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Abstract

This work undertakes an empirical study of one of the least researched issues in interlanguage pragmatics so far: comprehension of jokes by Spanish learners of English as a second language (L2, henceforth). It seeks to examine whether these learners grasp the humor some joking texts are intended to produce, which types of jokes prove to be more difficult to understand and why. Adopting a relevance-theoretic perspective on comprehension, and, more precisely, the model of comprehension envisaged in the cognitive-pragmatic framework put forward by Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995), this work relies on the classification of jokes recently proposed by Yus (2016), where jokes are sorted out into seven different types depending on three parameters which are purportedly exploited by humorists in their creation and are, therefore, responsible for their triggering the expected effect. Consequently, this work presents the results obtained through an online questionnaire that was administered to students of English as an L2 with an upper-intermediate, B2 level who were enrolled in one of the compulsory courses of the Degree in English Studies taught at the Universidad de Sevilla. Owing to its limitations, this work cannot but be considered an initial, exploratory study that aims to spark off further research contributing to a better and deeper understanding of the problems that L2 learners may face when processing humorous texts.

1. Introduction.

As a rather vibrant linguistic discipline, pragmatics has addressed a plethora of phenomena and issues pertaining to language use in context. Over the years, it has given rise to various branches, sub-disciplines or offsprings, one of which is *interlanguage pragmatics* (Kasper & Dahl 1991; Kasper & Rose 1993). Emerging as an attempt to apply pragmatic research to the study of second language acquisition (SLA), it analyzes how pragmatic knowledge and skills are acquired and develop, examines L2 learners' pragmatic knowledge and performance in their target language(s), delves into individual differences in the acquisition of L2 pragmatics, and considers the factors that may have an impact on it. With a quick and impressive growth, interlanguage pragmatics has extensively looked into L2 learners' productive skills and contributed very insightful studies on, for instance, speech-act realization (e.g., Blum-Kulka and Levenston 1987; Beebe et al. 1990; Jaworski 1994), turn-taking management (e.g., Kasper 2006), or the production of conventionalized formulas or routines (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig 2012), to name but a few¹. Regrettably, less attention has been given to the study of comprehension, even if there are notable exceptions like some works on implicature comprehension (Bouton 1994), comprehension of indirect refusals and opinions (Taguchi 2012), or on meta-psychological awareness of comprehension and the so-called *epistemic vigilance* (Padilla Cruz 2013b), to name but some.

Humor is a complex and intriguing phenomenon that has manifold manifestations, fulfils significant social functions (Yus 2016), and has been approached from diverse perspectives, among which is pragmatics (see below §2.2.1). Pragmatists have addressed how humorous reactions arise in stand-up comedies (e.g., Yus 2002), how cartoons achieve their intended effects (e.g., El Refaie 2011), the peculiarities of puns and how they are processed (e.g., Solska 2012), or the role of vigilance mechanisms in the interpretation of puns (Padilla Cruz 2015). However, if there is a manifestation of humor that has attracted much attention, that is undeniably jokes (Yus 1997a, 1998b, 2003, 2013a, 2013b, 2016). Unfortunately, despite the wealth of research from a pragmatic angle, comprehension of humor in general and of jokes in particular do not seem to have arisen the curiosity of practitioners in interlanguage pragmatics.

The current work aims to fill this gap. It is an empirical study that intends to serve as a preliminary insight into how learners of English as an L2 understand jokes. It purports to

¹ For a more complete overview of interlanguage pragmatics studies focusing on learners' L2 production, see Padilla Cruz (2013a).

investigate (i) if such learners perceive the humor that texts devised as jokes intend to generate, (ii) if such learners experience difficulties when coping with various types of jokes, and (iii), if so, which factors account for their comprehension problems. This work is grounded, on the one hand, on relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995), a cognitive-pragmatic framework of human communication that conceives of comprehension as an inferential activity consisting of various simultaneous sub-conscious tasks and offers a plausible and realistic model thereof. Its postulates have been widely applied to account for humor. On the other hand, this work is based on the relevance-theoretic taxonomy of jokes proposed by Yus (2013a, 2013b, 2016), which distinguishes seven types of jokes on the basis of how three crucial parameters are exploited by humorists with a view to generating laughter and amusement. Owing to its nature, this work relies on data collected by means of a specifically designed questionnaire, which exposed the participants in this study to samples of each of the types of jokes differentiated by Yus (2013a, 2013b, 2016).

This work is structured into five sections. Section 1 will offer an overview of relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995), briefly present some of the frameworks from which humor has been accounted for, and review the relevance-theoretic approach to humor in general and jokes in particular. When so doing, the classification of jokes this work relies on will be explained. Next, Section 3 will comprise the methodology followed in this work in order to assess comprehension of jokes by learners of English as an L2. Therefore, this section will describe the data-collection tool, the selected participants, the data-collection process, and the procedures for data analysis. Then, Section 4 will present and discuss the results obtained in a quantitative and qualitative manner. Finally, section 5 will offer some conclusions and directions for future research.

2. Understanding Verbal Humor

The purpose of this study is to investigate humor comprehension by Spanish learners of ESL. Although humor research has a long and distinguished history dating back to Plato and Aristotle, it was not until the structuralist movement that attempts were made to present a linguistic theory of humor. The appearance of Raskin's (1985) *Semantic-Script Theory of Humor (SSTH, henceforth)* established that all humor involves a semantic-pragmatic process, but many other authors have subsequently put forth new models relying on pragmatics. Back in the eighties, Sperber & Wilson (1981) suggested a revision of Grice's (1957, 1975) ideas regarding communication and his maxim-based approach to it, which led them to formulate a very influential

theory in contemporary pragmatics: *relevance theory* (Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995; Wilson & Sperber 2002, 2004). Its cognitive apparatus and conceptualization of communication explain the process of comprehension and has been applied to humor comprehension, so it proves appropriate to investigate how learners understand humor.

The theoretical part of this work is divided into two sections. The first one is dedicated to introducing the theoretical tenets of relevance theory, reviewing its purpose and foundations, and explaining the new model of comprehension that it proposes. The second section is devoted to humor. After briefly reviewing some of the most influential models approaching it from various perspectives, this section centers on proposals based on the idea that humor relies on the presence of an incongruity and its resolution. Emphasis is then given to Yus's (2013a, 2013b, 2016) view of humor, whose taxonomy of jokes will be discussed and exemplified, as it will set the basis for the empirical study undertaken in this work.

2.1. Relevance theory

First proposed in 1986, revised in 1995 and revisited several times afterwards, relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995; Wilson & Sperber 2002, 2004) is based on an essential idea: that communication is an intentional activity that gives rise to expectations which help us decide the message that the communicator intends to convey (Clark 2013: 4). Relying on a new conception of communication, it seeks to unravel (i) how hearers process linguistically encoded utterances, (ii) how they understand meanings explicitly/implicitly communicated, and (iii) why interlocutors may misunderstand each other. The following subsections center on the precedents and foundations of Relevance theory, a review of the key notions of this cognitive model, and a definition of the tenets of this model of comprehension.

2.1.1. *A new conception of communication*

Theories of communication can be roughly divided into the *code model* and the *inferential model*. The former model portrays communication as a process of encoding and decoding messages, where the speaker encodes her intended message into a signal that will be received and decoded by the hearer (see Shannon and Weaver 1949). The inferential model, in contrast, conceives of communication as a process based on recognition of intentions, as Grice (1957, 1975) postulated. Upon speaking, the speaker provides indirect evidence –i.e., encoded, so it amounts to what Grice

(1957) labelled *non-natural meaning* ($meaning_{NN}$)– of her² intention to convey a certain meaning, which must then be worked out through inference by the audience on the basis of the evidence provided.

Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) offer a much more complex view of communication. They depict it as an *ostensive-inferential* activity involving a first-order *informative intention*, or the speaker’s intention to make a set of assumptions or beliefs *manifest* to the audience –i.e., to cause the audience to mentally represent the intended message– and a higher-order *communicative intention*, or the speaker’s intention that the audience recognize that she has a specific informative intention. *Manifestness* refers to the possibility of an assumption or belief to be mentally represented. Hence, there are degrees of manifestness, as long as individuals may be more or less likely to represent assumptions or beliefs, and assumptions or beliefs may be manifest without being actually entertained (Clark 2013: 114-115). The set of assumptions that are manifest to an individual make up his *cognitive environment* (Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995: 39). When a set of assumptions is manifest to two or more individuals, it is *mutually manifest* to them and they share a *mutual cognitive environment*.

Communication is ‘ostensive’ because it provides evidence for and triggers the attribution of the speaker’s communicative and informative intentions. This attribution is possible thanks to individuals’ *mindreading* skills or *theory of mind* abilities, which are the “[...] abilities to attribute mental states to others in order to explain and predict their behavior” (Wilson & Sperber 2002: 275-277), required to arrive at plausible interpretations of utterances. On the other hand, communication is ‘inferential’ because, from the hearer’s point of view, it involves making inferences about the intentions of the speaker. Moreover, Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) portray communication as an *overt* activity in which the speaker actively aids the hearer to recognize her two intentions and, thus, the intended message (Wilson 1993: 350-353).

2.1.2. *Key assumptions and notions*

Relevance theory assumes that (i) utterances have a variety of possible interpretations compatible with the information linguistically encoded, even if those interpretations are not equally accessible; (ii) the order in which the hearer accesses possible interpretations is predictable; (iii) hearers are

² Following a relevance-theoretic convention, reference to the speaker is made through the feminine 3rd person singular pronoun, while reference to the hearer is made through the masculine counterpart.

count with a criterion for testing interpretations; and (iv) this criterion is powerful enough to exclude all but one interpretation (Wilson 1993: 345-346). What makes the hearer select a particular interpretation is a property of information: *relevance*. This is defined as a function of two factors: *cognitive* or *contextual effects*, and *cognitive* or *processing effort*.

Cognitive effects would be achieved when new information interacts with existing assumptions by *strengthening* previous ones, *contradicting* and eliminating them, or yielding *contextual implications*, which is information that can only be derived from the joint interaction of both old and new information. Therefore, the more the cognitive effects an interpretation of an utterance yields, the higher its relevance. On the other hand, cognitive or processing effort is the mental energy invested in the cognitive tasks performed during comprehension, which include the selection of a suitable interpretive *context* and *mutual parallel adjustment* (Sperber & Wilson 1997, 1998; Carston 2002; Wilson & Sperber 2002, 2004). In relevance theory, the interpretive context is a mental entity that is not limited to the linguistic co-text or the physical setting, but includes all background assumptions that may be mentally represented and used in comprehension. It comprises cultural knowledge, common-sense assumptions and idiosyncratic information. This context is not stable, but may be restricted or expanded. As regards mutual parallel adjustment, it is the process during which various simultaneous, non-sequential inferences are made in order to develop decoded input³. Cognitive or processing effort depends on the psychological complexity of utterances, which stems from its linguistic structure or the occurrence of unusual or difficult words. This effort also depends on how quickly or easily hearers search for and find the necessary or appropriate information to process an utterance, i.e., on the amount of time they devote and the difficulties they face when selecting an adequate interpretive context. Consequently, the more complex an utterance is, the more effort it requires; and the greater the effort required, the less relevant the utterance is.

Accordingly, an interpretation is *relevant* to an individual when it yields a satisfactory amount of *positive cognitive effects* in exchange for a reasonable amount of cognitive effort (Wilson 1993: 345-348). Positive cognitive effects are epistemic improvements or an increase in knowledge resulting from the connection of relevant information and an individual's existing representation of the world, and contribute positively to the fulfilment of cognitive functions or goals (Sperber & Wilson 1995: 265-266). The hearer's mind determines whether a particular interpretation is

³ See 2.1.4 for a more detailed explanation of *mutual parallel adjustment*.

relevant or not on the basis of the cognitive benefits that processing provides and the amount of effort expenditure, even though the human mind does not compute such benefits and effort quantitatively, but intuitively.

In turn, an interpretation is irrelevant when it yields no positive cognitive effect in a particular context. According to Sperber and Wilson (1995: 120-121), there are three cases in which information –and, by extension, interpretations– may turn out irrelevant:

- a) When information, despite providing new knowledge, is not connected with the interpretive context.
- b) When information, albeit related to the interpretive context, is inconsistent with it or is too weak to modify it.
- c) When information is already present in the interpretive context and its strength is unaffected by other available information.

The notion of relevance is the cornerstone of Sperber and Wilson’s (1986/1995) cognitive pragmatic framework. It is so important that it will lead the authors to propose two universal principles based on it.

2.1.3. *The principles of relevance*

Evolution enabled human cognitive mechanisms to get adjusted to the environment, providing the human brain with the ability to monitor our surroundings automatically. The human mind seems to have evolved in such a way that it seeks to maximize the relevance of the stimuli that it processes by making the most efficient use of the available processing resources in order to get the maximum benefit possible. This leads Sperber and Wilson to claim that the mind always tends to search for an *optimal* level of relevance, an idea that is captured in the *First, or Cognitive, Principle of Relevance*: “Human cognition is oriented towards the maximization of relevance” (1995: 260). Our perceptual system monitors the environment for relevant stimuli, our memories are organized in a way that we will retrieve relevant background information, and our inferential systems are set up so as to maximize the cognitive effects (Clark 2013: 106-107).

This first principle is the foundation of the *Second, or Communicative, Principle of Relevance*, which applies to the ostensive-inferential communication: “Every utterance conveys a presumption of its own optimal relevance” (Sperber & Wilson, 1995: 260). Such a *presumption of optimal relevance* involves that: (a) an utterance is relevant enough to be worth the audience’s processing

effort; and (b) the utterance is the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences (Sperber & Wilson 1995, 2002: 256-259). In other words, since messages that are not in hearers' best interest will be interpreted as irrelevant, speakers will always attempt to communicate information that they think will be relevant, but depending on their communicative skills, their knowledge of the world and their preferences (see Mazzarella 2013: 23).

Accordingly, the act of communicating always creates particular expectations in hearers: *expectations of optimal relevance* (Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995; Wilson 1999; Wilson & Sperber 2002, 2004), or the presupposition that there will always be an interpretation that the hearer will find worthwhile to recover in exchange for a reasonable amount of effort (Clark (2013: 91). Once the hearer arrives at a satisfactory interpretation, he will think that such an interpretation is the intended one and stop processing. The first interpretation tested to satisfy the two conditions of relevance will be the one the hearer opts for as it is *consistent with the principle of relevance* (Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995; Wilson & Sperber 2002, 2004).

In order to illustrate these claims, consider (1) (from Yus 2016: 17):

- (1) *Tom*: [1] Would you like a hamburger?
Ann: [2a] No, thanks.
[2b] I am a vegetarian.

From among all the possible answers that Ann could give to Tom, [2a] is relatively explicit and direct, and requires little processing effort, while [2b] does not explicitly and directly respond to his offer. It is more demanding in terms of effort because Tom has to access encyclopedic knowledge regarding vegetarian people in order to draw an implicit conclusion about what Ann eats and cannot eat, which accounts for a refusal interpretation. Although [2b] involves more effort investment, this is balanced with additional cognitive effects, in this case a contextual implication to the effect that Ann is not only refusing Tom's offer, but also giving the reason why she does so. Therefore, [2b] is more relevant.

2.1.4. *A new model of comprehension*

Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) and some of their followers, more specifically Carston (2002), react against the code model by arguing that comprehension involves much more than simply decoding. This led them to propose a more complex model thereof, according to which the human mind carries out simultaneous, parallel, non-sequential, sub-conscious, almost automatic and extremely fast tasks that mobilize various mental (sub-)modules that are part of the more general

mindreading module (Wilson 1999). These tasks make up the process of *mutual parallel adjustment* of explicit and implicit content, and are always guided by the perennial search for optimal relevance (Carston 2002; Wilson & Sperber 2002, 2004).

The aim of mutual parallel adjustment is to determine (i) what the speaker intends to communicate explicitly, (ii) what she intends to communicate implicitly, and (iii) what contextual information she expects the hearer to be able to access in order to arrive at explicit and implicit contents (Yus 2016: 19). Through it, the mind turns a schematic linguistically encoded stimulus – namely, an utterance– which is underspecified or underdeterminate, into a fully contextualized proposition. The output of mutual parallel adjustment is an interpretive hypothesis. The tasks it subsumes are detailed in what follows (Sperber & Wilson 2002, 2004: 615).

2.1.4.1. Construction of an appropriate hypothesis about explicit content

In Sperber and Wilson's (1986/1995) relevance-theoretic terms, the formulation of a hypothesis about the explicit content of an utterance is a complex process requiring more inferential work. Indeed, decoding only yields a very schematic *logical form* –i.e. an organized chunk of conceptual representations (Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995)– which is not fully propositional, so it must be inferentially developed through a series of tasks (Carston 2002, 2009; Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995; Wilson & Sperber 2002, 2004).

One of such tasks is *disambiguation*. It involves the selection of one sense out of the two or more potential senses of a word, as in the case of synonyms or homophones like that in (2), and the selection of one reading of a syntactic chunk, as in (3), where the syntactically ambiguous sentence (a) can be interpreted as either (b) or (c) (Carston 2002: 27):

- (2) John and Bill passed the *port* in the evening. [harbor/wine?] (from Huang 2014: 276)
- (3) a. He's an indiscriminate dog-lover; he likes some cats and dogs.
 - b. He likes [[some cats] and dogs].
 - c. He likes [some [cats and dogs]].

Additionally, the mind needs to carry out two sorts of tasks, which Jary (2016: 25) sorts out into those that are linguistically mandated and those that are not linguistically mandated. Linguistically mandated tasks are known as *saturation* and comprise, on the one hand, assignment of reference to personal, anaphoric and cataphoric pronouns, space and time deictics, or proper nouns by taking into account appropriate contextual information. In the case of pronouns and deictics, reference assignment is constrained by the *procedures* or computational instructions that these linguistic elements encode, which restrict the searching space for potential candidates (Blakemore 1992;

Wilson & Sperber 1993). Thus, in an utterance like that in (4), the hearer will have to assign reference to ‘she’, ‘there’, ‘her’, and ‘Thomas’ by relying on manifest information:

(4) *She was there with her and with Thomas.* [Mary was at the party with Helen and Thomas Smith] (from Yus 2016: 23)

On the other hand, saturation comprises certain inferential expansions contingent on extra-linguistic information and necessary to arrive at the explicit content of utterances (Carston 2009), like that in (5) below:

(5) Paracetamol is better. [than what?]

Non-linguistically mandated developments of a logical form are known as *free enrichment* and include two tasks:

A) Supplying of unarticulated constituents like the location or time frame of an action or state of affairs, as in the case of (6):

- (6) a. I’ve had a shower.
b. I’ve had a shower [today] (from Carston 2009)

B) *Lexical or conceptual adjustment.* The concepts encoded by content or open-class words – i.e., nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives– are not stable, but mutable and malleable (Barsalou 1983). Through this task, the denotation of the concept is either *narrowed* or *restricted* towards something more specific, or *loosened* or *broadened* towards something less specific (Carston 2002: 321-349; Sperber & Wilson 1998; Wilson 2003; Wilson & Carston 2007). In (7) the denotation of the rather general concept DEPRESSED⁴ may allude to different degrees of the referred emotion, so it must be restricted as meaning just ‘a bit low’, ‘very low’ or ‘suicidal’ (Huang 2014: 279):

(7) John is *depressed*.

If conceptual adjustment results in a one-off, occasion-specific denotation, the concept becomes an *ad hoc* one (Carston 2002, 2004).

The result of these tasks is the *lower-level* or *first-order explicature* of an utterance, i.e., the proposition expressed by it or the propositional content that it communicates (Wilson & Sperber 1993: 5-6). It is a proposition that is more explicit than the logical form, from which it is obtained through inferential development, and has truth conditions. The lower-level explicature of an

⁴ Following a relevance-theoretic convention, encoded concepts are notated in small caps.

utterance can further be embedded under a conceptual schema capturing the speaker's attitude when speaking or towards what she says (8), or the action that she is taking to perform in saying what she says (9):

- (8) Mary is happy that (p)
- (9) Mary wants/complains/says (p).

Such a conceptual schema is the *higher-level* or *second-order explicature*: “[...] a particular kind of explicature [...] which involves embedding the propositional form of the utterance or one of its constituent propositional forms under a higher-level description such as a speech-act description, a propositional attitude description or some other comment on the embedded proposition” (Carston 2002: 377). Mary's reply to Bill's question in (10) below might have the lower-level explicature in (11a) and the higher-level explicatures in (11b-d) (Carston 2002: 119):

- (10) *Bill*: Did your son visit you at the weekend?
Mary (visibly happy): He did.
- (11) a. Mary's son visited her at the weekend.
b. Mary says that her son visited her at the weekend.
c. Mary believes that her son visited her at the weekend.
d. Mary is happy that her son visited her at the weekend.

2.1.4.2. Construction of an appropriate hypothesis about implicit meaning

Part of mutual parallel adjustment consists in hypothesizing about the possible implicit contents communicated by an utterance or, in other words, its implicatures. Relevance-theoretic pragmatics distinguishes two kinds of implicatures:

- a) *Implicated premises*, which are the contextual information items that need to be fed to an inferential process by the hearer. They make up a subset of the contextual assumptions that are used in processing (Carston 2002: 135-136), but some of them are intended or expected by the speaker (Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995; Wilson & Sperber 2002, 2004).
- b) *Implicated conclusions*, which are the assumptions or beliefs resulting from relating the explicit import of an utterance with implicated premises in inferential processes. They amount to contextual implications that are communicated by the speaker or, what is the same, to the implicit meaning that the speaker wants to transmit. They are derived entirely inferentially by the hearer from the given set of premises (Carston 2002: 135; Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995; Wilson & Sperber 2002, 2004).

An implicature is “[...] a communicated assumption which is derived solely via processes of pragmatic interference”, and thus “[...] is either an implicated premise or an implicated conclusion”

(Carston 2002: 377). Hypotheses about explicit content, implicated premises and implicated conclusions are developed in parallel, since implicated premises are accessed and supplied as part of the contextual information that is needed to deduce the implicated conclusions (Wilson & Sperber 2013). Accordingly, in the following conversation (12) the two possible implicated premises in (13) give rise to the implicated conclusion that Tom really wants to communicate (from Yus 2016: 29):

- (12) *John:* Would you like a beer?
 Tom: I am a Muslim.
- (13) *Implicated premises:*
 a. Beer is an alcoholic drink.
 b. Muslims do not drink alcohol.
 Implicated conclusion: Tom does not want a beer.

John has to be aware that beer is an alcoholic drink and that Muslims do not drink alcohol in order to draw the implicated conclusion that follows deductively from (17a-b) combined with the utterance expressed by Tom.

All in all, the series of tasks presented here offers a picture of comprehension as an extremely complex process mainly contingent on (i) the completion and development of incomplete logical forms through the general mindreading module of the brain, and specifically the inference module, in order to construct explicatures, and (ii) the derivation of implicated conclusions through access to implicated premises. In these two steps the mind is always guided by the expectations of relevance that utterances automatically trigger, so it selects the least effort-demanding and most effect-yielding options in each of the tasks in mutual parallel adjustment (see Wilson 1999; Wilson & Sperber 2002, 2004).

The relevance-theoretic postulates and ideas have been applied to many areas and domains, such as media discourse (e.g., Yus 1998b, 2001), translation (e.g., Gutt 2000), politeness (e.g., Jary 1998), figurative language (e.g., Wilson and Sperber 1992) or humor (e.g., Yus 2003). The following section will show how this cognitive framework has been applied to humorous communication and how it explains the interpretation of jokes.

2.2. Humor

Humor is a typically social phenomenon of our society, which is frequent in many aspects of our daily life, and it is shaped differently depending on the culture. Even though Sperber and Wilson's (1986/1995) cognitive pragmatic framework was not proposed to address sociocultural aspects of

communication, but to account for the mental processes taking place when turning linguistically encoded input into a relevant interpretation, it is suited to deal with many of such aspects, that arise as a result of the information accessed during comprehension or how the tasks in mutual parallel adjustment are carried out.

After briefly discussing various models proposed to account for humor, this section will adopt a relevance-theoretic standpoint in order to account for how jokes are built and result in humor. Then, it will present a classification of jokes based on relevance-theoretic postulates and three cognitive parameters or variables (Yus 2013a, 2013b, 2016). This classification will be the one on which the empirical study presented in this work relies.

2.2.1. *Models analyzing humorous discourse*

Over the last decades, many models have been proposed to explain humor from psychology and pragmatics. In a classical pragmatic view, several authors have attempted to understand humor from a Gricean angle (Attardo 1990, 1993, 1994; Morreall 1982). On a different approach, three major theories of humor have been proposed (Morreall 2009b), such as *Superiority Theory* (Morreall 1987; Yus 2016); *Relief (or Release) Theory* (Morreall 1987; Yus 2016), or *Incongruity-Resolution Theory* (IR, henceforth) (Suls 1977, 1983). IR theory is probably the most influential model and has distinct offshoots, such as Koestler's (1964) *bisociation theory*, or Ritchie's (1999, 2000, 2004, 2006) *forced reinterpretation model*.

Another quite influential offshoot of IR is Raskin's (1985) *Semantic Script Theory of Humor* (SSTH, henceforth). In this model, joke-telling is a specific kind of *non-bona-fide* communication that violates Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle and the conversational maxims set for the *bona-fide* (i.e. normal, usual, information-bearing) communication (Attardo & Raskin 1991: 308). Consequently, Attardo and Raskin (1991) proposed the so-called *General Theory of Verbal Humor* (GTVH, henceforth), which integrates Raskin's SSTH with a five-level representation model of jokes previously proposed by Attardo (1988; 1994). In addition, Dynel (2012a, 2012b) differentiated three types of mechanisms enabling construction and interpretation of jokes: (a) *Garden-path mechanism*; b) *Red-light mechanism*, (c) *Crossroads mechanisms*.

The relevance-theoretic approach to humor that this work endorses is based and shares some of the assumptions of IR models. As Yus (2016: 66) points out, "RT[relevance theory] can provide a valid cognitive explanation of why certain senses of words are selected (and eventually rejected),

or why certain framings of the situations depicted in the joke can be manipulated for the sake of incongruity [...] in order to generate humorous effects”. It is precisely for these reasons that its cognitive approach to humorous phenomena and their comprehension has been selected for the purposes of this study.

2.2.2. Relevance-theoretic approach(es) to jokes

Relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995; Wilson & Sperber 2002, 2004) is perfectly suited to explain why a particular sense of a word or a syntactic structure is selected, and others are dismissed, or why an interpretation is constructed and chosen, but not others. The complexity of a joke plays a part in funniness, together with the level of incongruity and the time that the hearer needs to solve it.

The relevance-theoretic ideas about communication and its conception of comprehension were firstly applied to analyze humor and, more specifically, jokes by Jodłowiec (1991) and Curcó (1995a, 1995b, 1997a, 1997b, 1998). Jodłowiec (1991) proposed that in jokes there normally is a setting that favors an interpretation that appears plausible and easy, but then such an interpretation is challenged by a subsequent. In turn, Curcó (1997a: Chapter 5) highlights that “(H1) and (H2) are not two competing interpretations, as [Jodłowiec] initially seems to suggest. Rather, each one is an interpretation of a different utterance”.

However, the most complete relevance-theoretic analysis of humor has been made by Yus (1997a, 1998c, 2003b, 2016), one of the most prominent scholars currently approaching humor in general and jokes in particular from a cognitive perspective. His approach is based on the following assumptions stated by Wilson (1994: 44): (a) every utterance has many possible interpretations compatible with the linguistically encoded information; (b) some of these interpretations take more effort to think up and more time to process; (c) hearers are endowed with a criterion for evaluating interpretations; (d) this criterion is powerful enough to exclude all but one single interpretation.

He suggests that jokes tend to be assigned a first accessible interpretation in terms of the balance of cognitive effects and mental effort in what he labels the *multiple-graded-interpretations part* of the joke, or MGI for short (Yus 2003: 1309). This initial part has multiple interpretations that are graded on the grounds of their accessibility, but the hearer is often led to select a first and seemingly optimally relevant one in that part. Then, the humorist creates an incongruity that has to be resolved by the hearer. Its resolution depends on the recovery of a covert interpretation which, despite its

unlikeliness, is compatible with the rest of the text. Since hearers tend to stop their interpretive process upon reaching a first interpretation appearing optimally relevant, covert or latent interpretations are not taken into account until the humorist foregrounds them in what Yus labels the *single-covert-interpretation* part of the joke, or SCI part for short (2003: 1309).

Humor arises as a consequence of the following factors (Yus 2003, 2008, 2016):

- a) *Pragmatic ambivalence*, or the fact that phrases, sentences, textual stretches or whole texts can have (many) possible interpretations as a consequence of the various outputs of each of the tasks in mutual parallel adjustment.
- b) *Saliency* (Giora 1998, 1999, 2003), which is the likelihood for an interpretation to be constructed immediately, relatively effortlessly, regardless of contextual bias or speaker's intent. Salient interpretations come to the mind of hearers much more easily and quickly, and hence tend to appear optimally relevant.
- c) *Relevance*, inasmuch as every utterance communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance. In the case of jokes, the humorist will push the hearer or her audience into assuming an eventual level of relevance. Jokes will have a positive interpretive outcome when hearers realize that they need to go well beyond the comprehension of a non-humorous utterance, but the amusement and laughter that they will experience will certainly make up for the additional effort required.

Moreover, humor can be generated thanks to three different human abilities or tendencies:

- d) *Mind-reading abilities*, or the abilities to predict the mental states and inferential paths of other individuals. This enables humorists to select the stimulus that best suits their purposes, anticipating what their interlocutor will understand and adapting her discourse to this intended interpretation.
- e) The human tendency to *solve incongruities*. Human cognition is prone to solving the incongruities that may come across when interpreting a discourse. This tendency partly stems from the fact that incongruous utterances are more challenging to the hearer and attract greater attention than congruous ones (Yus 2016: 307). Humorists often exploit these leanings to solve incongruities and the incongruity-resolution formula in cases such as word disambiguation or reference assignment.
- f) *Vigilance mechanisms*. The information that humans communicate may be true, false, incomplete, or ambiguous, and consequently, the hearer can either believe or discredit it

and/or his informants (Mascaro & Sperber 2009; Sperber et al. 2010; Padilla Cruz 2012). However, the human mind seems to have developed complex mental mechanisms targeted at the sources and content of information. These mechanisms make up some mental modules that prevent deception and/or misinformation by alerting the hearer to misleading information or informants. Relying on factors such as emotional dispositions, inherited norms, informants' age and reputation, among others (Michaelian 2013; Origgi 2013), they trigger an attitude of *epistemic vigilance* which makes it possible for hearers not to blindly believe informants and the information that they dispense (Mascaro and Sperber 2009; Sperber et al. 2010).

These cognitive mechanisms would also encompass mechanisms specialized in warning against misinterpretation. In this case, they would trigger an attitude of *hermeneutical vigilance* (Padilla Cruz 2014, 2016). While epistemic vigilance protects from deception, hermeneutical vigilance alerts hearers to wrong reference assignment, erroneous conceptual adjustment, infelicitous disambiguation, mistaken recovery of unarticulated constituents, etc. This is essential for determining the acceptability of a given interpretative hypothesis and regarding it as actually intended⁵ (Padilla Cruz 2016: 25). Regarding humor, vigilance mechanisms must play an important role in the interpretation of jokes by “alerting the audience to an interpretation that cannot be trusted as intended and triggering the search for (an) additional less salient interpretation(s)” (Padilla Cruz 2015: 14).

This work endorses the relevance-theoretic ideas about humor in general and jokes in particular. However, since it focuses on the comprehension of jokes, a specific model is needed that accounts for how jokes are constructed and work, as well as explaining their types and peculiarities. Such a model has also been proposed by Yus (2008, 2013a, 2013b, 2016) and will be discussed in the next subsection.

2.2.3. The Intersecting Circles Model of humorous communication.

There have been many attempts to classify jokes based on linguistic, social and cultural features (Dynel 2012a; Ritchie 1999, 2000, 2004, 2005, 2006; Suls 1977, 1983, among others). However, Yus's work deserves a special attention as regards jokes because of its insights into how jokes are

⁵ Note, however, that these sets of cognitive mechanisms do not alert to the insufficient relevance of an interpretive hypothesis, but rather to the unacceptability of an interpretive hypothesis (Solska 2012).

constructed, what they exploit and how they are understood. In a first work, Yus (2003) proposed a classification based on the distinction between intentional and unintentional humor, and between jokes which are not integrated into the conversation, or *canned* jokes, and those which are integrated. The criticism that it arouses and the problems detected therein (Dyner 2012a; Biegajło 2012) prompted Yus (2013a, 2013b, 2016) to propose a new model: the so-called *Intersecting Circles Model*.

This new model focuses specifically on the distinction between “[...] jokes whose humorous effects lie in the steps leading to an interpretation of the joke [...] and jokes whose humor is based on cultural and collective information stored in the hearer’s mind” (Yus 2016: 115). It is a more naturalistic and inference-centered approach, according to which humor arises from the humorist’s prediction and/or manipulation of certain interpretative steps and context accessibility within three areas, which he represented as *circles*:

- a) The *make-sense frame*⁶, or the stereotypical ways of building up scenarios for the comprehension of humorous discourses. This type of frame comprises distinct kinds of information: (i) *word-associated schemas*, or encyclopedic information connected with specific words; (ii) *sequence-associated scripts*, or information about events, and (iii) *situation-associated frames*, or information about situations and settings.
- b) The cultural frame, or encyclopedic knowledge concerning cultural and social stereotypes that remain relatively stable in a certain social community.
- c) Utterance interpretation, or the relevance-driven inferential tasks and steps leading to an adequate interpretation. This involves the construction of interpretive hypotheses about the explicit content of an utterance –i.e. its explicature– and/or its implicit content –i.e. the implicated premises necessary for drawing specific implicated conclusions.

In other words, a humorous reaction will depend on whether the following types of information play a role in the production of jokes or not (Yus 2016: 117): (i) the information retrieved by the hearer from background knowledge in order to activate certain knowledge structures or mental frames, which are subsequently discovered not to be valid to understand the joke, (ii) cultural information assumed to be shared by the community to which both the speaker and the hearer belong, (iii) the information obtained from the interpretation of the utterance, including the

⁶ This term was proposed by Yus (2013a) in order to unify the various terms available in the bibliography, such as *frame*, *schema* or *script*.

inferential enrichment of the logical form and the construction of explicatures and/or the derivation of implicatures.

These three parameters are exploited, jointly or separately, in the search for humorous effects, yielding a taxonomy of seven types of jokes. Consequently, the possible combinations of the make-sense frame, the interpretative tasks and the cultural frame make up the Intersecting Circles Model of humorous communication, and shape the strategies used by humorists when devising a joke. Figure 1 shows the possible combinations that may result from the intersection of the three different circles that define this taxonomy of jokes.

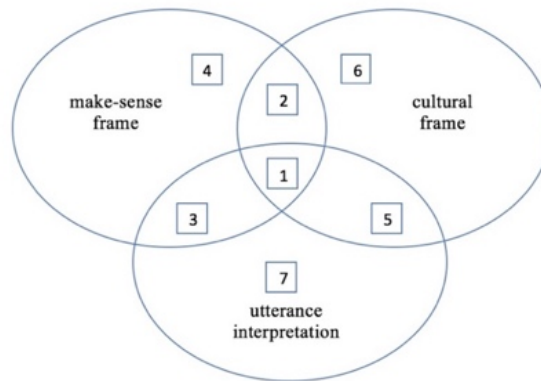


Figure 1. The *Intersecting Circles Model* (Yus, 2013a, 2016)

The Intersecting Circles Model is especially suitable for the current study, given that its aim is to examine L2 comprehension of jokes and the problems that may arise from this process. In light of these concepts, the seven types of jokes proposed by Yus (2013a, 2013b, 2016) will be described and exemplified below⁷.

2.2.3.1. Make-sense frame + cultural frame + utterance interpretation

In this first category of joke, the speaker exploits an alternative output of interpretative tasks, the activation of inappropriate make-sense frames, and the recognition of cultural stereotypes. The hearer proceeds with the interpretation by making sense of an initially activated frame, and he assigns relevant interpretations to lexical expressions according to certain cultural stereotypes or beliefs. However, this interpretation clashes with other frames subsequently activated, invalidating the frames and interpretative tasks which were initially activated, and bringing incongruity into it. At this point, the hearer backtracks and reinterprets certain phrases, making sense of a new, though still relevant and appropriate scenario. This is what happens in the next example:

⁷ All examples presented in the following subsection are taken from Yus (2016), unless otherwise specified.

- (14) As an airplane is about to crash, a female passenger jumps up frantically and announces, “If I’m going to die, I want to die feeling like a woman.” She removes all her clothing and asks, “Is there someone on this plane who is man enough to make me feel like a woman?” A man stands up, removes his shirt and says, “Here, iron this”.

The hearer will start by making sense of the airplane situation and assigning suitable interpretations to some lexical expressions: “die feeling like a woman” would be interpreted as “die while making love with a man” because of the eventual crash. The same applies to the concepts of “man” and “woman”, which have to be conceptually adjusted to become “a man that is a good lover” and “a woman being given full sexual pleasure”, respectively. By the end of the joke, the hearer finds an incongruity (“Iron this!”) that is brought into the interpretation and forces the hearer to engage in inferential backtracking: “feel like a woman by performing a stereotypical female activity”. In the interpretation process, both the sex-role stereotype and the sexual make-sense frame are valid, but the hearer does not notice it because it is not that relevant in the frame initially activated.

2.2.3.2. Make-sense frame + cultural frame

Both make-sense frames and cultural frames are activated for the sake of humor in this second type of joke. In it, the hearer needs to make sense of the scenario of the joke, only to be invalidated at the end by virtue of a new cultural frame, which must be subsequently activated and leads him to arrive at a different interpretation. It is the incompatibility between the recently activated cultural frame and the initial make-sense frame that gives rise to humor. An example of this type of joke is provided in (15):

- (15) Late one night, a mugger wearing a mask jumped into the path of a well-dressed man and stuck a gun in his ribs. “Give me your money,” he demanded. Indignant, the affluent man replied, “You can’t do this. I’m a politician!” “in that case,” replied the robber, “give me MY money!”.

The hearer is guided to construct the typical situation of mugging, which implies actions such as intimidating, demanding money, getting the money, and fleeing with the cash. The construction of an appropriate make-sense frame for the joke leads to the inevitable conclusion that the man is a frightened victim and the mugger is doing wrong. However, the hearer is surprised to know that the politician refuses to give him the money, which clashes with his attempt to make sense of the situation. At the end, he is reminded of the cultural frame of politicians embezzling money, and humor arises from the conflict between the cultural frame of mugging and the make-sense frame of a politician being mugged.

2.2.3.3. Make-sense frame + utterance interpretation

In this joke type, the speaker anticipates how her text may be processed and incites the audience to activate certain make-sense frames by manipulating the inferential steps in the utterance interpretation by means of ambiguous words, for instance. The recently activated frame plays a special role in leading the hearer to inevitably choose an apparently relevant interpretation, since this predetermined frame saves effort for the interpretation of the subsequent stretch of the joke. Nonetheless, this interpretation is invalidated at the end, and an offset of humorous effects compensates for the increase of mental effort. Consider (16):

- (16) On the night of their honeymoon, a newlywed couple had an unfortunate accident, resulting in the amputation of the groom's left foot. Unable to control her grief, the bride called her mother from the hospital. "Mother," she sobbed, "My husband has only one foot." The mother, trying to console her daughter said, "That's alright dear, your father has only six inches".

The hearer will be guided to construct an initial *hospital frame*, which would fit one of the senses of the ambiguous word 'foot', i.e. the lower part of the leg vs. a unit of length. This recently activated frame will trigger the disambiguation in favor of the former sense, since it fits better the scenario in which the hearer is already engaged, hence demanding very little mental effort to process. However, the last part of the joke invalidates the *hospital frame* and activates a new *sexual frame*, in which the word 'foot' now gets the latter meaning. This disambiguation and the subsequent contradiction of the initially activated frame bring along humorous effects.

2.2.3.4. Make-sense frame

In this type of jokes, humorists exploit make-sense frames as the main and only source of humorous effects without reliance on cultural frames or manipulation of the tasks necessary for mutual parallel adjustment. The jokes that fall under this category comply with the incongruity-resolution pattern. An example is (17):

- (17) A man was drinking in a bar when he noticed this beautiful young lady sitting next to him. "Hello there", says the man, "and what is your name?" "Hello," giggles the woman, "I'm Stacey. What's yours?" "I'm Jim." "Jim, do you want to come over to my house tonight? I mean, right know??" "Sure!" replies Jim, "Let's go!" So Stacey takes Jim to her house and takes him to her room. Jim sits down on the bed and notices a picture of a man on Stacey's desk. "Stacey, I noticed the picture of a man on your desk," Jim says. "Yes? And what about it?" asks Stacey. "Is it your brother?" "No, it isn't, Jim!" Stacey giggles. Jim's eyes widen, suspecting that it might be Stacey's husband. When he finally asks, "Is it your husband?" Stacey giggles even more, "No, silly!!" Jim was relieved. "Then, it might be your boyfriend!" Stacey giggles even more while nibbling on Jim's ear. She says, "No, silly!!" "Then, who is it?" Jim asks. Stacey replies, "That's me before my operation!!"

The hearer will have to search for a coherent make-sense frame that is adequate to the scenario of the joke. Such a make-sense frame initially matches the *man meets woman at a bar* frame. In it, the character tries to make sense of the picture of a man in the woman's bedroom. The hearer is probably surprised that Jim tries to figure out who the man in the picture is and fails to find an adequate solution. As explained by Yus (2016: 132), the main source of humor is the fact that the man in the picture was the woman that was next to him, which contradicts the frame initially activated.

2.2.3.5. Cultural frame + utterance interpretation

The jokes falling within this type engage the hearer in a cultural frame where a given social stereotype is strengthened with the aid of certain interpretative tasks, such as disambiguation. The humorist initially leads the hearer to assign a specific sense to an ambiguous term, but a disambiguation of this concept in favor of a second interpretation reinforces the cultural stereotype. This is what happens in (18):

- (18) Following a bitter divorce a husband saw his wife at a party and sneered, “You know, I was a fool when I married you”. The wife simply sighed and replied, “Yes, dear, I know, but I was in love and didn't really notice.”

In a cultural frame in which a married life is not a fortunate and cheerful one, the hearer initially interprets the ambiguous term ‘fool’ as “someone who lacks sense”, meaning that he was not in his right mind when he got married. This first interpretation stresses the cultural stereotype of marriage as being troublesome. However, the woman compels the disambiguation of this concept by selecting a meaning that was not the intended by the man: “a stupid or silly person”. The hearer will be surprised to find that this new interpretation fits the overall context and this will trigger a humorous reaction.

2.2.3.6. Cultural frame

In some jokes, the humorist only exploits the awareness of cultural stereotypes to generate humor. In those jokes, the hearer is guided through a cultural frame in which certain social stereotypes are either strengthened or weakened. These effects on these social beliefs give rise to humor. Typical examples of cultural stereotypes include sex roles –e.g., dominant/superior male, submissive/inferior female– professions, national identities, family roles, etc. An example is (19) below:

(19) A man lost both ears in an accident. No plastic surgeon could offer him a solution. He heard of a very good one in Sweden, and went to him. The new surgeon examined him, thought a while, and said, “Yes, I can put you right”. After the operation, bandages off, stitches out, he goes to his hotel. The morning after, in a rage, he calls his surgeon, and yells, “You swine, you gave me a woman’s ears.” “Well, an ear is an ear. It makes no difference whether it is a man’s or a woman’s.” “You’re wrong” I hear everything, but I don’t understand a thing!”.

The humorist plays with the hearer’s background knowledge about stereotypical information concerning sex roles. He is guided towards the stereotypical belief that women do not understand what they hear. After undergoing surgery, the man complains that he was given a woman’s ears. At this point, the hearer is reminded of the sameness between a man’s and a woman’s ears. However, the patient’s assertion that there is indeed a difference because he cannot understand anything entails a strengthening of this cultural stereotype, even if the hearer does not individually support this belief.

2.2.3.7. Utterance interpretation

Finally, sometimes the only source of humorous effects is the manipulation of the interpretive steps leading to an optimally relevant interpretation of the text of the joke. In other words, humorists may play with polysemy, ambiguity, punning and/or the explicit/implicit likelihood of interpretations for the sake of humor. Some of the strategies that humorists may exploit are:

(i) Invalidating a logical form decoded at the beginning of the joke and enforcing its replacement with a more unlikely one. In (20) below, the humorist exploits alternative grammatical arrangements of the constituents in “that dress in the shop window”. She predicts how the grammatical chunk will more likely be parsed by the hearer at the beginning of the joke: “[try on [that dress [in the shop window]]]”. However, that parsing is later on invalidated and replaced with a more unlikely but eventually correct interpretation: “[try on [that dress] [in the shop window]]” (from Clark 1968: 239, quoted in Yus, 2016: 133).

(20) A lady went into a clothing store and asked, “May I try on that dress in the shop window?” “Well,” replied the sales clerk doubtfully, “don’t you think it would be better to use the dressing room?”

(ii) Invalidating the sense ascribed to ambiguous or polysemous words on the basis of the context of the joke and triggering a new ascription of sense. The example in (21) relies on the ambiguous word ‘hard’. The hearer is guided to choose one of its possible senses in accordance with the setting of the joke –a funeral. By the end of the joke, the first

interpretation of 'hard' as "being in a deeply emotional manner" is invalidated in favor of a different, though still suitable one: "difficult to accomplish".

(21) Mr. Isar was attending his friend's wife's funeral. "It must be hard to lose a wife," remarked Mr. Isar. "Almost impossible," remarked his friend.

(iii) Invalidating the way in which a concept is adjusted, which involves confronting the initially activated literal sense of a word to its metaphorical sense. In the joke in (22), the hearer is expected to select the literal meaning attached to 'sausage' and 'pig', which are relevant in the context of a sausage factory. However, these senses are invalidated by the end of the joke, and the hearer is compelled to ascribe a metaphorical sense to both terms: 'sausage' as 'penis' and 'pig' as "greedy or dirty person".

(22) There once was a man who owned a sausage factory, and he was showing his arrogant son around his factory. Try as he might to impress his snobbish son, the lad seemed to sneer at everything. They approached the heart of the factory, where the father thought "This should impress him!" He showed his son the machine and said "Son, this is the heart of the factory. This machine here we can put in a pig, and out come sausages." The son, unimpressed, said "Yes, but do you have a machine where you can put in a sausage and out comes a pig?" The father, furious, said "Yes son, we call it your mother."

(iv) Invalidating the referent assigned to deictics, pronouns or proper names, and causing a new process of reference assignment. The example quoted in (23) exploits the dual availability of referents for 'it'. The hearer will initially interpret the classified ad as "an offer to mow in place of the client", though he will reinterpret it as "an offer to kill the client in the garden" thanks to a reassignment of reference.

(23) Don't kill yourself in the garden. Let us do it for you.

(v) Invalidating a specific identification of psychological states or speech act, and, hence, a higher-level explicature, and inviting a new attribution of psychological states or identification of speech act, and, therefore, the construction of an alternative higher-level explicature. In (24) below, the hearer will most likely identify the underlying attitude and construct a higher-level explicature intended by the diner as "I am complaining that...". However, this identification is invalidated at the end of the joke, and the hearer is prompted to construct the less likely, but eventually correct, higher-level explicature "I am glad that..." (from Ritchie 2004: 42, quoted in Yus 2016: 138).

(24) Diner: Waiter! There's a fly in my soup!

Waiter: Please, don't shout so loudly. Everyone will want one.

The Intersecting Circles Model of humorous communication proposed by Yus (2013a, 2013b, 2016) predicts that any given joke involves the manipulation of any of the three areas discussed and exemplified above, and offers a seven-type taxonomy of jokes. The present study is based on these types of jokes because it purports (i) to observe the extent to which L2 students understand humor, and (ii) to determine the types of jokes that are easier to understand and those that may pose some difficulties. The next section offers a description of the methodology used in this study, including a description of the instrument, the criteria for selecting participants, the data collection process, and the data analysis procedures.

3. Methodology

L2 pragmatics, and specifically its research methodology, is a long-standing concern. The way researchers collect and analyze data is fundamental for obtaining valid, acceptable and reliable results. This is an empirical study that centers on comprehension, as it aims to analyze how learners of English as an L2 understand a specific type of discourse: humorous discourse, but, more specifically, jokes. In so doing, it seeks to look into the problems that may arise in this process. Therefore, this work adopts a *receptive data approach* to shed light on L2 comprehension of jokes, instead of using production data.

Receptive judgment data results from *metapragmatic judgment tasks*, which are also known as *acceptability judgements* (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei 1998; Taguchi 2017: 77-79; Taguchi 2011a), or from *pragmatic comprehension tasks* (Taguchi 2011b, 2017: 79-81). While the former has long been used to elicit respondents' perceptions about a pragmatic feature, the perception of power that the interlocutors have over each other –i.e., the addressee's age, social status, position in society, etc.– the social distance existing between them, or the degree of imposition of their actions, the latter has been applied in some studies to assess L2 learners' comprehension (Bouton 1994; Taguchi 2011b). Pragmatic comprehension tasks usually target learners' inferential abilities and, more specifically, how they interpret specific pragmatic features like implicatures (Bouton 1994; Taguchi 2011b), irony (Bouton 1999; Yus 1998b) or conventional expressions (Bardovi-Harlig & Bastos 2010), among others.

Advantages of receptive data are more direct access to pragmatic knowledge and easier data classification and analysis than with production tasks, where responses can be conditioned by

learners' speaking or writing abilities. Besides, receptive data tasks only look into comprehension, and therefore, learners are put under less pressure than in production tasks.

The most commonly tools used in pragmatic comprehension tasks are Likert scales (Roever, Fraser & Elder 2004), binary yes/no judgements (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei 1998), or multiple-choice tasks (Matsumura 2001). However, Taguchi (2005, 2011b) used a computer-delivered multiple-choice listening test to assess L2 English learners' comprehension of conversational implicature, in which learners had to choose the correct interpretation of the target utterance out of four possible interpretations. Some others have subsequently incorporated visual elements like drawings, graphics or pictures, and even audio or video recordings. For example, Taguchi (2011a) provided the input via recordings, whereas Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) presented their scenarios as video clips.

In the comprehension process of jokes, hearers need to (i) correctly interpret the text of the joke, (ii) activate adequate make-sense frames to engage in the situation depicted in the joke, and (iii) recognize valid cultural frames of stereotypical information. For L2 learners to be considered proficient or communicatively competent, in addition to satisfactorily producing and understanding ordinary discourse in their target language, they should also be able to correctly interpret hilarious texts like jokes and achieve humorous effects. This is precisely why this work aims to investigate comprehension of jokes by Spanish learners of English as an L2 and to elucidate the problems that these learners may face when processing them. In order to do so, this work adopts a mixed-method approach based on a questionnaire measuring pragmatic competence, which includes both recognition and non-interactive production tasks. Owing to its empirical nature, what follows describes the instrument specifically designed for this study, the criteria for the selection of participants in the study, the data collection process, and the data analysis procedures.

3.1. Instrument

The instrument developed for this study consisted of an online questionnaire that comprises different types of jokes and five tasks and questions. Since this study relies on receptive data, three out of the five tasks included in this data-collection tool were geared towards gathering quantitative data, while the remaining two questions were aimed at eliciting qualitative data. What follows describes the design of the questionnaire and its structure.

3.1.1. Questionnaire design and structure

The questionnaire included seven samples of jokes, each of which corresponds to one of the types of jokes in Yus's (2016) taxonomy. The jokes featured were the same as those that Yus (2016) provides on his work (see below §3.1.2). The aim of providing a sample for each type of joke was to ascertain the type(s) of joke posing greater difficulties to students with a specific proficiency level (see below), as well as to determine which of the factors the interpretation of jokes depends on –i.e. make-sense frame, cultural frame or utterance interpretation– appeared to play (a) crucial role(s). In this regard, a decrease in comprehension was expected when satisfactory interpretation is contingent on the activation of make-sense frames that students are not aware of, unfamiliar cultural references or complex manipulations of certain linguistic expressions. Additionally, the questionnaire included two samples of narrative texts with no humorous content to serve as distractors.

The jokes were presented to the participants as audio inputs. They were recorded thanks to the collaboration of various native speakers of English from the Midwestern United States. They were trained beforehand to avoid a prosody mismatch and to have a balance in the way sample jokes were produced. The samples consisted of two female and one male voices. No effects determined by sociolinguistic factors were expected to be found.

The questionnaire was distributed and presented to the participants in the form of an online survey. It was developed with the Qualtrics (Provo, UT) software, a tool for data collection that allows researchers to design and distribute online questionnaires in a simple and reliable manner, adapted to diverse research needs. Regarding linguistic research in particular, this software is especially useful when designing questionnaires with distinct types of questions, such as multiple-choice questions, Likert-scale sliders, rank-order questions, side by side questions, or text entry boxes. The software also allows for the inclusion of visual, acoustic, and video input, which can be embedded into the questions. Moreover, it can record the time spent in each task and even count the number of clicks made on a certain page. Additionally, the software organizes the data and presents it in a clear and comprehensible way. All in all, this software greatly facilitated the design of a questionnaire that accurately suited the purpose of the study and its easy and straightforward distribution and presentation through smartphones and computers.

The questionnaire was structured into a series of individual web pages. The audio input and the ensuing four tasks were presented on two separate pages per sample. For each joke sample,

participants were first shown an individual page featuring only the corresponding audio file and, after listening to the joke, they could continue to the next web pages to answer the different questions related to that specific joke. However, every task had to be completed before moving to the next joke sample. In designing the questionnaire in this way, participants were intended to follow a step-by-step process whereby they were prevented from continuing with the following joke sample before having answered the comprehension questions first.

The written transcript of the recordings was never provided to the participants, as jokes very frequently manifest in oral speech because of their sociopragmatic functions (Yus 2016) and to a lesser extent in written form. Therefore, oral/auditory input was provided rather than written input so that participants could not derive certain nuances from the text, omit other features that are characteristics of orality, such as homophony or prosody, or reread jokes several times, which would have resulted in less reliable data. Presentation of oral/auditory input on a page exclusively containing it also granted control over the time participants were exposed to the input, as the software recorded the time that the participants spent on each page and tracked if they heard the recordings more than once and were hence overexposed to the joke. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

At the end of the questionnaire, participants were asked to provide some demographic data regarding their personal background and information about their previous experience with English, including proficiency level as certified by an official institution or the courses they had already passed in the School of Philology at Universidad de Sevilla. In addition, they were also asked to provide information about study abroad programs they had participated in, or any experience working in a foreign country, as well as an estimated average of how many hours per week they spend in contact with English outside of class. Consequently, it was acknowledged that these factors might have an impact on the results.

Finally, before starting the study itself, participants were informed of the kind of tasks they would find in the questionnaire, and they were asked to give explicit consent to participate in the survey anonymously by clicking on a button stating “I agree to take part in this study”. This informed consent was included on the introductory webpage and was necessary to accept it before continuing to the next webpage. After giving explicit consent, they were presented with an example intended to work as a training, and a volume adjustment test. This background questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

3.1.2. Types of jokes

The questionnaire included one original example of each of seven types of jokes differentiated by Yus (2016). In so doing, the intent was to provide input that fitted this author's classification most closely. The examples, which have already been discussed in the previous section (see § 2.2.3), are listed in Appendix C for formatting reasons.

3.1.3. Tasks and questions

After having read the instructions, giving explicit consent, and completing the training, participants were prompted with the first joke sample. A first webpage showed only the audio recording, and so participants had to click on the play button to hear the joke. This first webpage with the audio file is included in Appendix A.

Once participants heard the joke, they had to click on the 'next' button, and they were presented with four tasks corresponding to that particular joke on a different webpage. Once they were done with all the questions, they could continue to the next audio file, presented again on a separated webpage. The same tasks were repeated after each input.

The tasks consisted of four different tasks (5 questions in total), which were carefully designed to analyze the participants' comprehension abilities. They are described below:

- (i) *Reaction to Humorous Discourse Task*, which comprises two sub-tasks: (a) a multiple-choice question in which participants had to decide whether a series of adjectives fit the audio input or not, and (b) a non-interactive production task to explain why such adjectives fit the audio or not. For task 1-a, participants had to mark one of the two boxes (Yes/No) for each adjective to determine if it depicted what they had heard or not. The adjectives proposed were 'boring', 'repetitive', 'confusing', 'humorous', 'informative', and 'absurd', which were selected to provide a wide range of possible descriptions of a text. The selection of adjectives was not exclusive, so participants were able to check 'Yes' in more than one box, as the same text might lead to different reactions at the same time (e.g., a joke could be described as both humorous and absurd). With this question, participants were intended to portray how they felt about the recording within a controlled and guided context that did not bias responses towards the 'humorous' option. Participants were expected to select the adjective 'humorous' to confirm that they had identified the joke as such. In the event that the joke was not funny,

task 1-b would serve to explain why they opted for one option or the other. Task 1-b would also shed light on how the parameters on which the different types of jokes are based –i.e., make-sense frame, cultural frame, and utterance interpretation– were grasped thanks to the information shared in the comments. Task 1 is illustrated in Figure 2 in Appendix D. This first task of the questionnaire will be complementary to question 4 which will be explained later on.

- (ii) *Self-perception of comprehension task*, which intended to assess the participants' level of comprehension by asking them to place a slider on a scale ranging from 0 to 100 to evaluate their self-perception of comprehension, with 0 being "I have understood nothing" and 100 being "I have understood everything", as shown in Figure 3 in Appendix D. Although this score does not really reflect the participants' actual comprehension abilities, it offers a glimpse into how easy or difficult the recordings were to understand, and provides an insight into which types of joke posed comprehension difficulties. Thus, this task sought to draw some conclusions about the participants' difficulties at understanding jokes. This task was related to Task 3.
- (iii) *Description of comprehension abilities*, which required participants to briefly describe the reason why the audio recording was easy or difficult to understand, as shown in Figure 4 in Appendix D. Along with task 2, this task purported to elicit the participants' self-assessment of their perception of the level of understanding. Consequently, the results obtained in this task will be correlated with the answers to questions 1 and 4. In other words, a participant who evidenced problems when understanding a joke would also evidence problems when identifying a joke as such, and would probably choose other adjectives than 'humorous' in question 1.
- (iv) *Discourse identification task*, which consisted of a multiple-choice question prompting participants to identify the type of text provided in the input audio, as can be seen in Figure 5 in Appendix D. Participants had to match the recording to only one of eight possible types of discourse –i.e., 'story', 'anecdote', 'joke', 'news', 'interview', 'letter', 'advertisement', or 'political discourse'– and were expected select 'joke' as the answer to this question in those cases in which a joke was presented. Since sense of humor may vary from person to person, this task was designed so that participants had to explicitly identify a joke as such, regardless of whether it was in effect found funny or not in question 1.

3.2. Participants

The participants in the current study were Spanish undergraduate students with a B2 level of English, as established by the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*. This selection is motivated by the fact that pragmatic understanding correlates directly with proficiency level (Taguchi 2011a, 2011b, 2013), so the lack of linguistic and cultural knowledge at a lower level would translate into a shortage of comprehension. 49 learners of English as an L2 recruited in Seville –the southern region of Spain – provided the data for the current study. Of them, 38 were females and 11 were males. Their ages ranged between 19 and 22, with a mean average of 19.76.

All participants were taking upper-division courses as part of the Degree in English Studies at Universidad de Sevilla. More specifically, all the participants were taking the *Inglés Instrumental I* (Instrumental English I) course, which is a general second-year course at advanced level corresponding to CEFR C1 level. In other words, all the participating students certified a B2 level of English provided by the Universidad de Sevilla. This certification of linguistic proficiency is recognized by this university upon successful completion of the *Lengua Inglesa I* (English Language I) course, which is a general English course of upper-intermediate level (B2) compulsory for all first-year students. Since all students had already passed this course at the time of participating in the study, the level of competence was as expected.

3.3. Data Collection

The researcher contacted one professor teaching two groups of Instrumental English I in the School of Philology of the Universidad de Sevilla via email on March, 21st 2019, and she was asked for permission to use a period of 30 minutes at the end of her two classes so that students could participate in the study. The participation was voluntary, and at no time were students compelled to complete the questionnaire.

Data were collected in two batches, each corresponding to the two sections of the aforementioned course. As a result, the data collection process was completed in the morning of April, 11th 2019. At the moment of collecting the data, the researcher visited the selected classes and he made sure to explain the questionnaire instructions thoroughly, namely participants had to (i) take the survey individually, (ii) use headphones throughout the whole questionnaire, (iii) give explicit consent in the introductory page, (iv) listen to each recording only once, and (v) follow the

instructions provided for each task carefully. He also answered any question related to the tasks orally. In addition, participants were requested to notify the researcher of any technical issues they might encounter.

The participants were informed that this was a study related to the acquisition of English as an L2, but the specific purpose was not mentioned so as to avoid a conditioning effect on the results. To get access to the questionnaire, a slide was presented on the classroom display with a QR code along with an URL to a blog post where the link to the questionnaire itself was found. In case of using a smartphone, participants only had to scan the QR code with the smartphone's camera to be taken directly to the questionnaire, while if they were using a computer, they had to type the link to the blog right into their web browser, and then click on the link to access the questionnaire. Students could participate from their own devices in class. The slide presented to the participants and the blog entry can be found in Appendix E.

3.4. Data Analysis

All the answers obtained in the questionnaire were coded in an Excel worksheet so that the trends drawn from the results could be analyzed quantitatively. Quantitative data analysis intends to give a statistical approach to the data so that it can be easily compared and contrasted. The data were coded for each type of joke individually in order to observe which type(s) of jokes is/are more difficult to understand, and which one(s) was/were comprehended more easily. For each type of joke, responses were coded according to: (i) whether “humorous” was selected as the answer in question 1 or not –a categorical binary factor, i.e., only two possible outcomes, (ii) the percentage of comprehension according to the answer to question 2 –a continuous factor, i.e., data that can occupy any value over a continuous range, in this case from 0% to 100%, and (iii) whether “joke” was selected as the answer in question 4 or not –binary factor.

This analysis gave as a result a total of three factors that altogether shaped the degree of comprehension of the student for a particular type of joke. These three factors were analyzed separately and will be presented and discussed in the next section in the same way to provide a more insightful view of the results.

On the other hand, responses were analyzed qualitatively. The answers to question 1-b of the questionnaire –i.e., “Why do you think the text was [*boring / repetitive / confusing / humorous / informative / absurd*]?”– were grouped depending on whether reference to humor was made or not.

Additionally, the answers to question 3 –i.e., “Why has it been easy or difficult to understand?”– were sorted out by the researcher depending on whether allusions to the different parameters intervening in jokes –namely, make-sense frame, cultural frame, utterance interpretation or none of these– were made or not. If nothing relevant was mentioned in relation to any frame, the answer would be considered invalid and would not be included in the analysis. These non-interactive production tasks will corroborate the answers given in the quantitative analysis and serve as an example to support the results.

In the following section, the results obtained with the questionnaire will be provided. They will be discussed according to the parameters established in the methodology described above. Next, the possible trends observed in the data analysis will be addressed.

4. Results & Discussion

The purpose of this study, as previously noted, is to provide an empirical insight into the understanding of jokes by Spanish B2-level learners of English as an L2, as well as to examine the comprehension problems that they may experience. By using the questionnaire designed specifically for this study, a total of 49 valid participants were obtained. This section presents and discusses the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses. A first subsection addresses the quantitative analysis obtained in tasks 1-a, 2 and 4 of the questionnaire. A second subsection compiles and qualitatively discusses the responses to tasks 1-b and 3. These are followed by another subsection that offers an overall discussion.

4.1. Quantitative Analysis

The results obtained in the quantitative analysis show a significant trend towards the recognition of jokes for the sample collected in this study. A general overview of all the joke types reveals that 63.8% of students (average of 31/49) at B2 level were able to recognize a joke in the target language, despite variation in sense of humor. Although a specific joke does not produce humorous effects, students seem to be able to recognize humorous texts. Indeed, there was not a case where a student found the joke funny and did not treat it as such.

The results obtained with the questionnaire vary depending on the type of joke, and the three parameters exploited in the jokes seem to condition the degree of understanding. In other words, some jokes are more difficult to understand than others, and this is presumably because a particular

parameter involves greater difficulties in the comprehension process. A comparative analysis of the data from tasks 1-a and 4 on the recognition of jokes hints at some significant findings in relation to the understanding of humor. However, the results of Task 2 on self-perception of comprehension apparently do not correlate with data from Tasks 1-a and 4 in a number of cases, thereby hinting that students' own perception of comprehension does not coincide with their actual comprehension abilities.

4.1.1. Results for Task 1-a

Task 1-a focused on how different adjectives correlated with the recordings, depending on whether or not these adjectives would describe how students felt about the texts. It was designed with the idea of gathering data on how students react to humorous discourse. It is worth recalling that this task included a multiple-choice question and that participants could select more than one option. Its results show a wide variety of reactions to humorous input. In addition, a comparison between the different types of adjectives included in this task to describe a joke sheds light on the understanding of humor. The results of Task 1-a with respect to the reaction to jokes are presented in Table 1⁸ in Appendix F.

Overall, those types of jokes relying on the invalidation of a make-sense frame already activated at any of its possible intersections are those that have a higher percentage of humorous effects. Joke type 3 (make-sense frame + utterance interpretation) shows the highest percentage of humorous attribution (81.6%), with 40/49 students selecting 'humorous' as one of the possible options. Joke type 4 (make-sense frame) also reveals a tendency towards this adjective, with 71.4% of the participants (35/49) ascribing a humorous label to the joke. Joke types 1 (make-sense frame + cultural frame + utterance interpretation) and 2 (make-sense frame + cultural frame) also feature a high selection rate for the 'humorous' option, meaning 31/49 (63.3%) and 33/49 (67.3%) of students, respectively. This may be due to the fact that the information contained in the make-sense frame is basically the same or very similar in the students' culture and in the target culture (e.g., a *hospital frame* will be constructed substantially in the same way in Spanish and British cultures). Therefore, students can access encyclopedic knowledge of their L1 and apply it to jokes in English.

⁸ For formatting reasons, all the tables referred to in this section have been placed on Appendix F.

On the opposite side, types 6 (cultural frame) and 7 (utterance interpretation) presented the lowest percentage rate, with 20.4% (10/49) and 28.6% (15/49), respectively. According to Taguchi (2011a, 2011b, 2013), pragmatic comprehension directly correlates with the student's proficiency level, thus a lack of linguistic and cultural knowledge at a B2 level could translate into a decrease in the level of understanding. The manipulation of certain sophisticated syntactic structures or complex linguistic phenomena related to derivation, polysemy, ambiguity, homophony, etc., led to a decrease in the students' level of comprehension. Likewise, unawareness of certain cultural information or stereotypes involved in the joke made it difficult for participants at this proficiency level to understand these types of jokes. Yet, what is apparently happening here is that students correlate cultural knowledge in their L1 with the situation in the joke.

Consider the example of the joke type 6, which relies on the activation of a specific cultural frame pertaining to women's alleged inferiority. The current awareness movement towards feminism and equal rights transcends borders, and because that joke in the instrument touches on these issues, it may have evoked the dissent of the participants. Interestingly enough, this is seemingly confirmed by the percentage obtained by other adjectives in this type of joke, such as 'absurd', with 28/49 (57.1%) of students selecting it, or 'boring', with 17/49 (34.7%) of them. The selection of these adjectives indicates that students do not approve of these stereotypes. In fact, it is worth noting that in certain types of jokes, such as types 1, 6 and 7, the adjective 'humoristic' (31/49 - 63.3%; 10/49 - 20.4%; 15/49 - 28.6%, respectively) was not the most selected, being surpassed by 'absurd' (33/49 - 67.3%; 28/49 - 57.1%; 26/49 - 51.0%, respectively).

One trend that stands out is that the adjective 'boring' shows a clear exponential increase from type 1 (4.1%) to type 7 (44.9%). This is likely due to *cumulative fatigue* (Chaudron 2003; Dörnyei 2001, 2005) throughout the completion of the questionnaire, as the level of attention is expected to diminish as the study unfolds and the effort that participants must invest increases due to growing tiredness.

4.1.2. Results for Task 2

Task 2 elicited data on the students' self-perception of what they had heard in the input. While this measure cannot be construed as an objective assessment of the participants' level of understanding, it does allow us to gauge the extent to which students understood the joke. Consequently, results for task 2 are presented in Table 2 in Appendix F.

Participants rated their comprehension above 80% in each type of joke, except for joke type 7, which relied on accessing various potentially plausible interpretations. This depicts a drastic decrease in relation to the other types (59.2%). Joke type 4, which relies on the activation and subsequent invalidation of a specific make-sense frame, ranks highest with an average of 98.2%, which means that the vast majority of students claim to have understood this joke almost completely. It is followed by joke type 3, which also reveals a high rate of comprehension (90.2%). The rest of the jokes, score in a range between 84.2% and 88.7%. This clearly indicates that students at the B2 level do not seem to have difficulties as far as language proficiency is concerned. However, joke type 7 poses some comprehension difficulty, as it is scored especially low (59.2%) if compared to the other types of jokes. One factor that may account for this result can be prosody, as many students pointed out. Yet, the same person also narrated the input for joke type 6. However, the problem is likely to arise from the exploitation of alternative grammatical arrangements of the constituents in “that dress in the shop window”. Students may not be well acquainted with the fact that the phrase is syntactically ambiguous, and may be construed as “[try on [that dress [in the shop window]]]” or “[try on [that dress] [in the shop window]]”.

4.1.3. Results for Task 4

Task 4 involved the identification of the recording as humorous text. If students heard a joke in the audio input, they should select ‘joke’ as the preferred option. This task consisted of a single-choice question, hence participants were compelled to select a single answer. These results are shown in Table 3 in Appendix F. In general, the mean of students who selected ‘joke’ to this question was 63.8%, so most jokes were recognized as such. However, some significant trends in the distribution of responses are worth addressing.

A noteworthy trend is that the ‘anecdote’ option is the second most favored in all types of jokes (23.6%). This suggests that students do not always identify a joke as such, but rather regard it as an anecdote –even with humorous effects. Remarkably, the results of Task 4 in Table 3 show that type 3, which exploits the invalidation of both an activated make-sense frame and an easily accessible interpretation, and type 4, which relies on the activation and invalidation of make-sense frames, obtain the highest rates for Task 4, and match the scores from Table 1, which reports the results of humorous effects.

On the other hand, the types of jokes that present a lower frequency of selection are type 1 (22/49 - 44.9%), which relies on the activation/invalidation of make-sense frames, the reference to certain cultural knowledge, and the manipulation of interpretive tasks; type 2 (27/49 - 55.1%), which first activates a make-sense frame and a cultural frame only to be invalidated at the end, and type 5 (29/49 - 59.2%), which strengthens a cultural stereotype with the aid of certain interpretive tasks. As expected, the results for type 1 reflect that students experience more difficulty in identifying a joke as such when humor depends on the manipulation of all the three parameters that are essential for it to be generated. Since the make-sense frame can be easily constructed by the students, the problem seems to be that they are stranded on the first and most likely interpretation “die while making love with a man”. This first interpretation of “dying feeling like a woman” would not be reinterpreted as “feel like a woman by performing a stereotypical female activity”, and so the incongruity brought by the sentence “iron this” is not solved. In addition, cultural stereotypes attributed to men and women may not be adequately recognized or accepted by students, and some steps in the interpretation process may be omitted or not properly invalidated, such as adjusting the concept MAN into “a man who is a good lover” and WOMAN into “a woman who is given full sexual pleasure”. In joke type 2 there seems to be a problem when it comes to giving a new interpretation to the cultural frame of mugging or invalidating and reinterpreting the make-sense frame of a politician being mugged. In joke type 5 the ambiguous term ‘fool’ may not be properly reinterpreted as “a stupid or silly person”, but rather keeps the activated sense of “someone who lacks sense”. Similarly, the student may not be engaged in the cultural stereotype of marriage as being troublesome, hence not reinforcing it.

4.1.4. Cross-analysis between Task 1-a and Task 4

A comparison of the results obtained in Tasks 1-a and 4 can provide an insight into the problems that may arise in understanding jokes. By correlating the perception data of humorous effects from Task 1-a with a straightforward identification of the joke, it may be ascertained that a joke does not have to be necessarily funny to be regarded as such. The results for this comparative analysis are presented in Figure 6 in Appendix F. It is worth commenting on some trends that can be observed when these data are compared side by side.

First, and quite remarkably, the types of joke that obtain the highest score in both tasks are type 3, which relies on the activation and invalidation of certain make-sense frames by manipulating

some inferential steps, and type 4, which exploits make-sense frames as the main and only source of humorous effects. This trend reveals that these types of jokes are the least difficult to understand, and therefore the most accessible for this group of students. However, this fact does not correlate with the types of jokes with a lower score in task 1-a, since joke types 6 and 7 obtained a 69.4% (34/49 students) and 61.2% (30/49 students) in task 4, ranking above other types of joke such as 1 (22/49 - 44.9%), 2 (27/49 - 55.1%) and 5 (29/47 - 59.2%).

A comparison of the results for tasks 1 and 4 also reveals that, as regards joke type 1, it seems that even if the input was ascribed a humorous label by students, it was regarded as an anecdote, therefore supporting that students may have difficulty in discriminating a joke from a different type of discourse in the L2. This may be due to an invalid reinterpretation of the *plane crash* make-sense frame, unawareness of cultural stereotypes related to sex-roles, or misinterpretation when conceptually adjusting the concepts MAN and WOMAN. However, other problems may be considered, such as prosody or some extralinguistic factors like demotivation, fatigue or lack of attention. Furthermore, it is of interest that in joke type 6 there is a significant discrepancy between the number of participants who identified the joke as such (34/49 - 69.4%) and the number of participants who ascribed a humorous label to it (10/49 - 20.4%).

4.1.5. Cross-analysis between Task 2 and Task 4

A contrastive analysis between Task 2 and Task 4 would correlate the data regarding self-perception of comprehension obtained in the former with the actual percentage of recognition of jokes obtained in the latter. This will shed light on whether a higher rate of self-perception of understanding favors better recognition of humorous text. This contrastive analysis between tasks 2 and 4 is presented in Figure 7 in Appendix F.

Overall, the results show a difference between the successful identification of a joke (Task 4) and the self-perception of the level of understanding depending on the type of joke. It is worth noting that, even though students claim to have understood the entire text of the audio, this does not necessarily mean that they recognize the joke as such. Participants can be sure that they have understood everything concerning vocabulary, grammar and other language-related factors, or the cultural context and the situations presented, but they have difficulties at detecting the invalidity of certain frames, such as the *plane accident* make-sense frame, or reinterpreting some parts of the joke in order to find a resolution to the incongruity. Nonetheless, there are some types of jokes in

which the answers to these questions are brought closer together. Interestingly enough, those types of joke with a higher rate in task 4, joke types 3 (40/49 - 81.6%) and 4 (37/49 - 75.5%), also get the highest rates for question 2 pertaining to perception of comprehension (90.2% and 98.2%, respectively).

Also worth mentioning is the result of joke type 7, which is based on the manipulation of interpretive steps: it shows the lowest response rate in task 2. In this case, the percentage of joke recognition in task 4 is 61.2% (30/49), nearly matching the percentage of self-perception in task 2 (59.2%). However, this is not the lowest score in question 4, since types 1, 2 and 5 rank below this value. This reaffirms that, although there are jokes that students think they have understood quite well, the truth is that phenomena such as polysemy, ambiguity, punning and/or the explicit/implicit likelihood of interpretations, which are exploited by humorists, are not always grasped by them.

4.2. Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative analysis in this work centers on tasks 1-b and 3. While the former asked students to explain why they thought the recording was funny or not, the latter prompted participants to briefly describe why the text was easy or difficult to understand. In order to present the qualitative results in a clear and accurate manner, only some examples of the responses given in each task will be provided because of space limitations. However, the whole set of responses can be found in Appendix H. Although they were all written in Spanish, they were subsequently translated into English by the researcher. It should be noted that, generally, most of the responses given by the participants in these questions were rather plain and brief, even though the text entry boxes did not have a word limit. In this regard, an average of 76.2% of students confined themselves to including very rough and general descriptions, so the answers listed in this section will only represent the other 23.8% of responses, which were the most relevant. Therefore, the percentages and number of students addressed in this subsection refer only to the examples featured here, accounting for a total of 82 examples for task 1-b, and 62 for task 3.

4.2.1. Joke type 1 (make-sense frame + cultural frame + utterance interpretation)

The first joke sample included in the questionnaire exploited the activation/invalidation of make-sense frames, alternative outputs in the utterance interpretation process, and the recognition of a

cultural frame. Table 4 in Appendix G⁹ shows some examples of the answers from task 1-b sorted out by the type of information referred to in the responses. 17/82 were included for this joke type..

Most answers referred to the activation or invalidation of the *plane accident* make-sense frame. 76.4% (13/17) of answers alluded to the incongruity of the situation. Comments such as “the fact of being illogical makes it funny somehow” or “it is so absurd that it is funny” suggest that students can spot an incongruous situation and find an adequate resolution to reinterpret the joke. When they realize that the new interpretation is valid and that they have been misguided by the speaker, they ascribe a humorous label to the text. However, three responses namely “the situation makes little sense”, “it is not funny because it is about an accident”, or “it makes no sense” imply that these participants had problems identifying the joke and misinterpreted the text as an anecdote. Additionally, 23.5% (4/17) of responses made reference to the sex-role stereotype included in the joke. All of these comments were related to sexist references incorporated in the joke, and some students considered that the joke was not funny due to the inclusion of these sexual stereotypes related to the man as “a good lover” and the woman as “being given full sexual pleasure”. Interestingly enough, participants did not report any observations on the interpretative tasks that are manipulated in the interpretation process. This may translate into students having greater difficulty engaging in the interpretive steps in the utterance interpretation than in the activation/invalidation of make-sense frames or the recognition of cultural frames.

In Table 5 in Appendix G, some examples from task 3 are presented. A total of 7/62 answers were included in this joke type. All the comments fit the trend observed in task 2 about self-perception of comprehension, whereby an average of 86.2% of students claimed to have understood the joke, even though results for tasks 1-a and 4 seem to prove a different tendency. Nonetheless, some of the answers hint at a lack of language proficiency to understand certain parts of the joke – e.g., “I have not been able to understand the last part”– even touching on the double meaning of some words –e.g., “I think that some words had a double meaning and I did not get it quite well”. In this regard, it is worth noting that students were able to recognize specific problems, even if they did not fully understand the text –“I understood the text, but I did not get the joke”.

^{9 9} For formatting reasons, all the tables referred to in this section have been placed on Appendix G.

4.2.2. Joke type 2 (make-sense frame + cultural frame)

In joke type 2, the *mugging* make-sense frame gets a reinterpretation at the end of the joke and the cultural frame of politicians embezzling money is strengthened in the search for humorous effects. The results for task 1-b are presented in Table 6 in Appendix G. 12/82 answers were included for this task in joke type 2. Accordingly, 50% of responses (6/12) presented in Table 6 concerned encyclopedic information about specific words, information about events or situations and environments, as well as encyclopedic knowledge about cultural and social stereotypes. The other 50% (6/12) made reference to the activation and invalidation of make-sense frames by the end of the joke, such as “the end is unexpected”, “it is funny that someone gets to do something like that”, or “the mugger’s reply can be funny”.

Additionally, 75% (9/12) of the responses provided in this task suggest a strong awareness of the cultural stereotype of politicians embezzling money exploited in the joke. A few examples of this are “it is a critique that can be funny”, “it is a current problem” or “the joke makes you think about the money that politicians embezzle”. This implies that the students were able to accurately interpret the stereotype of politicians embezzling money and apply it to the overall situation presented in the joke for the sake of humorous effects. However, it is noteworthy that some students did not find this text funny because they perceived some overtones, and hence claimed that a joke should not deal with these issues because they are a serious problem.

Answers to question 3 in this joke type are along the same lines as those for joke type 1, as presented in Table 7 in Appendix G. (9/62) were included as examples for this joke type. Comments mainly refer to the lack of vocabulary to understand the whole joke –presumably, words like ‘mugger’, ‘ribs’, or ‘affluent’– or to difficulties in understanding certain parts of the text, such as “jumped into the path of a well-dressed man”, “stuck a gun in his ribs” or “give me MY money!”. It is remarkable that several participants reported that the joke was predictable and therefore easier to understand –e.g., “it was easy to understand because I already had an idea of what was going to happen” or “because the story is predictable”. The last comment is also noteworthy –“it’s a pretty literal joke, with no double intent”– since cultural stereotypes seem to be so entrenched that they prevent the hearer from realizing that the joke exploits the reinterpretation of a well-dressed man being mugged as a politician being mugged. These stereotypes become standardized by students, so when they are activated/invalidated or strengthened/weakened, students are not aware of the underlying process, even if the humorous effects are grasped.

4.2.3. Joke type 3 (*make-sense frame + utterance interpretation*)

The joke provided in the questionnaire to exemplify type 3 exploited the activation/invalidation of certain make-sense frames and the manipulation of the inferential steps in the utterance interpretation. Table 8 in Appendix G features 11/82 instances for this joke type. 36.3% of the answers (4/11) provided in this task were related to the invalidation of the make-sense frame prompted by the end of the joke –“the unexpected ending of the story was funny” or “the last part was quite funny”. Therefore, it is concluded that the invalidation of the *hospital* frame and subsequent activation of the *sexual* frame have a humorous effect on students. Nonetheless, 63.6% of the comments (7/11) focused on the interpretive steps followed in the utterance interpretation process. Examples include some comments referring to ambiguity, such as “it is a joke with a double meaning”, “the mother’s answer is funny” or “foot and inches are also units of length”, the last one being quite precise in the explanation. Therefore, these responses reveal that the students were aware of the double meaning of ‘foot’, and that the disambiguation at the end of the joke also triggers humorous effects.

As for question 3, Table 9 in Appendix G shows 14/62 examples provided for this task. It is remarkable that this joke type had the highest percentage of humorous rating according to task 1-a (40/49 - 81.6%), but a great number of instances in task 3 relates to the lack of vocabulary as a cause of misunderstanding. In addition, even though this joke had a score of 90.2% of comprehension according to task 2, 57.1% of students (8/14) claimed to have difficulties regarding language proficiency. To name but a few examples, “I did not quite catch the topic because of the lack of vocabulary”, “easy, although I missed some words/expressions”, “there are some words that I have not been able to catch, perhaps because of the context I can understand what [the speaker] is saying more or less”, “I found it not very easy to understand but because I did not know the meaning of the last part”. There is a comment in particular which is worth mentioning: “everything is easy to understand except that I did not catch the joke because I do not know what ‘6 inches’ refers to”. This student seems to spot where the ambiguous part is, but probably because she is unable to find the double meaning of ‘foot’ in this context, she does not know how to interpret “6 inches” in such a context. These results suggest that a lack of linguistic knowledge in the target language can greatly affect the understanding of humor in L2. If students do not know the two meanings of certain lexical items, they are unlikely to understand the text, and consequently to consider it a joke.

4.2.4. Joke type 4 (make-sense frame)

Joke type 4 solely exploited the activation and later invalidation of certain make-sense frames for the sake of humor. Table 10 in Appendix G shows some examples gathered in task 1-b. A total of 14/82 responses were provided for this joke type. 85.7% of the comments (12/14) make reference to the plot twist, i.e., the invalidation of the initially activated frame and the consequent activation of a new one. Comments such as “it is funny because of the man’s misunderstanding”, “the man is very confused”, “the last part is unexpected” or “I think it is very funny with the unexpected ending” prove that students successfully activated *the man meets woman at a bar* frame and perceived the contradiction of that frame at the end of the joke. These answers suggest that this is one of the most accessible joke type for students at a B2 level. Nevertheless, this type of joke is not exempt of negative reactions, since in two cases it was interpreted as offensive for including certain references to the transgender collective. In this regard, it might be argued that, if this type of joke involved a different content or theme, perhaps the results would lead to more humorous assessment. This is something to keep in mind in future research.

Table 11 in Appendix G illustrates 7/62 answers for this joke type in Task 3. It is notable the high rate of comments that support a satisfactory understanding of the joke, since all the comments mentioned that participants found this text quite easy to understand –e.g., “it was easy to understand because it employs easy words and I understood everything”, “I could get the joke”, “very literal and easy to follow”. These results are consistent with those obtained in task 2 about self-perception of comprehension for this joke type, which scored the highest percentage for that task (98.2%). Therefore, it can be assumed that the activation and invalidation of the *man meets woman at a bar* frame does not cause comprehension problems for this group of students, since it is easily accessible to them.

4.2.5. Joke type 5 (cultural frame + utterance interpretation)

Joke type 5 exploited the strengthening of certain cultural frames, and the manipulation of interpretive tasks in the utterance interpretation. Some of the examples collected with task 1-b for this joke type are featured in Table 12 in Appendix G (8/82). As reflected in the examples in Table 12 above, there were two cases in which the sexist attitude present in the joke was reported –“it is too sexist” and “if there is so much complaint about marriages, why do they still get married?”– while others pointed to the reinforcement of the cultural stereotype –e.g., “because that happens to

many married couples and since you can identify with it, it is funny”, “a little, because of the unexpected situation”. In addition to references to the cultural frame, some of the responses referred to the disambiguation or double meaning of the word ‘fool’ in the joke, such as “the woman has a good comeback”, “because the woman’s response was witty”, or simply “double sense”. Therefore, the double meaning of the word ‘fool’ is accessible to these students and they are aware that this double sense is exploited in the text in the search for humorous effects.

Regarding question 3, Table 13 in Appendix G shows some examples of the answers provided, meaning 8/62 of answers gathered in total in Task 3. It should be noted that this type of joke scored 88.7% of comprehension in Task 2. Students’ answers in Task 3 were along the same line. Of the comments considered, 2/8 referred to the ease of understanding: “it is a simple text” and “simple grammar and vocabulary”. However, the rest of the responses featured in Table 13 hint at comprehension problems related to the lack of vocabulary –e.g., “I did not quite catch what the girl said because I did not understand her vocabulary”– to certain parts of the joke –e.g., “I did not understand the last part”, “it was difficult to understand the end of the audio”, “it was hard to understand everything”– or cultural aspects –e.g., “it is hard to understand because if you have not been married before, you do not know what a joke like that can lead to”.

4.2.6. Joke type 6 (cultural frame)

This joke type only relies on awareness of cultural stereotypes to generate humor. The results for task 1-b in the questionnaire are presented in table 14 in Appendix G, featuring a total of 12/82. Even though the 66.6% of students (8/12) seem to identify and understand the joke, allusion to certain sensitive stereotypes, such as women not understanding what they hear, can cause a backlash from students. Comments such as “jokes about women are not funny”, “this topic does not make me laugh”, “I can understand the joke but I do not share it”, or “it is kind of offensive”, prove that participants reacted against this type of joke because it touched upon sexist issues. In addition, one of the comments specifically refers to the fact that even though humor takes advantage of these topics, special care should be taken: “it may offend women, but humor is humor, I love these kinds of jokes, although nowadays you have to be very careful with these issues”. Therefore, it suggests that the understanding of humor does not have to be linked to the validation of certain cultural stereotypes. This comment seems to point out that humorous text is a special

type of discourse in which there are certain components that play an essential role and should not be regarded in a critical way.

Table 15 in Appendix G shows 8/62 answers collected in task 3 for this joke type. Responses such as “I did not understand some words”, “I did not understand the last word, which is the most important one”, or “[it was] difficult, I got lost”, suggest that the level of understanding for this type of joke was a little lower than previous ones (84.2%). Although 37.5% of the responses (3/8) point to some difficulties in understanding, the cultural stereotype was grasped, and students were able to assign an appropriate interpretation to the text –e.g., “I missed some words. I understand the core”, “[there were] some words that I did not know, but in general I understood well”.

4.2.7. Joke type 7 (utterance interpretation)

The last joke manipulated the interpretive steps in the utterance interpretation for the sake of humor. In Table 16 in Appendix G, 8/82 from task 1-b are provided. This joke exploited the duality of grammatical structures within the same sentence, such as the phrase “that dress in the shop window”, which can be interpreted as “[try on [that dress [in the shop window]]]” or as “[try on [that dress] [in the shop window]]”. Many of the comments included in task 1-b for this type of joke point to this syntactic ambiguity as a source of humor. Consider some examples such as “it was a curious play on words”, “the ending is unexpected and can be funny”, “yes, because the sales clerk is right, it is better to get changed in the dressing room”. However, three of the comments featured in table 16 unveil that these students have problems in solving the disambiguation of the ambiguous syntactic structures involved in the joke. Since this is a more complex disambiguation process, students’ degree of understanding may decrease in this type of joke. This accounts for the fact that this type of joke obtained 59.2% of comprehension in Task 2.

As for question 3, Table 17 features 9/62 of relevant answers provided in the questionnaire. Answers such as “I got lost in some parts”, “it was confusing”, “it was not clear”, “[it was] difficult, complex expressions”, or “I did not understand some parts”, reveal that the complexity of the grammatical structures affected the understanding of the joke. Even though 61.2% (30/49) identified the text as a joke in Task 4, only 28.6% (15/49) of the participants thought it was funny in Task 1-a. In addition, the aforementioned percentage for Task 2 makes it clear that a large number of participants got lost in some parts and found it difficult to get the joke. This seems to further confirm that while students may identify the humorous text, they may not understand it.

4.3. Discussion of the results

The results obtained in this study show a strong tendency towards the comprehension of jokes by Spanish B2-level learners of L2 English. However, this trend varies depending on the joke, as the number and type of parameters exploited in each of them largely determines the percentage of understanding. Both quantitative and qualitative results confirm that a joke may not produce humorous effects, even if it is recognized, and that pragmatic failure arises if the parameters exploited in the joke are not correctly (re)interpreted.

The data obtained in tasks 1-a suggest that jokes included in the questionnaire can convey different emotions and generate different reactions in the participants, usually at the same time. There is a general tendency to assign humorous effects to jokes by correlating the adjective 'humorous' with the text in the recordings of types 1 to 5. However, it is noteworthy that types 6, which relies on the strengthening of a cultural stereotype, and 7, which manipulates the interpretive tasks in the interpretation process, show a considerable decrease, reporting lower values than other adjectives such as 'boring' or 'absurd'. In the former type, the motivation for this low percentage would be related to the shared view of students that there are certain stereotypes, such as those reinforcing sexual roles or those stressing inequality between men and women, which do not produce humor and are, in fact, offensive. The fact that joke type 6 exploits the stereotype that women do not understand anything they hear leads students to react against these social beliefs and advocate for gender equality. In the latter type, which manipulates the syntactic ambiguity of a specific phrase of the joke, there are difficulties in deriving and reinterpreting both senses. When a learner is exposed to complex and ambiguous grammatical structures, such as the phrase "that dress in the shop window", it is possible that the level of proficiency in the target language does not suffice to derive both interpretations: "[try on [that dress [in the shop window]]]" and "[try on [that dress] [in the shop window]]". Since this is a strictly linguistic matter, students should be previously aware of this type of structures and their potential disambiguations. If they are unable to grasp the two possible interpretations of the phrase, the truly ambivalent phrase in question will appear monovalent to them and no invalidation of one interpretation in favor of another will occur, hindering any kind of humorous effect.

These findings are supported by qualitative data collected in Task 1-b. Students' comments in relation to how they felt about the recordings they listened to confirm the trends of the quantitative

results. It should be recalled that 76.2% of responses provided in both Task 1 and Task 3 lacked detail and simply restated the response given in Task 1-a and 2, respectively, and therefore were excluded from the analysis. However, the comments that were relevant to this qualitative analysis provided a detailed view of the factors that determined a positive or negative rating for each adjective. Thus, the comments provided for the adjective ‘humorous’ referred to the comprehension problems that have already been noted, namely those concerning (i) failure to invalidate previously activated make-sense frames and find an appropriate alternative, (ii) failure to recognize a strengthening of a certain cultural stereotype, or (iii) failure to adequately perform any of the tasks involved in utterance interpretation.

The results obtained in task 2 of self-perception of humor comprehension reflect that the students are positive about the degree of comprehension of the jokes. Prior to the analysis, a higher level of difficulty was expected in type 1, as it was the type that involved the greatest number of parameters and would therefore require the most cognitive effort. However, this was not confirmed by the results of task 2, and only joke type 7, which exploited the syntactic ambiguity of the phrase “try on that dress in the shop window”, showed a decrease in the percentage of self-perception. This would reinforce the previous argument that the students did not grasp the ambivalence of that phrase, and therefore could not reinterpret it. As a matter of fact, because type 1 was not ranked as the most difficult to understand, the number of parameters exploited in the joke is not a predictor of comprehension problems according to students’ self-perception. In general, the fact that students are so optimistic about the self-perception of comprehension can yield some preliminary conclusions. Perhaps with this rating students referred only to the vocabulary used in the texts. The results of Task 3 seem to confirm this, since many of the evaluations provided by the students referred to the lack or difficulty of the vocabulary. If so, participants would be assessing the complexity of grammatical structures and unknown vocabulary, which would explain the decrease in comprehension in type 7, as it includes more complex structures. In other types that also manipulate the interpretative steps of the utterance interpretation process, such as 1, 3, or 5, the reinterpretation is less complex and requires less cognitive effort, since they rely on an ambivalence or lexical ambiguity, instead of syntactical (e.g., “die feeling like a woman”, ‘foot’ or ‘fool’). It is worth pointing out the possibility that the formulation of the instructions in the questionnaire might not indicate the intention of the task correctly. The aim was not for students to simply say whether they had understood all the vocabulary or grammatical structures, but to reflect in a global way the

understanding of everything that the text conveys, including cultural references or the make-sense frame. This is a limitation to be considered in future studies.

Task 3 provided qualitative data in connection with Task 2, and overall the results are in line with the percentages reflected in that task. The answers to this question are especially significant in shedding light on the high percentages of self-perception of comprehension. These results further support the previous discussion and confirm that many of the students responded to both Task 2 and Task 3 in terms of the amount of vocabulary they had understood. In this regard, and ahead of future research, a redesign of the question type would be appropriate to more reliably portray the level of humor comprehension. However, both Task 2 and Task 3 were designed with the idea of providing an insight into what the students considered to be their level of understanding, so to that effect, both tasks fulfill their purpose within this study.

In relation to Task 4, the results show a clear trend favoring the recognition of jokes in all types except Type 1, which relies on the invalidation of an initially activated make-sense frame, of an interpretation that seems probable and valid, and of a cultural frame that is activated as a consequence of the first part of the text. In fact, both 'joke' and 'anecdote' show the same percentage of recognition in this task. This is likely due to the fact that the accident make-sense frame introduced at the beginning of the joke is not invalidated and replaced by the sexual frame based on stereotypical sex-roles. Since the first make-sense frame is not invalidated, the text is not regarded as a joke. The incongruity presented at the outset is not resolved, and therefore, this text is regarded as an anecdote.

Mostly, jokes that involve a cultural frame in some way, either recognizing it (joke type 1) or reinforcing it (joke types 2, 5 or 7) are likely to have problems associated with comprehension in task 4 about recognition of humorous text. However, a new insight into the qualitative results of tasks 1-b and 3 reveals that these are not necessarily problems of understanding, but rather that participants perceive certain features of jokes as negative, namely a sexist stereotype (e.g., joke type 6, which relies on the woman as not understanding what she hears) or some factor related to gender or sexuality (e.g., joke type 4, which involves potentially transphobic content). Such jokes are therefore identified to a lesser extent as humorous text. In addition, the fact that a large number of jokes exploit these stereotypes as part of the cultural frame, not only in this study, but in humorous discourse in general, entails a backlash against almost any joke that engages these topics. It is worth noting that the joke type 4, which relies on the activation and later invalidation of a

make-sense frame, also included a reference to the transgender community, and yet, it was regarded as a joke by 75.5% (37/49) of students in Task 4, and 71.4% (35/49) found it humorous in Task 1-a. Since this joke does not exploit any cultural references, the results suggest that the students in general do not find the inclusion of a gender-related reference inappropriate, but rather react to the reinforcement of the possible stereotypes mentioned in a joke.

As for demographic data collected in the background questionnaire, no relevant results were obtained so as to be mentioned in this section. Only 3/49 respondents had experience studying or working abroad, so it is not feasible to obtain a meaningful sample to be contrasted with the overall results. However, in future research it might be of interest to delve into the effect of studying abroad with a larger sample. Similarly, this work offers some pedagogical implications, since analyzing the effect of teaching on a better understanding of humor in general, and jokes in particular, would be a relevant contribution in future studies.

Also for future research, certain factors should be reconsidered to delve into comprehension of jokes. A case in point is the order in which jokes are presented, as this can create a conditioning effect that may have an influence on the identification of the humorous text. Including jokes that are easily accessible to students at the beginning of the questionnaire may result in regarding later examples as jokes that may be similar in terms of prosody, for example. As previously discussed, fatigue or demotivation are other external factors that may affect the results. To prevent this effect, it would be desirable to include shorter and more straightforward tasks requiring little processing effort and avoid repetitive questions. It would also be interesting to use the reaction time as a measure to analyze the understanding of humor. This factor was incorporated into the instrument of this study, but not analyzed. Nevertheless, it will be addressed in future research.

6. Conclusions

The current study aimed to examine the comprehension of a type of humorous texts, namely jokes, by Spanish B2 learners of English as an L2, and to determine the problems they may experience when processing jokes. More specifically, this work sought to ascertain which types of jokes learners could more easily understand and, therefore, find funny or amusing; which types of jokes posed some difficulties and hence turned out hard or impossible to interpret, and where such difficulties stemmed from. Despite limitations and drawbacks such as limited examples of joke types, excessive length or completion time, the instrument developed for this purpose has proved

valid to provide insightful results on these issues. In fact, the set of tasks devised for the questionnaire have yielded a satisfactory amount of data on joke comprehension and have enabled to detect learners' difficulties and problems when processing jokes, as each of them targeted specific issues and features connected with jokes.

The results from Task 1-a and Task 1-b demonstrate a significant trend: correct identification of jokes and achievement of humorous effects are not correlated. In other words, the participants in the study could successfully identify a text as a joke but this did not mean that they actually found the joke funny. Tasks 2 and 3, which collected data on students' self-perception of their level of comprehension, suggest that a high level of self-perception does not imply an increase in the recognition of jokes. The participants may have been able to understand the entire text of the joke at the explicit level, but, since jokes and humorous effects also rely on access to cultural and idiosyncratic contextual information that goes well beyond the information explicitly conveyed by the text, participants often experienced comprehension problems or reacted negatively to some jokes because of their topics and/or allusions. Lastly, task 4 on the recognition of humorous text supports the results obtained in previous tasks and confirms that the Spanish B2-level learners of English as an L2 recognized to a greater extent those jokes that were based on the activation and subsequent invalidation of a make-sense frame. In contrast, they perceived in a negative manner certain cultural references and stereotypes, especially those related to sex-roles and gender equality. In this regard, future research should explore if other types of cultural references trigger a more positive reaction in the students. On the other hand, task 4 also shows that the participants in the study had more difficulties at understanding jokes playing with the output of interpretative tasks. This might be taken to suggest either that proficiency level was not yet sufficient to cope with deliberately ambiguous syntactic structures or textual chunks, or that failure at disambiguation was due to personal factors.

A general overview reveals that joke type 3, which exploits the activation and subsequent invalidation of a make-sense frame and the manipulation of interpretive tasks in the utterance interpretation, posits as the most comprehensible joke, since it poses very little understanding problems. This may be due to the similarity of these make-sense frames between the participants' culture and the target culture, and the use of non-complex interpretive tasks, such as lexical disambiguation. In contrast, joke type 7 shows further difficulties in understanding, as it relies solely on a complex disambiguation process, such as that of the underlying syntactic structure. The

remaining types of jokes are within this spectrum, and their difficulty in understanding varies depending on which parameters are involved in the joke and how they are exploited.

This study has only been a first empirical approach to the understanding of jokes by non-native speakers of a language like English. Despite the limitations connected with the questionnaire and the amount of participants, it could certainly set the bases for future in-depth research aimed at unravelling learners' comprehension and appraisal of jokes. Future research, though, should overcome the limitations pointed out here by considering a higher number of participants and devising a better-suited or more efficient data-collection tool. Since the questionnaire employed in this study required too much time to complete and thus contributed to participants' fatigue, boredom or demotivation, and it included a very limited number of samples for each type of joke, perhaps further studies could only concentrate on individual types of jokes and expose participants to more samples thereof with a view to gathering data that could be subsequently compared. Future research, moreover, could also undertake cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses of L2 learners' comprehension of jokes in order to gain a more fine-grained picture of how their pragmatic performance varies across proficiency levels and time. Research following these directions will certainly contribute to a better understanding of an intriguing but fascinating phenomenon like humor.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire used to collect data about students' comprehension of jokes.



¡Bienvenidos a esta investigación!

Mi nombre es Santiago Arróniz y estoy llevando a cabo una investigación para mi Trabajo Fin de Máster en la Facultad de Filología.

La realización del estudio le llevará alrededor de 15-20 minutos. Su participación en esta investigación es voluntaria. Tiene el derecho a retirarse en cualquier momento durante el estudio, por cualquier razón y sin ningún tipo de prejuicio. Cualquier dato que proporcione durante la realización de la misma será tratado de forma totalmente anónima y con un fin exclusivamente estadístico y de investigación. Si desea ponerse en contacto con el investigador principal del estudio para hablar sobre esta investigación, envíe un correo electrónico a sarroniz@outlook.com

Al hacer clic en el siguiente botón, reconoce que su participación en el estudio es voluntaria, tiene más de 18 años de edad y sabe que puede decidir dar por finalizada su participación en el estudio en cualquier momento y por cualquier razón.

Tenga en cuenta que esta encuesta se mostrará mejor en un ordenador portátil o de escritorio. Algunas características podrían ser menos compatibles para su uso en un dispositivo móvil. Es muy recomendable usar auriculares durante todo el estudio. Si llega a tener algún tipo de problema técnico al cargar la página, pruebe a refrescarla. Si persiste, póngase en contacto con el investigador. No retroceda de página durante el estudio.

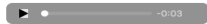
Puede responder a las preguntas en español o inglés.

¡Muchas gracias!

He comprendido la finalidad de este estudio, cómo se usarán mis datos y doy mi consentimiento para llevar a cabo la investigación.



Este es un ejemplo de lo que encontrará a lo largo del estudio (no es necesario responder a estas preguntas). Por favor, **ajuste el volumen** de su dispositivo electrónico para que escuche lo mejor posible. Asegúrese de **leer bien** el enunciado de cada pregunta y cada una de las opciones.



¿Qué piensas sobre lo que acabas de escuchar? Por favor, responde "Sí" / "No" y "¿Por qué?" para cada una de las siguientes opciones:

	Sí	No	¿Por qué?
Aburrido	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Repetitivo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Confuso	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Gracioso	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Informativo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Absurdo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>

¿Te ha resultado fácil o difícil de comprender? Por favor, desliza el cursor hasta lo que consideras que ha sido tu porcentaje de comprensión:

No he entendido nada 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 Lo he entendido completamente

Desliza...



Describe brevemente por qué te ha resultado fácil/difícil de comprender:

¿Qué tipo de texto piensas que es?

<input type="radio"/> Cuento	<input type="radio"/> Entrevista
<input type="radio"/> Anécdota	<input type="radio"/> Carta
<input type="radio"/> Chiste	<input type="radio"/> Anuncio publicitario
<input type="radio"/> Noticia	<input type="radio"/> Discurso político



AHORA DA COMIENZO EL CUESTIONARIO
POR FAVOR,
RESPONDA CON SINCERIDAD A TODAS LAS
PREGUNTAS
HAGA CLICK EN LA FLECHA PARA CONTINUAR



Powered by Qualtrics

POR FAVOR, ESCUCHA EL SIGUIENTE AUDIO **1 SOLA VEZ:**



¿Qué piensas sobre lo que acabas de escuchar? Por favor, responde "Sí" / "No" y "¿Por qué?" para cada una de las siguientes opciones:

	Sí	No	¿Por qué?
Aburrido	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Repetitivo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Confuso	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Gracioso	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Informativo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Absurdo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>

¿Te ha resultado fácil o difícil de comprender? Por favor, desliza el cursor hasta lo que consideras que ha sido tu porcentaje de comprensión:

No he entendido nada 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 Lo he entendido completamente

Desliza...

Describe brevemente por qué te ha resultado fácil/difícil de comprender:

¿Qué tipo de texto piensas que es?

<input type="radio"/> Cuento	<input type="radio"/> Entrevista
<input type="radio"/> Anécdota	<input type="radio"/> Carta
<input type="radio"/> Chiste	<input type="radio"/> Anuncio publicitario
<input type="radio"/> Noticia	<input type="radio"/> Discurso político



Appendix B: Background Questionnaire

¡SOLO UNAS PREGUNTAS MÁS SOBRE TI!

INSTRUCCIONES:

Por favor, complete el siguiente cuestionario sobre algunos datos personales. No debe dar su nombre en ningún momento. Sus respuestas se guardarán de forma anónima y segura y sólo se reportarán en conjunto con los datos de otros participantes. Siéntase con libertad de hacer preguntas si tiene dudas sobre cualquier parte de este cuestionario.

¿Con qué género te identificas?

Edad:

¿Posees algún Certificado Oficial de Inglés?
(Cambridge, Trinity, TOEFL...)

Sí

No

Si eres alumno de la Facultad de Filología, por favor, **especifica la asignatura de Lengua Inglesa/Inglés Instrumental aprobada más avanzada**. En caso negativo, puedes saltar esta pregunta.

Lengua Inglesa 1

Lengua Inglesa 2

Inglés Instrumental 1

Inglés Instrumental 2

¿Has cursado algún año de estudios en el extranjero?
(Por ejemplo, Programa Erasmus o Fulbright) Por favor, **especifica el destino y el número de meses**. En caso negativo puedes saltar esta pregunta.

Programas en el extranjero	
Destino	Número de Meses
SI	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Por favor, selecciona el número aproximado de horas que pasas en contacto con la lengua inglesa, **a la semana y sin contar las horas de clase**.

- 0-10 horas
- 10-20 horas
- 20-30 horas
- Más de 30 horas

¿De dónde eres? (Especifica tu ciudad natal)

Indica tu nivel más alto de educación completada:

Estudios Completados

¿A qué te dedicas actualmente?

¿Cuál crees que fue el objetivo de este estudio?
(opcional)

¿Tiene cualquier otra observación o sugerencia de la que este estudio podría beneficiar? (opcional)

Appendix C: List of jokes included in the questionnaire, divided by joke type.

- (i) Make-sense frame + cultural frame + utterance interpretation
As an airplane is about to crash, a female passenger jumps up frantically and announces, "If I'm going to die, I want to die feeling like a woman." She removes all her clothing and asks, "Is there someone on this plane who is man enough to make me feel like a woman?" A man stands up, removes his shirt and says, "Here, iron this".
- (ii) Make-sense frame+ cultural frame
Late one night, a mugger wearing a mask jumped into the path of a well-dressed man and stuck a gun in his ribs. "Give me your money," he demanded. Indignant, the affluent man replied, "You can't do this. I'm a politician!" "in that case," replied the robber, "give me MY money!".
- (iii) Make-sense frame + utterance interpretation
On the night of their honeymoon, a newlywed couple had an unfortunate accident, resulting in the amputation of the groom's left foot. Unable to control her grief, the bride called her mother from the hospital. "Mother," she sobbed, "My husband has only one foot." The mother, trying to console her daughter said, "That's alright dear, your father has only six inches".
- (iv) Make-sense frame
A man was drinking in a bar when he noticed this beautiful young lady sitting next to him. "Hello there", says the man, "and what is your name?" "Hello," giggles the woman, "I'm Stacey. What's yours?" "I'm Jim." "Jim, do you want to come over to my house tonight? I mean, right know??" "Sure!" replies Jim, "Let's go!" So Stacey takes Jim to her house and takes him to her room. Jim sits down on the bed and notices a picture of a man on Stacey's desk. "Stacey, I noticed the picture of a man on your desk," Jim says. "Yes? And what about it?" asks Stacey. "Is it your brother?" "No, it isn't, Jim!" Stacey giggles. Jim's eyes widen, suspecting that it might be Stacey's husband. When he finally asks, "Is it your husband?" Stacey giggles even more, "No, silly!!" Jim was relieved. "Then, it might be your boyfriend!" Stacey giggles even more while nibbling on Jim's ear. She says, "No, silly!!" "Then, who is it?" Jim asks. Stacey replies, "That's me before my operation!!"
- (v) Cultural frame + utterance interpretation
Following a bitter divorce, a husband saw his wife at a party and sneered, "You know, I was a fool when I married you". The wife simply sighed and replied, "Yes, dear, I know, but I was in love and didn't really notice."
- (vi) Cultural frame
A man lost both ears in an accident. No plastic surgeon could offer him a solution. He heard of a very good one in Sweden, and went to him. The new surgeon examined him, thought a while, and said, "Yes, I can put you right". After the operation, bandages off, stitches out, he goes to his hotel. The morning after, in a rage, he calls his surgeon, and yells, "You swine, you gave me a woman's ears." "Well, an ear is an ear. It makes no difference whether it is a man's or a woman's." "You're wrong" I hear everything, but I don't understand a thing!".
- (vii) Utterance interpretation
A lady went into a clothing store and asked, "May I try on that dress in the shop window?" "Well," replied the sales clerk doubtfully, "don't you think it would be better to use the dressing room?"

Appendix D: Figures included in the Methodology section.

¿Qué piensas sobre lo que acabas de escuchar? Por favor, responde "Sí" / "No" y "¿Por qué?" para cada una de las siguientes opciones:

	Sí	No	¿Por qué?
Aburrido	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Repetitivo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Confuso	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Gracioso	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Informativo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>
Absurdo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="text"/>

Figure 2. Task 1: *What do you think about what you have just heard? Please, select 'Yes'/'No', and explain why for each of the following options.*

¿Te ha resultado fácil o difícil de comprender? Por favor, desliza el cursor hasta lo que consideras que ha sido tu porcentaje de comprensión:

No he entendido nada 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 Lo he entendido completamente

Desliza...

Figure 3. Task 2: *Did you find it easy or difficult to understand? Please, move the slider to the point that best defines your percentage of comprehension:*

Describe brevemente por qué te ha resultado fácil/difícil de comprender:

Figure 4. Task 3: *Briefly describe the reason why it was easy or difficult to understand.*

¿Qué tipo de texto piensas que es?

<input type="radio"/> Cuento	<input type="radio"/> Entrevista
<input type="radio"/> Anécdota	<input type="radio"/> Carta
<input type="radio"/> Chiste	<input type="radio"/> Anuncio publicitario
<input type="radio"/> Noticia	<input type="radio"/> Discurso político

Figure 5. Task 4: *What type of text do you think it is?*

Appendix E: The slide presented to the participants and the blog entry to access the questionnaire from students' own devices.

**blogs.iu.edu/research/
estudioadquisicioningles/**



Santiago Arroniz: sarroniz@outlook.com



Estudio de Adquisición Inglés L2

Posted on [April 11, 2019](#) by [sarroniz](#)

Has click en el siguiente enlace para ir al estudio:

https://iu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_29NcXCWJVX00Zs9

¡Gracias!

Appendix F: Tables and figures from the quantitative analysis.

Joke Type	Boring		Repetitive		Confusing		Humorous		Informative		Absurd	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
1. Make-sense frame + cultural frame + utterance interpretation	4.1	2	12.2	6	49.0	24	63.3	31	14.3	7	67.3	33
2. Make-sense frame + cultural frame	4.1	2	10.2	5	8.2	4	67.3	33	36.7	18	26.5	13
3. Make-sense frame + utterance interpretation	12.2	6	2.0	1	26.5	13	81.6	40	26.5	13	51.0	25
4. Make-sense frame	12.2	6	34.7	17	6.1	3	71.4	35	16.3	8	32.7	16
5. Cultural frame + utterance interpretation	26.5	13	8.2	4	26.5	13	51.0	25	26.5	13	28.6	14
6. Cultural frame	34.7	17	16.3	8	24.5	12	20.4	10	24.5	12	57.1	28
7. Utterance interpretation	44.9	22	4.1	2	57.1	28	28.6	15	14.3	7	51.0	26

Table 1. Results for Task 1-a of the questionnaire: *What do you think about what you have just heard? Please, select 'Yes'/'No' [...] for each of the following options. The percentage and number of occurrences presented in the table correspond to the option 'Yes'.*

Joke Type	%
1. Make-sense frame + cultural frame + utterance interpretation	86.2
2. Make-sense frame + cultural frame	86.9
3. Make-sense frame + utterance interpretation	90.2
4. Make-sense frame	98.2
5. Cultural frame + utterance interpretation	88.7
6. Cultural frame	84.2
7. Utterance interpretation	59.2

Table 2. Results for Task 2 of the questionnaire: *Did you find it easy or difficult to understand? Please, move the slider to the point that best defines your percentage of comprehension.* The percentage in the table corresponds to the average for each type of joke.

Joke Type	Joke		Anecdote		News		Tale		Interview		Letter		Ad		Political Discourse	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
1. Make-sense frame + cultural frame + utterance interpretation	44.9	22	44.9	22	2.0	1	6.1	3	2.0	1	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
2. Make-sense frame + cultural frame	55.1	27	20.4	10	14.3	7	8.2	4	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	2.0	1
3. Make-sense frame + utterance interpretation	81.6	40	16.3	8	2.0	1	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
4. Make-sense frame	75.5	37	10.2	5	0.0	0	14.3	7	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
5. Cultural frame + utterance interpretation	59.2	29	24.5	12	2.0	1	10.2	5	2.0	1	0.0	0	2.0	1	0.0	0
6. Cultural frame	69.4	34	18.4	9	6.1	3	4.1	2	0.0	0	2.0	1	0.0	0	0.0	0
7. Utterance interpretation	61.2	30	30.6	15	2.0	1	4.1	2	0.0	0	2.0	1	0.0	0	0.0	0
Mean	63.8		23.6		4.1		6.7		0.6		0.6		0.3		0.3	

Table 3. Results for Task 4 of the questionnaire: What type of text do you think it is? The percentage and number of occurrences in the table corresponds to each type of discourse in relation to the type of joke

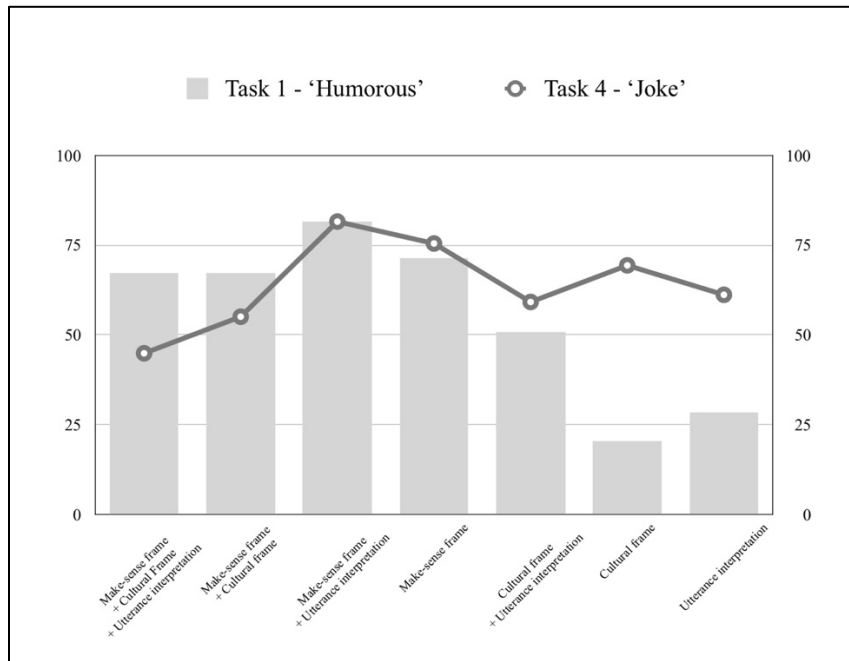


Figure 6. Results for the comparative analysis between Task 1-b and Task 4 of the questionnaire.

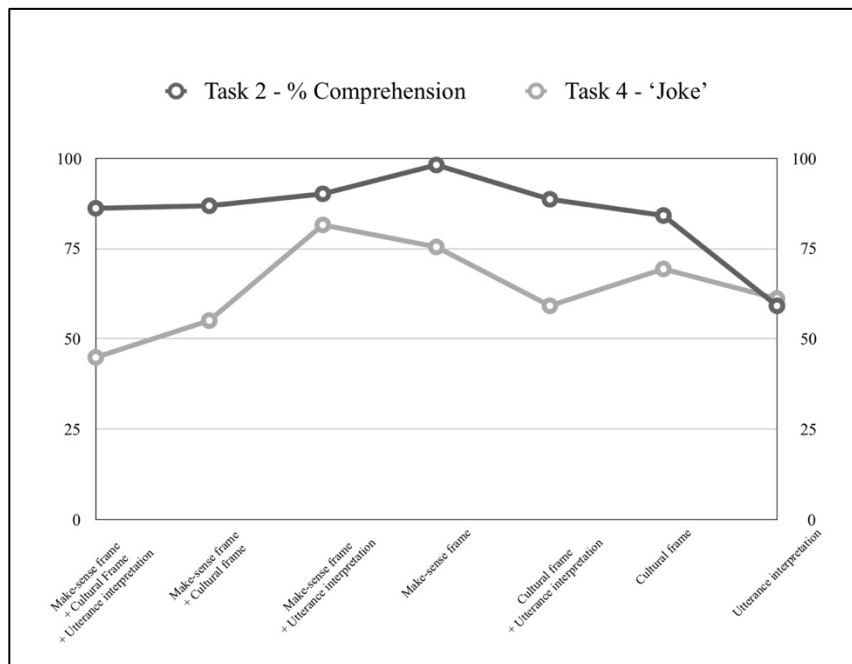


Figure 7. Results for the comparative analysis between Task 2 and Task 4 of the questionnaire.

Appendix G: Tables and figures from the qualitative analysis.

(i) *Joke type 1 (make-sense frame + cultural frame + utterance interpretation)*

Parameter/ circle involved	Humorous	Task 1-b
Make-sense frame	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - La situación es absurda - Situación con poco sentido - El final ha estado bien - La situación es un poco graciosa - Lo ilógico lo hace en cierto aspecto divertido. - Porque es inusual - No tiene mucho sentido - Me imaginé la situación y me hizo gracia - Es tan absurdo que llega a ser cómico - Es una anécdota
	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No es gracioso porque está hablando de un accidente - No es mi tipo de humor - Parece un chiste rancio
Cultural frame	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - El hecho de que una mujer diga eso me parece de risa.
	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Es un chiste machista - Tipo feminista - Es machista
Utterance interpretation	-	-

Table 4. Results for Task 1-b of the questionnaire: *Why do you think the audio was funny?* (type 1)

% of Comprehension in Task 2	Task 3
79%	- Ha sido un poco difícil comprender lo último dicho por las dos personas
86%	- No he sido capaz de descifrar qué dice justo al final.
82%	- He comprendido lo que se decía, pero no he pillado el chiste.
84%	- No entiendo muy bien si hay algún significado especial detrás de este audio.
71%	- No muy fácil porque es un poco rara la historia
82%	- Ha sido difícil porque he detectado cierta connotación sexista.
69%	- Creo que algunas palabras tenían doble sentido y no lo he pillado bien

Table 5. Results for Task 3 of the questionnaire: *Briefly describe the reason why it was easy or difficult to understand* (type 1).

(ii) Joke type 2 (make-sense frame + cultural frame)

Parameter/ circle involved	Humorous	Task 1-b
Make-sense frame	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - El final es inesperado - Es gracioso que alguien llegara a hacer algo así - Por la situación en la que se encuentran - La respuesta del ladrón puede llegar a ser graciosa - Ha tenido una salida muy buena el ladrón - Es una situación absurda
	No	-
Cultural frame	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Porque es una crítica que me ha hecho gracia - La ironía del ladrón al decir que le de su dinero al tratarse de un político a la persona que está robando lo hace divertido. - El chiste te hace pensar sobre el dinero que roban los políticos - Porque tiene razón, los políticos roban
	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Es un problema que se da en la actualidad - Es un asunto sarcástico

Table 6. Results for Task 1-b of the questionnaire: *Why do you think the audio was funny? (type 2).*

% of Comprehension in Task 2	Task 3
91%	- No he entendido algunas palabras
92%	- Me falta vocabulario pero he entendido lo que pasó
35%	- Difícil porque no he entendido bien, únicamente el final
100%	- Me ha resultado fácil de comprender porque ya imaginaba por donde iban a ir los tiros
100%	- Aunque al principio el lenguaje resulta algo complicado, se entiende la idea del chiste al completo
84%	- He entendido la trama principal, y el chiste en general, aunque algunas palabras no las he comprendido
66%	- Es extraño
93%	- Porque la historia es predecible
93%	- Es un chiste bastante literal, sin doble intención

Table 7. Results for Task 3 of the questionnaire: *Briefly describe the reason why it was easy or difficult to understand (type 2).*

(iii) Joke type 3 (make-sense frame + utterance interpretation)

Parameter/ circle involved	Humorous	Task 1-b
Make-sense frame	Yes	- Final inesperado - El final inesperado de la historia es gracioso - La última parta era bastante graciosa
	No	- No es gracioso porque es un accidente
Utterance interpretation	Yes	- Es un chiste con doble sentido - Es divertida la contestación de la madre - La madre ha parecido graciosa - Foot e inches son además medidas de longitud - Por la confusión en la charla. - Es gracioso por la respuesta tan llamativa que la madre da para consolar a su hija
	No	- No, porque no he entendido bien la gracia

Table 8. Results for Task 1-b of the questionnaire: *Why do you think the audio was funny?* (type 3).

% of Comprehension in Task 2	Task 3
100%	- Historia fácil de entender
98%	- No he entendido algunas palabras
58%	- Comprendí el principio pero el final no
91%	- Ha sido un poco complicado de entender el principio del audio
69%	- No he captado bien el tema por falta de vocabulario.
92%	- Todo es fácil de entender excepto que no entiendo la gracia porque no sé a qué se refiere con '6 inches'
100%	- Aunque es un chiste y puede resultar complicado de comprender, a mí me ha resultado bastante obvio
84%	- Me ha resultado no muy fácil de entender pero porque no sabía el significado de la última parte.
76%	- Fácil, aunque algunas palabras/expresiones se me han escapado
81%	- El humor puede ser difícil de comprender
51%	- Por la historia, me ha resultado un poco confusa
93%	- Hay algunas palabras que no he podido pillar, quizás por el contexto pueda entender lo que está diciendo más o menos
91%	- Se entiende bien a los que hablan pero no he entendido muy bien el doble sentido
94%	- Me ha resultado difícil porque no entiendo el sentido del chiste.

Table 9. Results for Task 3 of the questionnaire: *Briefly describe the reason why it was easy or difficult to understand* (type 3).

(iv) Joke type 4 (make-sense frame)

Parameter/ circle involved	Humorous	Task 1-b
Make-sense frame	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Me reí mucho al final - Es gracioso por la confusión del hombre - Me he reído un montón - El hombre está muy confuso - No te esperas el final - Porque el final es inesperado - Es gracioso por el plot-twist - No me esperaba la respuesta final de ella - Depende del sentido del humor de la persona - Final inesperado - Me parece muy gracioso con final inesperado - Por el giro de la situación.
	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - En absoluto, ha sido ofensivo - El chiste era un poco ofensivo

Table 10. Results for Task 1-b of the questionnaire: *Why do you think the audio was funny?* (type 4).

% of Comprehension in Task 2	Task 3
100%	- Me ha resultado fácil porque emplea un vocabulario fácil y lo entendí todo
87%	- Fácil, por la forma de historia
100%	- Tal vez un relato fácil de entender
100%	- Este audio me ha resultado muy fácil de entender y más entretenido.
100%	- He podido comprender bien la gracia.
100%	- Porque he estado muy atenta a lo que decía ya que me ha llamado la atención
100%	- Muy literal y fácil de seguir

Table 11. Results for Task 3 of the questionnaire: *Briefly describe the reason why it was easy or difficult to understand* (type 4).

(v) Joke type 5 (cultural frame + utterance interpretation)

Parameter/ circle involved	Humorous	Task 1-b
Cultural frame	Yes	- Sí porque eso pasa con muchos matrimonios y como es relatable hace gracia - Un poco, por la inesperada situación
	No	- Demasiado sexista - Si hay tanta queja sobre los matrimonios, ¿por qué siguen casándose?
Utterance interpretation	Yes	- La parte que se entiende, el final es gracioso - La mujer tiene un buen comeback - Porque la respuesta de la mujer era ingeniosa. - Doble sentido
	No	-

Table 12. Results for Task 1-b of the questionnaire: *Why do you think the audio was funny?* (type 5).

% of Comprehension in Task 2	Task 3
100%	- Es un texto sencillo
100%	- Gramática y vocab sencillos
42%	- No entendí todo al final
87%	- Me ha resultado difícil de comprender el final del audio
92%	- Me ha costado entender perfectamente
27%	- De este audio he entendido muy poquito.
100%	- Es difícil de entender porque si no has estado casado, no sabes a qué puede llevar hacer un chiste así.
40%	- No me he enterado muy bien de lo que ha dicho la chica porque no entendía su vocabulario

Table 13. Results for Task 3 of the questionnaire: *Briefly describe the reason why it was easy or difficult to understand* (type 5).

(vi) Joke type 6 (cultural frame)

Parameter/ circle involved	Humorous	Task 1-b
Cultural frame	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Depende del humor de cada persona - Puede ofender a las mujeres, pero el humor es humor, a mí me encantan este tipo de chistes, aunque hoy en día hay que tener mucho cuidado con estos temas
	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Las bromas sobre mujeres no tienen gracia - Este tema no me hace reír - El chiste es machista - Es un chiste un poco machista. - Entiendo la gracia pero no la comparto - No me divierte el humor machista - Es un poco ofensivo - La muchacha nos relataba un accidente que tuvo y no me ha parecido gracioso - No porque por lo que yo he entendido es como que al tener una oreja de mujer lo va a oír todo pero no va a entender nada, es un poco machista el chiste - Es machista por lo que no es divertido

Table 14. Results for Task 1-b of the questionnaire: *Why do you think the audio was funny?* (type 6).

% of Comprehension in Task 2	Task 3
88%	- Algunas palabras se me escapan. El núcleo lo comprendo
100%	- Bastante simple la historia
95%	- No he entendido algunas palabras
86%	- No entendí la última palabra que es la más importante
58%	- Difícil, me he perdido.
100%	- Ha resultado fácil de entender porque el estereotipo de que una mujer es inferior intelectualmente es claro en el chiste.
91%	- Palabras que no conocía pero en general he entendido bien
100%	- Es fácil de comprender pero bastante ridículo

Table 15. Results for Task 3 of the questionnaire: *Briefly describe the reason why it was easy or difficult to understand* (type 6).

(vii) Joke type 7 (utterance interpretation)

Parameter/ circle involved	Humorous	Task 1-b
Utterance interpretation	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inesperada respuesta - Era un juego de palabras curioso. - La situación lo es - El final es inesperado y puede resultar divertido - Sí porque la dependienta tiene razón, para cambiarse mejor irse a un probador
	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No lo entendí - No he comprendido bien así que no pilló la gracia - No lo entendí bien

Table 16. Results for Task 1-b of the questionnaire: *Why do you think the audio was funny?* (type 7).

% of Comprehension in Task 2	Task 3
73%	- Difícil de pillar fuera de contexto.
60%	- Era confuso
65%	- Me perdí en algunas partes
19%	- No estaba claro
8%	- Difícil, expresiones complicadas
100%	- Me ha resultado fácil de comprender porque iba al grano y es una forma de humor que me es familiar malinterpretar a la gente
4%	- Bastante difícil de entender. Solo he entendido unas cuantas palabras
74%	- No he entendido algunas partes
71%	- No he entendido algunas palabras

Table 17. Results for Task 3 of the questionnaire: *Briefly describe the reason why it was easy or difficult to understand* (type 7).

Appendix H: Total amount of qualitative responses provided in Task 1-b and Task 3

(i) Joke type 1 (make-sense frame + cultural frame + utterance interpretation)

Task 1-a

Task 3

<p><i>Tampoco para tanto</i></p> <p><i>Porque es inusual</i></p> <p><i>La situación es un poco graciosa</i></p> <p><i>Pasan cosas entretenidas</i></p> <p><i>Es surrealista</i></p> <p><i>Es gracioso que pida eso</i></p> <p><i>Parece un chiste</i></p> <p><i>Porque no me hacen gracia los chistes</i></p> <p><i>Parece una broma</i></p> <p><i>No me ha hecho reír</i></p> <p><i>No he considerado que sea gracioso</i></p> <p><i>Parece un chiste</i></p> <p><i>no es un chiste</i></p> <p><i>Lo ilógico lo hace en cierto aspecto divertido.</i></p> <p><i>Es un chiste machista</i></p> <p><i>Entiendo que es un chiste por lo absurdo de la situación</i></p> <p><i>Es una Anécdota</i></p> <p><i>Si, porque no tiene mucho sentido</i></p> <p><i>Tipo feminista</i></p> <p><i>Era un chiste un poco raro.</i></p> <p><i>Hace reír</i></p> <p><i>Parecía un chiste</i></p> <p><i>No es gracioso</i></p> <p><i>la situación es absurda</i></p> <p><i>Fue una Anécdota</i></p> <p><i>Parece una Anécdota</i></p> <p><i>Porque está hablando de un accidente</i></p> <p><i>Cuenta una historia divertida</i></p> <p><i>Parece un chiste</i></p> <p><i>Es machista</i></p> <p><i>Situación con poco sentido</i></p> <p><i>No me he reído</i></p> <p><i>It's unexpected</i></p> <p><i>Es tan absurdo que llega a ser comico</i></p> <p><i>Se trata de un chiste</i></p> <p><i>Es peculiar</i></p> <p><i>Me he reído en algunas partes del discurso</i></p> <p><i>No me ha hecho gracia</i></p> <p><i>Ha habido puntos de humor</i></p> <p><i>Me imaginé la situación y me hizo gracia</i></p> <p><i>No es mi tipo de humor.</i></p> <p><i>Normal</i></p> <p><i>El final ha estado bien</i></p> <p><i>Chiste</i></p> <p><i>Parece un chiste rancio.</i></p> <p><i>Yes</i></p> <p><i>No cuenta nada gracioso</i></p> <p><i>el Hecho de que una mujer diga eso me parece de risa jajaja.</i></p>	<p>La dicción era clara. Solo he no he entendido la última palabra.</p> <p>El acento un poco extraño pero entendible para mi</p> <p>El hablante habla bastante claro y a la velocidad adecuada</p> <p>Hablaba en un tono muy tranquilo</p> <p>Se entiende fácilmente</p> <p>Lo he comprendido todo</p> <p>Pronuncian bien y hablan claro</p> <p>No he entendido la frase final</p> <p>Gracias a la pronunciación es fácil de comprender aunque haya alguna que otra palabra que me ha resultado difícil por el vocabulario.</p> <p>El audio era claro, me faltaba 1/2 palabras de vocabulario</p> <p>Ha sido un poco difícil comprender lo último dicho por las dos personas</p> <p>Vocabulario fácil y sencillo, además, de una voz nítida.</p> <p>Porque habla claro y de manera comprensible</p> <p>El vocabulario no era complejo, la pronunciación era adecuada, y la velocidad óptima para su comprensión.</p> <p>Vocabulario y gramática sencillos</p> <p>No he sido capaz de descifrar qué dice justo al final.</p> <p>La voz es clara y no es demasiado rápido. El acento es común.</p> <p>Mas o menos fácil porque hablaba bastante claro la persona y conocía el vocabulario empleado</p> <p>Fácil porque no habla demasiado rápido</p> <p>He comprendido lo que se decía, pero no he pillado el chiste.</p> <p>El lenguaje era fácil y la pronunciación clara</p> <p>Me he perdido un poco al escucharlo y no he entendido el chiste</p> <p>Se ha hablado muy rápido</p> <p>la última palabra del señor no la he entendido, lo demás era fácil</p> <p>El vocabulario usado era fácil y comprensible</p> <p>La velocidad era moderada y las palabras claras</p> <p>Pronunciación clara y velocidad adecuada</p> <p>Hablaba claro, alto y lento</p> <p>No tiene lenguaje difícil, y al no ser aburrido es más fácil prestar atención</p> <p>Una narración lenta</p> <p>Era un audio relativamente corto y entendible.</p> <p>Se entiende bien la forma en la que hablan. No entiendo muy bien si hay algún significado especial detrás de este audio.</p> <p>Easy text, clear voice and it wasn't fast</p> <p>El acento y la velocidad a la que hablaban era fácil de entender</p> <p>Todo me ha resultado fácil de comprender, salvo la última parte del audio</p> <p>No muy fácil porque es un poco rara la historia</p> <p>La persona que hablaba tiene acento americano. Y algunas palabras con acento americano son más difíciles de entender para mí que las palabras con acento británico.</p> <p>Hablaba claro</p> <p>Tanto el vocabulario como la pronunciación han sido muy claros</p> <p>Pues porque las personas vocalizaban bien al hablar.</p> <p>Ha sido difícil porque he detectado cierta connotación sexista.</p> <p>Las palabras eran muy claras y bien pronunciadas.</p> <p>A veces no entendía algunas palabras</p> <p>Creo que algunas palabras tenían doble sentido y no lo he pillado bien</p> <p>No he entendido lo que dice el hombre al final.</p> <p>Some words</p> <p>Porque no he conseguido entender muy bien la idea general</p> <p>Porque el hablante hablaba bien y claro .</p>
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(ii) Joke type 2 (make-sense frame + cultural frame)

Task 1-a

Task 3

<p>Buen humor</p> <p>.</p> <p>Um poco</p> <p>Es una situación real</p> <p>Es divertido</p> <p>El final es inesperado</p> <p>Es gracioso que alguien llegara a hacer algo así</p> <p>Es un chiste</p> <p>Porque es una crítica que me ha hecho gracia</p> <p>Es un problema que se da en la actualidad</p> <p>Tema serio</p> <p>Debido al final</p> <p>Buen chiste</p> <p>porque le pide más dinero</p> <p>La ironía del ladrón al decir que le dé su dinero al tratarse de un político a la persona que está robando lo hace divertido.</p> <p>El chiste te hace pensar sobre el dinero que roban los políticos</p> <p>Es un chiste</p> <p>Es algo serio</p> <p>Por la situación en la que se encuentran y el comentario</p> <p>Creo que no lo es</p> <p>Esta vez Sí pillé el chiste (la corrupción política).</p> <p>No hace reír</p> <p>Es un chiste</p> <p>No</p> <p>Sí</p> <p>Es como un chiste</p> <p>No hay humor</p> <p>Es irónico ya que no debería hacernos gracia, pero nos la hace</p> <p>Es una especie de chiste</p> <p>Es un chiste</p> <p>Es un asunto sarcástico</p> <p>La respuesta del ladrón puede llegar a ser graciosa</p> <p>Me he reído con el final</p> <p>Not really, a bit dull</p> <p>No me parece una situación cómica o de broma</p> <p>Se trata de un chiste</p> <p>Es peculiar</p> <p>Me resulta gracioso lo que ha dicho el hombre</p> <p>Porque tiene razón, los políticos roban</p> <p>Ha habido puntos de humor, como cuando el ladrón le dice al político que le de su dinero</p> <p>Ha tenido una salida muy buena el ladrón</p> <p>Típico pero ocurrente.</p> <p>No es un hecho bueno</p> <p>No es un humor que me haga reír</p> <p>Es una situación absurda</p> <p>Es un tema muy actual.</p> <p>No</p> <p>No me ha hecho gracia</p> <p>Es gracioso pero a la vez triste ... porque es una burla a los políticos aunque es una pena que a un político se le llame generalmente chorizo</p>	<p>El inglés en claro y lento. El vocabulario es básico.</p> <p>.</p> <p>Un poco de ruido y el hombre vocalizando regular me han hecho entender el principio regular, pero el final perfecto</p> <p>Difícil la velocidad del hablante</p> <p>El principio es fangoso</p> <p>Porque la historia se entiende fácilmente</p> <p>No he entendido algunas palabras</p> <p>Hablaban rápido</p> <p>Fácil se entendía con claridad</p> <p>Se comprendía muy bien por el vocabulario y por la velocidad del hablante.</p> <p>Me falta vocabulario pero he entendido lo que pasó</p> <p>Ha sido fácil de comprender debido a la manera pausada en la que se ha contado, pero debo decir que el principio no estaba claro</p> <p>Vocabulario sencillo. además, tiene un speaker con voz nítida.</p> <p>es una narración con un vocabulario fácil de entender</p> <p>El comienzo no ha sido claro, pero al escuchar el resto, ha cobrado sentido.</p> <p>Situación normal de fácil entendimiento.</p> <p>Vocabulario y gramática sencillos</p> <p>Me ha costado entender la presentación de los personajes.</p> <p>Porque la voz era clara, contundente y pausada, también ayudaba el hecho de que se marcara el acento en algunas ocasiones para darle entonación al relato.</p> <p>Me ha resultado fácil porque habla despacio y he entendido el vocabulario</p> <p>Difícil porque no he entendido bien, únicamente el final</p> <p>El hablante entona con claridad y representa bien a los personajes del chiste.</p> <p>Lenguaje fácil de entender y pronunciación clara</p> <p>Me ha resultado fácil de comprender, quizás demasiado porque ya imaginaba por donde iban a ir los tiros</p> <p>Las palabras han sido pronunciadas muy rápidamente</p> <p>era vocabulario que entendía y la pronunciación clara</p> <p>Al principio no entendí algunas palabras</p> <p>El vocabulario es un poco complejo</p> <p>Velocidad adecuada y buena pronunciación, aunque hay algunas palabras técnicas</p> <p>Habla alto, claro y lento</p> <p>Aunque al principio el lenguaje resulta algo complicado, se entiende la idea del chiste al completo</p> <p>Una narración concisa y de corta duración</p> <p>La primera parte habla un poco rápido pero el resto se entiende bien</p> <p>He entendido la trama principal, y el chiste en general, aunque algunas palabras no las he comprendido</p> <p>Once again clear voice and text</p> <p>El vocabulario y la pronunciación eran fáciles de comprender</p> <p>Se expresaba con total claridad, y el acento era fácilmente entendible</p> <p>Es extraño</p> <p>Es un poco difícil de entender por la pronunciación de algunas palabras.</p> <p>Porque hablaba despacio</p> <p>Al principio estaba un poco desconcentrado pero luego lo entendí todo muy bien</p> <p>Porque las personas vocalizaron bien</p> <p>El vocabulario empleado me ha confundido un poco, aunque he entendido el sentido general.</p> <p>He entendido pero el acento del hablante no era muy claro.</p> <p>Se entiende muy bien donde está el punto fuerte del audio</p> <p>Es un chiste bastante literal, sin doble intención</p> <p>Pronunciación clara.</p> <p>It was quite clear</p> <p>Vocaliza bien</p> <p>Porque la historia es predecible y se escucha bien</p>
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(ii) Joke type 2 (make-sense frame + cultural frame)

Task 1-a

Task 3

<p>Es un chiste con doble sentido</p> <p>.</p> <p>Es una historia loca</p> <p>Es una anécdota</p> <p>No me resulta gracioso</p> <p>Final inesperado</p> <p>Personalmente, no me ha hecho gracia</p> <p>Era un chiste</p> <p>Es un chiste</p> <p>Es un chiste gracioso</p> <p>No he entendido la broma</p> <p>Me hizo gracia</p> <p>Es divertida la contestación de la madre</p> <p>es un accidente</p> <p>No sabría decir.</p> <p>Es un chiste muy bueno</p> <p>Me hace gracia solo porque supongo que debe hacer gracia</p> <p>El final es gracioso</p> <p>Es un chiste, esa es su intención</p> <p>Uso de la ironía</p> <p>El chiste era malo, pero me he reído.</p> <p>No hace reír</p> <p>Bastante</p> <p>Si</p> <p>es un chiste</p> <p>Es un chiste</p> <p>Es humor</p> <p>Por la entonación y el final</p> <p>Es un chiste</p> <p>Es un chiste</p> <p>Un chiste malo</p> <p>El final inesperado de la historia lo es</p> <p>No he entendido el final, aunque probablemente sea gracioso</p> <p>The ending was quite funny</p> <p>Tiene un toque cómico</p> <p>Es un chiste y cumple su función</p> <p>Entretiene</p> <p>Me parece gracioso</p> <p>Sí, es un chiste y hace gracia</p> <p>La madre ha parecido graciosa</p> <p>No porque no he entendido bien la gracia</p> <p>No me gustan este tipo de bromas.</p> <p>Divertido</p> <p>El sentido del humor ha sido particular</p> <p>Foot e inches son además medidas de longitud</p> <p>Por la confusión en la charla.</p> <p>It's funny</p> <p>Es un chiste</p> <p>Es gracioso por la respuesta tan llamativa que la madre Lena da para consolar a su hija</p>	<p>La dicción era un poco más rápida pero igualmente asequible.</p> <p>.</p> <p>Es fácil porque ya estoy acostumbrado a escuchar a McKenzie</p> <p>Me ha resultado un poco más complicado de entender la velocidad con la que habla ya que parece hacer unión de palabras</p> <p>No usa vocabulario raro</p> <p>Historia fácil de entender</p> <p>No he entendido algunas palabras</p> <p>Hablaba rápido pero se entendía bien</p> <p>Fácil aunque hablaba un poco más rápido</p> <p>El hablante habla con claridad y es un relato breve.</p> <p>Comprendí el principio pero el final no</p> <p>Ha sido un poco complicado de entender el principio del audio</p> <p>Audio breve, conciso, con vocabulario fácil.</p> <p>habla rápido pero era entendible</p> <p>No he captado bien el tema por falta de vocabulario.</p> <p>Vocabulario y gramática sencillos</p> <p>Todo es fácil de entender excepto que no entiendo la gracia porque no sé a qué se refiere con '6 inches'</p> <p>Aunque es un chiste y puede resultar complicado de comprender, pero a mí me ha resultado bastante obvio</p> <p>Me ha resultado no muy fácil de entender pero porque no sabía el significado de la última parte.</p> <p>Fácil, aunque algunas palabras/expresiones se me han escapado</p> <p>Se hacía ameno de escuchar porque la hablante narró bien el chiste.</p> <p>Lenguaje fácil pero pronunciación confusa</p> <p>Me ha resultado fácil de comprender y la pun no me era desconocida</p> <p>The context was clear</p> <p>en la mitad del audio el speaker se ríe y eso dificulta la comprensión</p> <p>Entendí todo excepto dos o tres palabras</p> <p>El humor puede ser difícil de comprender</p> <p>Pronunciación clara y una entonación entretenida y divertida</p> <p>Habla alto y claro</p> <p>Lenguaje fácil y clara pronunciación</p> <p>No ha habido dificultades, bien expresado</p> <p>Ha sido una narración con vocabulario y gramática informal a la que estamos acostumbrados a escuchar</p> <p>No he entendido la parte final del audio</p> <p>The voice was clear and it wasn't flat, there was intonation and stress</p> <p>El acento se entiende bien</p> <p>Al principio, resulta difícil pillar la broma si no se está muy acostumbrado con el sistema métrico americano</p> <p>Por la historia, me ha resultado un poco confusa</p> <p>Hay algunas palabras que no he podido pillar, quizás por el contexto pueda entender lo que está diciendo más o menos</p> <p>No habla rápido</p> <p>Tanto el vocabulario como la pronunciación han sido muy claros</p> <p>Se entiende bien a los que hablan pero no he entendido muy bien el doble sentido</p> <p>Me ha resultado difícil porque no entiendo el sentido del chiste.</p> <p>Me ha resultado rápido y con palabras que no conozco</p> <p>El nivel de comprensión ha sido bueno</p> <p>No utiliza palabras demasiado complejas</p> <p>Se entiende bien.</p> <p>I don't understand the husband has lost</p> <p>Usa un vocabulario sencillo</p> <p>Porque hablan claro y tiene concordancia la situación</p>
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(iv) Joke type 4 (make-sense frame)

Task 1-a

Task 3

<p>Un poco . Me jarte de reir al final Si por la confusión del hombre Me he reído un montón El hombre está muy confuso No te esperas el final No tiene gracia hacer bromas sobre cuestiones de género No me ha hecho gracia Es una situación incomoda pero a su vez graciosa Este tema no me hace reír Es gracioso porque considero que es un chiste Si por el plot-twist john es muy cotilla Es divertida. Hace burla a las personas trans Final inesperado El final es gracioso Sí, porque no era de esperar lo que me a pasado y ha estado curioso No me esperaba la respuesta final de ella El chiste era un poco ofensivo. Hace reir No personalmente Hace reir es un poco transfobico Intenta hacer gracia Es un chiste o una anécdota Intenta serlo, pero la situación no es muy cómoda Es un chiste Me parece transfobo No es gracioso hacer bromas sobre gente trans La historia es divertida Me he reído al final Could be seen as a borderline bewteen a joke and something transphobic No me parece cómico Depende del sentido del humor de la persona Final inesperado Me parece muy gracioso con final inesperado Porque el final es inesperado Ha habido puntos de humor Sí me hartado de reírme En absoluto. Ha sido ofensivo. Divertido El final ha sido inesperado y gracioso La situación es absurda Por el giro de la situación. Si Es un chiste Si porque me ha hecho gracia el final Cuando Steisy dice que antes era un hombre el señor que había llevado a su casa se quedaría perplejo</p>	<p>El inglés es simple y claro. . El speaker habla muy claro Acento y forma de hablar muy asequibles Es fácil Son historias bastante simples El vocabulario era fácil Buena pronunciación Fácil hablaba muy claro El hablante habla con mucha claridad, se entiende bien y con un vocabulario cotidiano Vocabulario fácil y el hombre habla despacio El audio ha sido fácil de entender debido al vocabulario usado y la vocalización correcta Audio simple y nitido. porque el nivel no es muy alto El vocabulario no era complejo, la pronunciación era adecuada, y la velocidad óptima para su comprensión. Vocabulario y gramática sencillos La velocidad es correcta y habla claro. El vocabulario es sencillo. Era bastante claro y repetitivo Me ha resultado fácil porque emplea un vocabulario fácil y lo entendí todo Fácil, por la forma de historia Porque el narrador habla claramente y a un ritmo ideal, ni muy lento ni muy rápido. Lenguaje fácil y pronunciación clara Me ha resultado fácil de entender aunque se puede contar de manera más corta y liaba un poco Todo está claro era facil de comprender Vocabulario fácil El vocabulario no es complejo y la velocidad es moderada Pronunciación clara y entonación divertida Habla alto, claro y lento Lenguaje fácil y clara pronunciación Tal vez un relato fácil de entender Uso de vocabulario y formas de expresión a la que estamos acostumbrados Lo he entendido entero de principio a fin It wasn't too slow for me to get bored Es pausado y se entiende el acento Por la lectura lenta y la clara pronunciación Es un vocabulario sencillo Este audio me ha resultado muy fácil de entender y más entretenido. Porque hablaba claro y despacio Al principio no estaba atenta Porque hablan y vocalizan muy bien He podido comprender bien la "gracia" porque he oído muchos chistes aSí. Todos giran en torno a la percepción de la gente transexual como algo "asqueroso", "repulsivo" y "no natural". Concve a todas las palabras y el hablante hablaba muy despacio El vocabulario ha sido bastante fácil asi que todo se entendia bien Muy literal y fácil de seguir Se entiende bien lo que dice. Very clear Usa un vocabulario sencillo y el hombre vocaliza bien a una velocidad adecuada Porque he estado muy atenta a lo que decía ya que me ha llamado la atención</p>
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(v) Joke type 5 (cultural frame + utterance interpretation)

Task 1-a

Task 3

<p>un poco . Ns La parte que se entiende, el final es gracioso No te ries La mujer tiene un buen comeback No cuenta un chiste o algo gracioso No me ha hecho gracia Es una anécdota graciosa No cuenta nada gracioso No me parece gracioso No lo considero aSí,no hay ningún factor que sea gracioso Aburrido no me hace gracia No. no tiene nada de comico Es un chiste Es un chiste por lo tanto es gracioso Sí, porque es un chiste Un poco, por la inesperada situación Porque la respuesta de la mujer era ingeniosa. No hace reir Es gracioso Si es un chiste Intenta hacer gracia No hay humor El final Es un chiste Es un chiste Fácil para hacerte reír por un segundo La historia no es graciosa No lo he entendido Too sexist No me parece divertido Incluye elementos de humor Es un chiste No me parece aburrido Sí porque eso pasa con muchos matrimonios y como es relatable hace gracia No me ha parecido gracioso No me ha hecho gracia Si hay tanta queja sobre los matrimonios, ¿por qué siguen casándose? Normal Me ha hecho reir Doble sentido Es un chiste It's funny No me he enterado muy bien No produce risa la situación</p>	<p>Dicción clara. Algunas palabras al principio del audio no las entendí en su totalidad, pero comprendí por el contexto. . He escuchado ya tantos que me cuesta mantener la.concentracion No comprendo bien el inicio del audio Es un texto sencillo Historia bastante simple Vocabulario mas complejo Hablabamuy rápido y no he entendido que decía Fácil porque hablaba claro Audio breve y con pronunciación buena No entendí todo al final Me ha resultado difícil de comprender el final del audio Vocabulario sencillo habla con la boca un poco cerrada El vocabulario no era complejo, la pronunciación era adecuada, y la velocidad óptima para su comprensión gramatica y vocab sencillos Me ha costado entender perfectamente Porque era claro y con un acento común Porque se entendía bien el vocabulario Fácil, comprensible Porque se narró de forma amena. Lenguaje fácil y pronunciación clara Me ha resultado fácil de comprender y se pillar el chiste Las palabras han sido pronunciadas de manera muy clara era facil de entender Corto y entendible Se sigue el hilo con facilidad Pronunciación clara y entonación entretenida Habla alto, claro y lento Lo he entendido bien, menos algunas palabras del principio Es un chiste corto Estamos acostumbrados a este tipo de conversaciones y el vocabulario y gramática usados son sencillos Se entiende bien The voice was easy to follow and the audio not too long Se entiende el vocabulario y el acento bien Difícil la parte del final, en un principio cuesta pillar el chiste Es breve y conciso De este audio he entendido muy poquito. Habla demasiado rápido. Porque hablaba despacio y claro Ha sido fácil porque el mensaje era claro y el narrador hablaba muy bien Vocalizan bien y no tienen un acento fuerte Es difícil de entender porque si no has estado casado, no sabes a qué puede llevar hacer un chiste aSí. No conocía algunas palabras Todo ha sido bastante facil de comprender Fácil de seguir Se entiende bastante bien It's clear No me he enterado muy bien de lo que ha dicho la chica porque no entendía su vocabulario Se entiende bien manda situación y el hablante habla bien y despacio</p>
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(vi) Joke type 6 (cultural frame)

Task 1-a

Task 3

<p>humor básico básico No me ha parecido gracioso Ns No Es un chiste El final Es gracioso Las bromas sobre mujeres no tienen gracia No me hace gracia La considero una anécdota graciosa Este tema no me hace reír Debido al final Aburrido es un accidente No. El chiste es machista No hace gracia Es un chiste No me gusta No incluye ironía Es un chiste un poco machista. No hace reír Entiendo la gracia peor no la comparto No hay nada gracioso no lo he comprendido muy bien No hace gracia Es un chiste Intenta serlo, pero es insultante No me divierte el humor machista Es machista No es muy gracioso, un humor sarcástico Lo que cuenta no es gracioso No lo he entendido, pero no me parece gracioso Not really, kind of sexist Es un poco ofensivo Depende del humor de cada persona Inesperado No me ha resultado gracioso Puede ofender a las mujeres pero el humor es humor, a mí me encantan este tipo de chistes aunque hoy en día hay que tener mucho cuidado con estos temas La muchacha nos relataba un accidente que tuvo y no me ha parecido gracioso No porque por lo que yo he entendido es como que al tener una oreja de mujer lo va a oír todo pero no va a entender nada, es un poco machista el chiste No tiene ninguna gracia. Normal Es machista por lo que no es divertido Machista No es muy gracioso Not really funny No me ha hecho gracia No hace gracia</p>	<p>algunas palabras se me escapan. El núcleo lo comprendo No he entendido mucho La voz Se entiende bastante bien, fácil La mujer tiene un tono de voz agudo Bastante simple las historias No he entendido algunas palabras Hablaban muy rápido Aunque hablaba rápido se entiende Es fácil de comprender y es una historia breve con argumento No entendí la última palabra que es la más importante Ha salido fácil de comprender por el vocabulario usado pero pienso que el hablante ha ido rápido Vocabulario sencillo me he distraído un poco Un poco más rápido que los demás, y difícil de captar cierto vocabulario fuera de contexto. Vocabulario y gramática fáciles Estaba claro pero un poco rápido Era claro Más o menos fácil aunque la pronunciación y el acento no lo entendía muy bien Difícil, me he perdido. Hablaban algo rápido, pero claramente. Lenguaje fácil pero pronunciación un poco confusa Me ha resultado fácil entenderlo aunque a veces era un poco largo innecesariamente, no añadía al humor Todo ha quedado claro se ha quedado un par de veces pillado y no he logrado comprenderlo A veces habla muy rápido Vocabulario no demasiado complejo y velocidad moderada Pronunciación clara Habla alto y claro Lenguaje fácil y pronunciación clara Rapidez, fluidez al hablar Hablaban un poco rápido y el tono utilizado era siempre el mismo por lo que me ha resultado un poco más complicado seguirla El que peor he entendido. Habla muy rápido I got distracted at the beginning and as she was speaking a bit faster than the rest audios I got a bit lost Se entiende bien pero habla un poco rápido En parte difícil, por la pronunciación más rápida Habla muy rápido y la historia es un poco confusa Más difícil que otros de los anteriores. Porque hablaba claro y despacio El vocabulario era fácil y la pronunciación buena Porque habla y vocaliza bien Ha resultado fácil de entender porque el estereotipo de que una mujer es inferior intelectualmente es claro en el chiste. Palabras que no conocía pero en general he entendido bien Es fácil de comprender pero bastante ridículo Buena pronunciación Habla rápido, pero más o menos se entiende I didn't get some words Habla muy deprisa Difícil porque no estaba muy concentrada y la persona hablaba rápido y acento cerrado</p>
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(vii) Joke type 7 (utterance interpretation)

Task 1-a

Task 3

<p>no he comprendido bien aSi que no pillo la gracia</p> <p>.</p> <p>Ns</p> <p>No</p> <p>No me río</p> <p>Inesperada respuesta</p> <p>Es un chiste</p> <p>No he pillado la broma</p> <p>No me ha hecho gracia</p> <p>No es gracioso ni aburrido</p> <p>No lo entendí</p> <p>No lo considero aSi</p> <p>Aburrido</p> <p>me aburre</p> <p>No.</p> <p>humor muy infantil</p> <p>No he entendido</p> <p>No lo entendí bien</p> <p>No lo entiendo</p> <p>No ironía</p> <p>Era un juego de palabras curioso.</p> <p>No hace reir</p> <p>Es gracioso</p> <p>No hay nada gracioso</p> <p>es divertido</p> <p>Se supone que es un chiste</p> <p>No hay humor</p> <p>La situación lo es</p> <p>No es divertido</p> <p>Es un chiste</p> <p>No es gracioso, un tanto desagradable</p> <p>El final es inesperado y puede resultar divertido</p> <p>No he entendido el audio</p> <p>Didn't get it</p> <p>No me divierte</p> <p>Es un chiste</p> <p>No entiendo la historia</p> <p>No me ha parecido gracioso</p> <p>Sí porque la dependienta tiene razón, para cambiarse mejor irse a un probador</p> <p>No lo era</p> <p>No me hace gracia</p> <p>No veo que tenga esa intención</p> <p>Divertido</p> <p>No entiendo la gracia</p> <p>No es algo gracioso</p> <p>Es un chiste</p> <p>I didn't get it</p> <p>No era gracioso</p> <p>No entiendo la gracia</p>	<p>Me he perdido el principio aSi que ya no sé porqué el final es gracioso</p> <p>.</p> <p>Han abierto la ventana justo cuando lo empecé y el ruido me distrajo</p> <p>El hablante informa de la situación muy rápido</p> <p>El tono de voz</p> <p>Historia corta y simple</p> <p>Por la velocidad del diálogo me ha costado entender más varias partes</p> <p>Hablaba demasiado rápido y no me he enterado</p> <p>Habla rápido y me ha costado</p> <p>El hablante se expresa muy rápido y cuenta mucha información en muy poco tiempo</p> <p>Mucho ruido</p> <p>Me ha resultado difícil de comprender debido a que el hablante usaba vocabulario difícil a mi parecer e iba muy rápido</p> <p>La speaker hablaba un poco rápido</p> <p>había mucho ruido</p> <p>Difícil de pillar fuera de contexto.</p> <p>vocab y grammar muy fáciles</p> <p>No estaba claro y era rápido</p> <p>Era confuso y rápido</p> <p>Hablaba muy rápido y no lo he entendido</p> <p>Difícil, expresiones complicadas</p> <p>Hablaba algo rápido.</p> <p>Pronunciación confusa</p> <p>Me ha resultado fácil de comprender porque iba al grano y es una forma de humor que me es familiar malinterpretar a la gente a posta</p> <p>Las palabras han sido pronunciadas muy rápidamente</p> <p>era sencillo de entender</p> <p>Vocabulario difícil</p> <p>La velocidad es alta y el vocabulario complejo</p> <p>Pronunciación clara</p> <p>Hablaba alto y claro pero rápido</p> <p>No he entendido algunas palabras del principio</p> <p>Falta de pronunciación, habla sin ganas</p> <p>Hablaba un poco rápido y el tono utilizado era siempre el mismo</p> <p>No he entendido nada</p> <p>The voice was too fast and the audio too short</p> <p>Habla muy rápido</p> <p>La pronunciación es más rápida</p> <p>Habla rápido</p> <p>Bastante difícil de entender. Solo he entendido unas cuantas palabras</p> <p>Porque hablaba claro</p> <p>El narrador hablaba deprisa</p> <p>Porque iba hablando muy rápido</p> <p>Creo que al ser más corto, es más difícil de entender. Además la persona hablaba rápido.</p> <p>La mujer hablaba demasiado rápido</p> <p>No se comprende bien el vocabulario y el acento es bastante extraño</p> <p>Demasiado rápido</p> <p>No he entendido algunas partes</p> <p>I missed some parts</p> <p>Vocabulario difícil</p> <p>No he entendido algunas palabras</p>
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