British Journal of Music Education (2026), 1–9
doi:10.1017/S0265051726101053

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

ARTICLE

The pedagogical value of humour in music education: perceptions of primary school teachers in Southern Spain

Paloma Bravo-Fuentes

University of Málaga, Spain
Email: palomabravo@uma.es

Abstract

This paper investigates the use of humour as a pedagogical tool in primary music education, highlighting its potential to improve attention and foster a climate of collaboration and trust among students. Using a qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 music teachers from primary schools in southern Spain to find out how they perceive and apply humour in their classes. The results indicate that humour not only acts as a catalyst for children's motivation and well-being but also promotes deeper and more creative musical learning. However, the study also highlights the challenges of its implementation, such as the need for specific teacher skills and sensitivity to cultural diversity. Despite these challenges, the potential benefits of humour justify a more structured and conscious approach to its use. It is suggested that educational institutions and teacher education programmes consider these findings to improve the integration of humour into music pedagogy, ensuring that it contributes positively to the holistic development of students in a respectful environment. This approach offers new perspectives and tools for music teachers, transforming the quality of the educational process by making the teaching-learning process more enriching.

Keywords: music education; humour; motivation; pedagogy

Introduction

Humour pedagogy is based on the idea that learning is not only a cognitive process but also an emotional and social process. According to previous studies, humour has a direct and positive effect on learning by improving students' comprehension, memory and creative development (Rönkkö & Aerila, 2018), through elements such as motivation, emotion, information processing ability (Tsukawaki & Imura, 2020), participation (Masek et al., 2019), attention, classroom climate (Bakar & Kumar, 2019), group cohesion and socialisation (Dávila, 2019). It is even able to control students' anxiety and inhibition levels (Heidari-Shahreza & Heydari, 2019) by balancing the adrenal hormone cortisol, which is activated when the subject is under stress (Losada & Lacasta, 2019), *reducing* anxiety and fostering a climate of trust and collaboration.

When we talk about the inclusion of humour in education, we are referring to the incorporation of a sense of humour and laughter in the classroom, creating a relaxed and trusting atmosphere with students (Fernández, 2019). In addition, various games and jokes can be incorporated by teachers (Horno-Chéliz, 2022).

Humour can bring positive emotions and moods for students and teachers, thereby improving the relationship between them (Fernández, 2019). Therefore, including humour in education is

© The Author(s), 2026. Published by Cambridge University Press. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution licence (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution and reproduction, provided the original article is properly cited.

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 05 Nov 2026 at 09:34:37, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051726101053

aligned with the methodological principle of approaching the teaching-learning process with a playful character (Porter, 2007 cit. in Fernández, 2019). Thus, teachers who are able to joke in class without losing their leadership role will potentially feel more attached to their group of students. However, negative styles of humour (sarcasm and/or jokes in bad taste) have the opposite effect on students (Vrabel et al., 2017).

The importance of music education in the holistic development of primary school students is widely recognised, given its potential to enhance essential cognitive, emotional and social skills (Hallam, 2010). Humour emerges as a potentially transformative pedagogical strategy, capable of creating motivating and dynamic learning environments, in short, a pleasant working environment (Bakar & Kumar, 2019) as well as strengthening the bonds between teachers and students. Thus, humour can be a catalyst for students to actively participate, express themselves creatively and enjoy the teaching-learning process.

However, it is important to recognise that humour can also create challenges. Aspects such as cultural interpretation, the balance between fun and discipline and the management of ethical boundaries are factors that require special attention in its implementation in the primary classroom. The interaction between humour and music education has not been sufficiently explored, especially from qualitative approaches that consider the direct experiences and perceptions of the educators themselves in this field.

This article aims to deepen our understanding of how music teachers at this level of education perceive and use humour in their classrooms. It is hypothesised that humour not only acts as a catalyst of motivation and well-being for students but also promotes more meaningful and creative musical learning. Several authors mention the importance of including topics such as mental health and emotional balance in education, where the inclusion of humour is an effective element (Marcia et al., 2020).

The findings reveal that humour offers itself as an effective tool for generating a positive classroom environment, fostering the development of creativity and enriching educational experiences in education in general and music in particular. However, the study also highlights certain challenges and limitations associated with the use of humour, highlighting the importance of maintaining a careful balance to ensure that its application is not counterproductive. Through this analysis, it seeks to stimulate a wider debate on the role of humour in music education and its possible pedagogical applications, as well as its integration into teaching practices within the primary school context. This innovative approach aims to provide new perspectives and tools to music education teachers in order to enrich their methodologies and improve the quality of the educational process.

Methodology

The aim of this study is to explore the perceptions of primary music teachers on the use of humour as a pedagogical tool, as well as to identify the strategies used for its implementation in the classroom and the challenges they face in this process. The hypothesis is that humour not only favours the motivation and well-being of pupils but also promotes more meaningful and creative musical learning. To this end, this study has adopted a qualitative approach by introducing semi-structured interviews with the aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of teachers' experiences and perceptions.

Purposive sampling was used to select a sample of $n = 30$ active teachers specialising in music, all belonging to public primary schools in southern Spain. A sample of teachers from the south of Spain was chosen for reasons of convenience and feasibility, as the geographical proximity of the researcher allowed for more efficient data collection and direct contact with the participants.

For the selection process, email addresses of teachers from a total of 50 different public schools in southern Spain were obtained. This process was carried out by directly contacting the school

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 05 Nov 2026 at 09:34:37, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051726101053

principals through the schools' websites. Subsequently, an email was sent with various information about the study to be carried out, an individual consent form and a short questionnaire to collect the following data: (a) socio-demographic information, (b) teaching experience and (c) use of humour in music education, with questions such as 'Do you use humour in your class?' or 'Do you think it is essential to maintain a relaxed atmosphere in your classroom?' The participants were selected by means of purposive sampling. This method sought to include a diversity of profiles that could enrich the results by representing different populations and provide a contemporary perspective on current educational practices in relation to specific variables: (1) experienced versus novice teachers, using five years of experience as a cut-off, (2) urban or rural location and (3) gender, understood in this study as biological sex assigned at birth, with the intention of achieving an equal distribution between men and women. In relation to these variables, the composition of the sample was approximately 70% more experienced teachers (more than five years of service) versus 30% novice teachers. A total of 80% of participants worked in urban areas (cities) in contrast to 20% from rural areas (outside cities), and finally, there is a gender difference with 40% male and 60% female. The final sample was equally distributed in terms of gender, consisting of $n = 15$ males and $n = 15$ females, included in the age range of 25 to 35 years old in order to obtain a fresh and current perspective on educational practices.

Data collection and analysis

Firstly, the sample of study participants was asked to write a free essay on the topic of 'humour in music education'. This action has been used as a complement to collect additional data as well as to facilitate data triangulation, taking advantage of the fact that teachers' essays are a valuable resource to examine their perceptions (Fives & Gill, 2015). Additionally, a detailed semi-structured interview was developed and pre-tested with $n = 3$ individuals from a comparable demographic (three specialist music teachers from other educational centres outside those selected). After making minor adjustments to clarify and reorganise the questions, we proceeded to conduct the interviews, either in person or via video conference. Each interview session lasted between 25 and 35 minutes, during which time each participant's responses were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed. A mixed transcription strategy was employed: *Whisper*, an automatic speech recognition model, was used to generate an initial draft, which was subsequently reviewed and manually corrected by the researchers. This process ensured an accurate and faithful transcription, aligned with the standards of qualitative analysis.

The interviews were specifically designed to explore three key areas:

- Perceptions of the role of humour in music education: this section of the interview seeks to define and understand the teachers' views on the importance and impact of humour in the music education process.
- Strategies for integrating humour in the classroom: specific techniques and methods used by teachers to incorporate playful and humorous elements in their classes were investigated.
- Challenges and constraints in using humour: this part focuses on identifying the obstacles faced by educators in implementing humour in their teaching, as well as possible constraints that may arise.

The questions were elaborated following the guidelines of Gómez et al. (2020), who point out that the interview should be structured through open and adaptable questions that are not strictly delimited, allowing the interviewee to share their personal opinions and emotions in a trusting environment.

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 05 Nov 2026 at 09:34:37, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051726101053

Some questions included in the interview are the following: How do you perceive humour as part of your teaching practice in music education? Is there anything that limits the use of humour in your classes? How do you include humour in your music lessons? Do you think humour influences students' learning?

Subsequently and after anonymising all the data from the sample of participants, *Nvivo* software was used to analyse the data. For the processing of the information collected, a thematic coding method was applied, based on the content analysis approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). This process consisted of the following phases: 1) Familiarisation with the data: through detailed reading of the transcripts and essays, 2) Initial coding: by identifying significant units in the data, 3) Extraction of themes: by grouping codes into relevant thematic categories, 4) Review: assessing the coherence of each of the themes, 5) Definition: developing a clear structure and; 6) Writing the report of results.

This analysis allowed not only to identify common patterns and discrepancies in teachers' perceptions of the use of humour, but also to highlight particular examples and unique cases that enrich the understanding of the topic under study.

The study was conducted in accordance with the fundamental ethical principles of educational research. All participants were informed of the aims, methods and possible implications of the study. They signed an informed consent form, and their anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed. They were reminded that they could withdraw from the study at any time without repercussions.

Results

In this research on the use of humour in primary music education, the analysis revealed common thematic patterns among participants' responses that were deemed relevant, alongside additional perceptions reported by a smaller subset of participants which, although less frequent, were also considered of interest. Participants are identified by numbers ranging from T1 to T30, with selected quotations included to illustrate their views directly. It is noteworthy that the essays written by the participants did not yield new insights beyond those obtained in the interviews; rather, both data sources proved highly consistent. For clarity, the findings are presented in sections organised first by recurrent thematic patterns and subsequently by non-recurrent patterns.

Recurring thematic patterns

Perceptions of the role of humour in music education

Positive classroom environment. The research results indicate that these teachers consider that humour is an essential tool for creating a positive and relaxed classroom environment. Teachers highlighted how humour relieves tension and fosters a welcoming environment. One teacher commented, 'I think humour is essential. Music, like humour, connects with emotions, if I make students laugh, I see them more relaxed and open to learn' (T11). Another added: 'Humour breaks down barriers and makes children feel more comfortable' (T14).

Emotional connection and meaningful learning. Sometimes humour facilitates an emotional connection that improves knowledge retention and motivates participation. One teacher expressed, 'Students retain more information when they feel happy and relaxed'. (T2). In addition, another teacher indicated, 'For me, humour is a tool to teach more effectively, especially abstract concepts. I tell them funny anecdotes related to composers or musical styles, and that makes them remember better' (T30).

Motivation for active participation. Some teachers observed that humour increases students' willingness to participate in potentially intimidating activities, such as playing instruments in

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 05 Nov 2026 at 09:34:37, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051726101053

public. According to one teacher, 'With a joke or a funny song, I can motivate them to try instruments that intimidate them' (T1). Another commented, 'It is a powerful form of motivation. If I can make the class fun, the children are always looking forward to the next lesson' (T28).

Several teachers supported this last premise (T5, T6, T8, T9, T12, T13, T19, T20, T21, T25, T26, T27, T28, T29).

Specific strategies in which they integrate humour into their lessons

Use of humour in creative and collaborative activities. Some teachers implement musical games and challenges that incorporate humorous elements to encourage creativity and cooperation. One teacher explained, 'I use musical games with funny challenges, like singing in the lowest or highest voice possible, and then we evaluate who was the funniest' (T3). Another added, 'We do competitions where they perform rhythms that sound like tongue twisters. We always end up laughing because the most difficult one's sound ridiculous' (T22).

Incorporating humour in the teaching of music theory. Humour can be a valuable tool for teaching music theory in an accessible and entertaining way. According to one participant, 'When I teach music theory, such as rhythmic figures, I make them learn them with made-up songs that are absurdly funny' (T15). In addition, another teacher mentioned, 'I tell them funny anecdotes related to composers or musical styles, and that makes them remember better' (T23).

Character creation and dramatisation. The use of characters and dramatisations to teach musical concepts is another effective strategy observed. One teacher shared, 'I always incorporate characters that become friends who are always singing and having fun together. The students remember it much better' (T17).

Humour through intentional error. Some teachers use intentional mistakes as a way of demystifying error in musical learning. 'Sometimes I make fun of myself, like pretending I don't know how to play a note and then playing something really simple. The children laugh and then try it without fear', explained one interviewee (T29).

Challenges and limitations experienced in using humour

Difficulty in maintaining control of the classroom. Although beneficial, the use of humour needs to be managed carefully to avoid a loss of control. 'Yes, sometimes humour can get out of control in class. A joke can lead to children becoming distracted and difficult to refocus' (T18). This is intensified in large groups, where the risk of disorganisation can increase (T4, T3).

Challenges in adapting humour to different learners. Humour is not universally understood or appreciated. 'Not all students respond to humour in the same way. Some shy children feel uncomfortable or don't understand jokes' (T16). Cultural factors also play a role: 'Cultural humour is a challenge, especially when you have students from different backgrounds' (T24, T23). This requires sensitivity and adaptability on the part of teachers.

Unrealistic expectations on the part of students. The frequent use of humour can lead to unrealistic expectations among students, who may start to expect all lessons to be equally entertaining. 'In some cases, I have noticed that students start to expect everything to be funny, and when I want to deal with something more serious, it is difficult for them to change their approach' (T10) shared one interviewee.

External constraints on humour. Several external factors restrict the use of humour in the classroom, such as the curriculum load and parental expectations. 'Sometimes the curriculum is so full that I don't have time to include more playful activities' (T7), one teacher indicated. Another commented: 'Sometimes humour can seem unprofessional to parents or school management, so I try to tone it down' (T30).

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 05 Nov 2026 at 09:34:37, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051726101053

Non-recurrent thematic patterns

Unique perceptions of the role of humour in music education

Humour and music as parallel emotional tools. Within the sample of participants, some teachers expressed unique insights into the emotional parallels between music and humour. These educators see both as powerful vehicles for connecting emotionally with students and enriching their educational experience. One teacher noted: 'Music and humour are similar in how they touch our emotions and can transform a classroom into a space of joy and discovery' (T9).

Ability of humour to transform education into an enjoyable experience. Another group of teachers stated that humour can turn sessions into desirable learning spaces. 'I use humour not only to teach but to transform each lesson into an experience that students want to live' (T19). This view underlines the potential of humour to enrich the classroom beyond the educational content.

Specific and unique strategies for integrating humour into music education

Creative activities: dramatisation of famous bands and animal impersonation. Within the sample of participants, some teachers have developed particular strategies that use humour in highly creative and unconventional ways. A unique pattern identified is the incorporation of dramatisation activities, such as pretending to be a 'famous band' or imitating how different animals would sing. One educator explained: 'During rehearsals, I ask them to act as if they were a famous band and at the end, we vote on who was the best' (T12). Another commented: 'In singing lessons, I ask them to imitate how an animal would sing. The results are always fun' (T29).

Integrating humour with interdisciplinary approaches. Another unique pattern is the integration of humour through interdisciplinary approaches, particularly by changing song lyrics to incorporate themes from other school subjects. 'I use popular songs and change the lyrics to something funny related to school subjects. They laugh a lot and remember it better' (T16), mentioned one teacher.

Unique challenges and limitations of using humour in music education

Difficulty in deciding the right time to use humour. Another unique challenge mentioned by teachers is determining the right time to use humour, based on the mood and emotional circumstances of the students. 'Personally, I sometimes hesitate when it is the right time to use humour, especially when students are very tired or unmotivated' (T 17) noted one teacher.

Discussion

The analysis of teachers' perceptions, strategies and challenges regarding the use of humour in primary music education highlights both its pedagogical value and the complexities of its classroom implementation. Consistent with previous research (Meyer, 2015; Ruch et al., 2013), humour emerges as a powerful emotional and social catalyst that fosters an empathetic teacher–student bond, creating an environment conducive to active learning. However, this study contributes novel insights by positioning humour and music not merely as separate elements, but as intertwined affective tools that together enhance students' emotional engagement and creativity.

One of the most significant findings is the association between humour and increased student motivation, echoing the constructivist notion that meaningful learning arises in emotionally rich contexts. Humour was perceived not only as a means of capturing attention but as a sustained motivational strategy that supports participation in tasks that might otherwise induce anxiety, such as public performance. This underscores the need to reconceptualise humour not as peripheral or incidental, but as integral to affective pedagogy in the arts.

The strategies identified reveal a form of pedagogical improvisation rooted in responsiveness and play, aligning with Vygotskyan perspectives on the role of play in learning. These practices also reflect aspects of creative pedagogy, where risk-taking, flexibility and emotional safety are

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 05 Nov 2026 at 09:34:37, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051726101053

central (Love & Barret, 2019). Furthermore, the interdisciplinary application of humour positions humour as a transdisciplinary resource that can bridge curricular domains and support holistic learning.

At the same time, the study sheds light on the often-overlooked constraints associated with the use of humour in diverse and demanding educational settings. Teachers voiced concerns about managing group dynamics, negotiating cultural sensitivities and responding to conflicting expectations from parents or school leadership. These findings resonate with Garner's (2006) assertion that humour must be used with intentionality and cultural awareness, particularly in heterogeneous classrooms. The risk of humour becoming counterproductive – either through overuse or misinterpretation – reinforces the importance of equipping teachers with tools for its deliberate and ethical use.

Importantly, the participants' reflections suggest that humour is not a universal or inherently effective tool; rather, its success is context-dependent and mediated by the teacher's sensitivity to the emotional and cultural nuances of the classroom. This has implications for teacher education: professional development should not only address how to employ humour but also when and why, integrating emotional intelligence and intercultural competence into training programmes.

The non-recurrent themes enrich the analysis by offering a glimpse into more experimental and imaginative uses of humour which reflect an embodied and performative pedagogy. These findings invite further inquiry into the relationship between humour and performance in music education and its potential to enhance student self-expression and confidence.

Taken together, the findings call for a shift in the educational discourse on humour, from seeing it as an entertaining digression to recognising it as a complex pedagogical instrument with emotional, cognitive and social dimensions. Future research could explore how humour interacts with other components of classroom climate, such as trust, autonomy and resilience or examine the long-term impact of humour-infused pedagogy on learners' musical identity and engagement. Additionally, cross-cultural studies could illuminate how different humour styles operate in diverse educational contexts, thus informing more inclusive and adaptable teaching strategies.

Conclusion

The use of humour in music teaching in Primary Education is, according to the results of this research, much more than a motivational resource: it is a potentially transformative tool that allows us to generate positive classroom climates, encourage active participation and facilitate more meaningful and memorable learning.

Teachers described practical strategies such as the playful adaptation of songs, dramatisations of musical stories and the deliberate use of exaggerated or intentional mistakes to reduce anxiety and make learning more approachable. Others mentioned the creation of characters or humorous anecdotes which help students retain complex concepts by linking them to enjoyable and relatable experiences. These concrete examples illustrate how humour operates as an emotional bridge, creating a safe space where students feel encouraged to experiment and take creative risks.

This vision reinforces the need to rethink teacher training frameworks, integrating the development of communication skills, emotional intelligence and creative competences as essential dimensions of teaching professionalism. To be effective, humour requires a reflective, contextualised implementation adapted to the diversity of learners. The findings also suggest that promoting humour in the classroom is in line with the European recommendations on teaching competences for the 21st century, which stress the importance of creating safe, emotionally enriching and inclusive learning environments. Furthermore, it aligns with a pedagogy based on well-being, cooperation and holistic student development.

Beyond the music classroom, humour can become a catalyst for positive relationships in the entire educational community. Its use by teachers in other curricular areas, as well as in school

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 05 Nov 2026 at 09:34:37, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051726101053

coexistence spaces, can strengthen group cohesion, reduce conflicts and generate an emotional climate favourable to learning. For families, fostering an environment where humour is welcome contributes to the development of self-esteem and affective communication at home. For their part, management teams can foster more empathetic and participatory school cultures by recognising the value of humour as part of a holistic educational vision.

For all these reasons, we propose the design of teacher training programmes focused on the pedagogical use of humour. These programmes should include aspects such as verbal and non-verbal comedy, the management of the emotional climate in the classroom, the intercultural adaptation of humour and the development of strategies to integrate it into different educational contents and levels. Investing in this type of training not only improves the professional competence of teachers but also contributes to building emotionally intelligent schools oriented towards the overall well-being of their community.

Funding statement. Funding for open access charge: University of Málaga.

References

BAKAR, F. & KUMAR, V. (2019). The use of humour in teaching and learning in higher education classrooms: Lecturers' perspectives. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, **40**, 15–25. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2019.04.006.

BRAUN, V. & CLARKE, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, **3**(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.

DÁVILA, L. T. (2019). "J'aime to be funny!": Humor, learning, and identity construction in high school English as a second language classrooms. *The Modern Language Journal*, **103**(2), 502–514. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12557.

FERNÁNDEZ, A. (2019). Educación: Competencias, emociones y humor, perspectivas y estudios. *Educación y Humanismo*, **21**(37), 51–66. https://doi.org/10.17081/eduhum.21.37.3365.

FIVES, H. & GILL, M. G. (2015). *International Handbook of Research on Teachers' Beliefs*. Abingdon: Routledge.

GARNER, R. L. (2006). Humor in pedagogy: How ha-ha can lead to aha! *College Teaching*, **54**(1), 177–180. https://doi.org/10.3200/CTCH.54.1.177-180.

GÓMEZ-NÚÑEZ, I., CANO-MUÑOZ, Á. & TORREGROSA, S. (2020). *Manual para investigar en educación: guía para orientadores y docentes indagadores* (vol. **225**). Narcea Ediciones.

HALLAM, S. (2010). El poder de la música: Su impacto en el desarrollo intelectual, social y personal de niños y jóvenes. *Revista internacional de educación musical*, **28**(3), 269–289.

HEIDARI-SHAHREZA, M. A. & HEYDARI, S. (2019). Humor-integrated language learning: A teacher's and student's perspective. *Tesol Journal*, **10**(1), 1–4. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.376.

HORNO-CHÉLIZ, M. C. (2022). Enseñar morgología en Educación Secundaria de un modo inductivo. El humor como herramienta del análisis morfológico. *Tejuelo*, **35**(1), 137–174. https://doi.org/10.17398/1988-8430.35.1.137.

LOSADA, A. V. & LACASTA, M. (2019). Sentido del Humor y sus Beneficios en Salud. *Calidad de Vida y Salud*, **12**(1), 2–22.

LOVE, K. G., & BARRETT, M. S. (2019). Signature pedagogies for musical practice: A case study of creativity development in an orchestral composers' workshop. *Psychology of Music*, **47**(4), 551–567. https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735618765317.

MARCIA MARITZA, A. O., LIBIA IRENE, A. O. & ADISNUBIA BOUE, A (2020). *Aula se escribe con H de humor*. Edumed Holguin.

MASEK, A., HASHIM, S. & ISMAIL, A. (2019). Integration of the humour approach with student's engagement in teaching and learning sessions. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, **45**(2), 228–233. https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2018.1548169.

MEYER, J. C. (2015). *Understanding Humor through Communication: Why Be Funny, Anyway?* Lexington Books.

RÖNKKÖ, M. L. & AERILA, J. A. (2018). Humor supporting preschoolers in designing and making crafts. *FormAkademisk*, **11**(2), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.7577/formakademisk.1858

RUCH, W., HOFMANN, J. & PLATT, T. (2013). The emotional functions of humor. In W. Ruch (Ed.), *The Sense of Humor: Explorations of a Personality Characteristic* (pp. 85–107). Berlin: Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110245485.85

TSUKAWAKI, R. & IMURA, T. (2020). Preliminary verification of instructional humor processing theory: Mediators between instructor humor and student learning. *Psychological Reports*, **123**(6), 2538–2550. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033294119868799.

VRABEL, J. K., ZEIGLER-HILL, V. & SHANGO, R. G. (2017). Spiteful and humor styles. *Personality and Individual Differences*, **105**, 238–243. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2016.10.001.

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 05 Nov 2026 at 09:34:37, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051726101053

Appendix: Semi-structured interview script

Title of the study: The pedagogy of humour in music education: perceptions of teachers in southern Spain.

Aim of the interview: To explore the perceptions, strategies and challenges of primary music teachers in relation to the use of humour as a pedagogical tool in the classroom.

Block 1. Perceptions of the role of humour in music education

- How do you perceive humour as part of your teaching practice in music education?
- What role do you think humour plays in student learning?
- Do you think that the use of humour influences the motivation of your students?

Block 2. Strategies for integrating humour in the classroom

- How do you include humour in your music lessons?
- Could you describe a specific activity in which you have used humour as a pedagogical tool?
- Do you adapt your humour according to the group or the time of the school year? How do you decide?

Block 3. Challenges and limitations in using humour

- Have you had experiences where the use of humour has led to confusion, misunderstanding or loss of control in the classroom?
- Do you think there are cultural or personal differences that affect the way students respond to humour?
- Do you find it difficult to balance the use of humour with curricular objectives?
- Are there times when you feel it is not appropriate to use humour, and could you give an example?

Closing the interview

- Would you like to add any personal reflections on the use of humour in music education that we have not addressed?

Cite this article: Bravo-Fuentes P (2026). The pedagogical value of humour in music education: perceptions of primary school teachers in Southern Spain. *British Journal of Music Education* 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051726101053

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 05 Nov 2026 at 09:34:37, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051726101053