinforce that humor is not merely an optional resource, but a powerful pedagogical strategy that benefits both students and teachers. According to Gheorghe & Curșeu (2024), it transforms the learning process, reduces tensions, stimulates creativity, and fosters a closer and more collaborative relationship among all involved. Thus, humor emerges as a bridge between academic rigor and a more human and engaging teaching approach.

3. Humor in the Classroom Context

3.1 The Impact of Humor on the Emotional and Socio-Emotional Classroom Environment

It is evident across all levels of education that the educational system generates stress in the majority of the school community. This happens because it often focuses on transmitting content that is far removed from students' interests, expectations, and reality (Valente, 2019). When teaching becomes rigid and overly formal, it weakens student development, limits their active participation, and turns the curriculum into something uninspiring and emotionless (Barrantes-Elizondo, 2016). As a result, there is a decline in engagement and academic performance (Attardo, 2020), which can lead to demotivation, frustration, impulsivity, and indiscipline—issues that are prevalent in many classrooms.

However, humor can play an essential role in creating a more positive emotional environment, helping to break down barriers in the learning process (Embalzado & Sajampun, 2020). Introducing moments of relaxation and lightness into lessons can increase student engagement, making teaching more dynamic and appealing.

Thus, a classroom environment that values humor can help reduce student stress and anxiety, minimizing demotivation and encouraging greater participation (Ellingson, 2018). Furthermore, it can be a powerful ally in preventing frustration, impulsivity, and indiscipline, fostering healthier relationships between students and teachers, and making the educational process more engaging and effective.

As noted by the Lourenço and Vaslente (2021), there is an increasing need to transform traditionally rigid classrooms into spaces where learning takes place in a more dynamic and engaging way. The goal is to create an environment where emotions can be expressed and experiences with teachers give emotional meaning to knowledge. According to the authors, this fusion of experience and learning becomes part of each student's life story, combining cognitive and emotional aspects in the process of knowledge construction. Li (2025) states that, being a highly demanding mental activity that involves both cognitive and emotional factors, the processing of verbal humor consumes more attentional resources than the processing of non-humorous content.

Indeed, Martin and Ford (2018) highlight that cognitive psychology has had a significant impact on the study of humor, as it encompasses and influences different areas, helping to

understand the mental processes involved in the perception and interpretation of stimuli. The authors point out that the perception of incongruity is an essential cognitive mechanism for humor, playing a crucial role in how we interpret and react to different situations. Mora (2013) emphasizes the importance of not overly focusing on the cognitive domain and instead giving more emphasis to the outcomes in the emotional field. In this sense, there is an urgent need for an approach that transforms and replaces a rigid, warm pedagogy with one where humor is a methodology capable of creating a healthy and emotionally enriching learning environment.

On the other hand, Novick et al. (2002) question the importance of including humor in the learning of today's students and emphasize that the academic world must consider the generational differences that exist. Students in today's global era exhibit distinct characteristics from those of a decade ago, particularly in terms of emotional difficulties, experiences with depression, stress, and a lack of experience with learning strategies. The authors highlight that the rapid evolution of globalization has had a direct impact on classroom learning conditions. Thus, creating a favorable environment for teaching and learning in today's and future classrooms increasingly involves the integration of socio-emotional aspects into the educational process.

To better understand this integration, Novick et al. (2002) highlights that the learning process includes five essential socio-emotional dimensions: self-awareness, emotional regulation, self-motivation, empathy (including perspective-taking), and social skills.

Self-awareness refers to students' perception that classroom activities are preparation for real-life situations, making the classroom an environment conducive to self-awareness. This awareness is crucial for a positive impact on learning success.

The study by Wang and Lee (2019) shows that students' self-awareness encourages the perception of the importance of their learning. This, in turn, increases self-motivation and self-confidence, which are linked to learning success, strengthening metacognition and positively impacting the quality of learning outcomes. Research by Atmojo et al. (2020) and Elmi (2020) support these findings, stating that

self-awareness is strongly correlated with both the quality of learning and the outcomes of learning. These results further confirm the close relationship between aspects of students' self-awareness, such as self-management and social awareness, in academic performance.

Inserted in positive psychology, Seligman (2002) mentions that humor can be an essential element in the development of self-awareness, as it allows individuals to approach life and challenges with a lighter and more reflective perspective. This humorous process promotes self-understanding by helping students recognize and accept their emotions, enabling them to build a more positive relationship with the learning environment and develop greater emotional self-awareness.

Emotional regulation refers to the ability to manage intense feelings, allowing students to remain calm and better engage in classroom activities. This skill helps prevent emotions such as stress, frustration, and anxiety, fostering a more active and positive involvement in the learning process.

A study by Cristóvão et al. (2017) confirms the relationship between emotional management skills, student participation, and academic performance quality. The results show that the development of these skills plays an essential role in promoting well-being and academic success. Furthermore, since these skills are learnable, they contribute to reducing problematic behaviors and improving student citizenship. Some studies indicate that students' ability to manage emotions is influenced by the teacher's ability to manage conflicts in the classroom (Maamari & Majdalani, 2019; Valente & Lourenço, 2020), highlighting the need for an emotional management model for students during the classroom learning process.

Humor can play a crucial role in emotional regulation, serving as an effective strategy to reduce stress and promote a more relaxed and motivating learning environment. According to Kuiper et al. (2004), humor functions as an emotional regulation mechanism, helping students reinterpret challenging situations in a lighter way and maintain an emotionally balanced state. In this way, integrating humor into the educational context can not only improve students' emotional well-being but also enhance their participation and academic performance.

Self-motivation refers to the ability to direct one's own behavior towards achieving goals, facing challenges and difficulties with initiative, persistence, and effort. According to Lourenço and Paiva (2010), this competency is directly related to beliefs such as self-efficacy, outcome expectations, intrinsic interest or value, and goal orientation, which influence the way students approach their tasks.

We can identify three main components of self-motivation: (i) expectancy, which relates to the student's perception of their ability to complete a task; (ii) value, which is linked to the student's goals and the importance they attach to the tasks; (iii) affect, which encompasses the emotions and concerns associated with the activity.

Highly self-motivated students tend to set ambitious goals for themselves and others, and are more receptive to feedback about their academic performance. Additionally, self-motivation plays an essential role in activating memory, facilitating the retention and recording of learning acquired during classroom activities (Novick et al., 2002).

Humor can play an important role in self-motivation, helping individuals approach challenges with a more positive and resilient attitude. Studies such as those by Jun and Lee (2024) suggest that humor can strengthen intrinsic motivation, making tasks more engaging and encouraging persistence in the face of difficulties. By reducing stress and promoting a lighter, more enjoyable environment, humor contributes to a favorable emotional state, essential for individuals to stay focused on their goals and develop greater self-confidence in their personal and professional performance.

Empathy and the ability to see things from others' perspectives are crucial for life in society. Yamamoto et al. (2018) explain that empathy involves two dimensions: the sharing of emotions (affective component) and adopting the other's point of view (cognitive component). These aspects play an essential role in how individuals interact and coexist within a community.

Lourenço and Paiva (2010) highlight that in the educational context, these skills cannot be separated from the empathy demonstrated by teachers. Therefore, it is essential that, in addition to developing good self-awareness, students are able to establish empathetic relationships with one another, fostering a more positive and enriching school environment where humor and good cheer can also thrive.

Chiu's (2025) study emphasizes the interconnection between humor and empathy, highlighting how humor can serve as a tool to promote more effective professional relationships, enhancing empathy between individuals. The study argues that humor can help build emotional bridges, making interactions more accessible and reinforcing mutual understanding, which is crucial for a healthy work environment.

Finally, social skills are learned behavioral abilities that involve social interactions. According to Del Prette and Del Prette (2018), social skills are a set of culturally accepted behaviors that form competent social performance and generate positive outcomes for the individual in their relationship with others. In a school context, the classroom is considered a miniature learning community consisting of various types of students with different personalities, academic potential, and emotional skill levels, all of which tend to have a significant impact on the quality of academic performance.

Thus, humor can serve as an essential facilitator in the development of social skills, promoting empathy, cooperation, and a more positive interaction environment. Ruch et al. (2018) highlights that humor is associated with a greater ability to form interpersonal bonds and interpret others' emotions, thus strengthening empathy and social competence. In this way, integrating humor into the school environment can contribute to healthier relationships and a more welcoming learning atmosphere.

Novick et al. (2002) emphasize that, to integrate these five dimensions, there are two essential steps. First, the teacher needs to adjust the way they organize activities in the classroom, focusing on a problem-solving model and carefully planning the learning process. This allows for the creation of an activity plan centered on the development of socio-emotional skills. Then, in the second step, it is crucial to leverage already tested and well-implemented strategies in schools, ensuring that they are sustainable in the long term. The authors also highlight that the connection between these five dimensions of socio-emotional learning and

students' academic success is a critical factor. Studies show that most students do not appreciate teachers who teach in an overly serious, rigid, and monotonous environment, as this can negatively impact their performance and engagement in learning.

Embalzado and Sajampun (2020) explain that humor in the classroom should not spoil the learning environment or turn lessons into a stand-up comedy show. The idea is that humor helps students stay focused and learn in a more enjoyable way. Following this principle, more recent studies show that incorporating humor into teaching can improve the relationship between teachers and students (Attardo, 2020; Embalzado & Sajampun, 2020). Additionally, research indicates that lessons with a touch of humor tend to make learning more effective and engaging.

Masek et al. (2019) argue that humor can be incorporated into the classroom in three ways: through learning materials, teaching processes, and strategies used to energize the lessons. According to the authors, humor in learning materials should be used without undermining educational goals, making the content less rigid and more appealing.

It is important to remember that students are adolescents, in a phase of identity construction, and generally do not like overly formal or rigid environments. They prefer a balance: a serious yet relaxed environment. For this, the teacher must know how to use humor strategically, making learning lighter without compromising the content. Ideally, humor and content should go hand in hand throughout the activities, making lessons more engaging and motivating students to value what they learn. Following this approach, Masek et al. (2019) shows that the appropriate use of humor can improve students' performance, skills, and academic success.

3.2 The Integration of Humor as a Pedagogical and Methodological Strategy in the Learning Process

Humor has increasingly been recognized as a facilitating element in teaching, promoting a lighter and more conducive learning environment. When used in a balanced way, it can make lessons more dynamic, stimulate student engagement, and strengthen the relationship between teachers and students.

According to Machlev & Karlin (2017), research shows that humor in the classroom is received differently depending on the students' age.

Some studies suggest that humor can increase student engagement, while others caution that it can become a distraction and negatively affect learning. Overall, students have a positive perception of humor in the classroom, and there is a strong link between this perception and their level of participation in learning. Therefore, it is important for teachers to understand the role of humor and know how to use it appropriately and effectively in their lessons.

In this context, Daumiller et al. (2019) clarify that the goal of humor in the classroom is not to divert students' attention or turn teaching into a comedy show, but rather to encourage focus and understanding of the content in a more enjoyable and relaxed manner. Recent studies highlight that integrating humor into the learning process can significantly improve the relationship between teachers and students, as well as contribute to more effective teaching (Attardo, 2020; Bolkan et al., 2018; Embalzado & Sajampun, 2020).

The integration of humor in the classroom can occur in various ways, including the use of learning materials, the adaptation of teaching processes, and the implementation of dynamic and engaging methodologies or strategies. Previous studies suggest that humor, when applied correctly, can make the learning environment more stimulating and accessible, contributing to greater student engagement (Daumiller et al., 2020; Machlev & Karlin, 2017). Humor can be present in instructional materials, as long as it does not compromise learning objectives (Masek et al., 2019). In other words, it is possible to organize content in a less rigid and more appealing way, without losing focus on the essentials.

It's important to remember that students, especially adolescents, are in a phase of building their identity and, generally, do not feel motivated in overly formal or rigid environments. They prefer a balance between seriousness and relaxation, as long as humor is used appropriately within the educational context (Daumiller et al., 2020). Teachers who manage to convey academic content with a touch of humor, without compromising the quality of the teaching, tend to capture students' attention and earn their admiration.

When humor is integrated into the learning process, the study by Miller et al. (2017) suggests that the classroom becomes more relaxed, which

helps students engage more in the activities, making them more effective. The results show that young people between the ages of 17 and 19 prefer a relaxed environment, yet still serious. They appreciate learning conditions that are both serious and relaxed — flexible, but not too rigid.

Another point to consider is that humor can be very useful when applied in teaching methodologies, techniques, and strategies, helping to motivate students to learn. Thus, humor becomes part of the learning method itself (Gnevek et al., 2018) and the teaching tools (Pozsonyi & Soulstein, 2019). Moreover, Omede and Daku (2013) argue that humor can be an excellent pedagogical tool for encouraging learning. By introducing humor into lessons, the environment becomes lighter, which can reduce student anxiety and increase their participation in activities. This creates a more open and collaborative atmosphere, where students feel more comfortable expressing their doubts and opinions, contributing to a more dynamic and effective learning experience.

Indeed, the use of humor in classroom activities is closely linked to students' psychological and emotional states, particularly how they retain content. According to Jeder (2015), when humor is well integrated into lessons, it has a positive impact on information retention and students' ability to maintain attention during learning. Other studies show that using humor as an energizer also helps improve students' concentration, keeping them focused on what is being taught (Tam, 2021; Kurniasih et al., 2018; Mauludin, 2021).

Friedman and Friedman (2019) explain that the use of humor in lessons should be done with balance, considering two important principles: being cheerful and being meaningful. "Cheerful" means creating a pleasant environment where fun should not be the main focus nor exaggerated. A meaningful learning experience only happens when we can connect what we are learning to knowledge we already possess (Silva-Filho & Ferreira, 2022). A study by Torres (2021) showed that if these two principles are well balanced, the lesson becomes enjoyable, and students can easily understand the content because learning success is measured by improved outcomes.

Thus, we can say that humor is essential in life, especially in the school environment, as it is key to creating a healthy and constructive atmosphere within the educational community.

4. Final Reflections

The emotional aspect of students' learning is incredibly important and must be taken into consideration by teachers and educators, as it directly influences the success of classroom activities. This emphasizes that students' opinions about their teachers should not be underestimated. When students have a positive view of how their teachers teach, it can make all the difference in the success of learning (Bakar, 2019). Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to effectively integrate humor into the learning process of their students.

As previously mentioned, much of the emotional load in the classroom is felt in the relationships between teachers and students, including aspects such as eye contact, body language, the content being taught, touch, proximity, tone of voice, methods of welcoming, instructions, corrections, verbal and non-verbal communications, among others. These behaviors and attitudes are part of the interpersonal interactions that have a significant emotional impact on students, which can be either positive or negative, depending on how these interactions are perceived and experienced.

Investing in teacher training is a fundamental task to ensure the success of teaching activities, which are undeniably demanding today due to the complexity of the situations faced. Well-trained teachers can contribute significantly to the improvement of the educational system, ensuring that it benefits all students while addressing each one's individual needs.

Considering this premise, it can be asserted that affectivity plays a crucial role in the pedagogical relationship (Lourenço & Valente, 2021) and, concurrently, in the teaching and learning process. With this understanding, it becomes clear that affective and cognitive aspects are inseparable. Therefore, the teacher, as the essential link facilitating the student's holistic development, must be mindful of the emotional aspect in their teaching practice and reflect on how they are building emotional bridges with their students. Humor can be a valuable tool here, as it creates a more relaxed and connected environment, helping to establish that affective bond, making the learning process lighter and more effective.

The emotional connection must be built on a relationship of closeness, where opportunities for cooperation, respect, trust, and sincerity can be created with the student. Consequently, the school can pave the way to understanding the barriers that hinder interpersonal relationships and provide means to overcome them, fostering a more emotionally aware and self-regulated civil society. The integration of humor in school activities could be a key factor in mitigating these barriers in the teacher-student relationship.

As Ngai (2025) points out, it is essential to establish a consensual definition of humor, especially in the school context, where its application can significantly influence both learning and the classroom environment. However, this definition remains a challenge, as humor takes on different meanings depending on the context in which it is used.

Closing the reflective cycle, and considering the importance of integrating humor into learning in the school context, it can be concluded that humor is an essential and fundamental dimension of the pedagogical relationship. It constitutes an indispensable tool in and for the education of a future, more emotionally aware society.

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