

## Abstract

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The aim of this thesis is to contribute to the field of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) by considering humour in casual conversations among non-native speakers of English.

Humour is a characteristic shared by all human beings, even though the way and the extent to which they practise and enjoy it, varies from one individual to another. The research on humour in ELF interactions was conducted under the assumption that one's *sense of humour* does not necessarily depend on one's mother tongue, i.e. non-native speakers can be 'funny' in English just as they can be in their respective mother tongues.

Apart from the ELF research, as theoretical background served various theories and studies about humour, even though these were in most cases carried out in native-speaker settings. The corpus of ELF interactions collected was small in scale, but nevertheless many aspects and types of humour found among native speakers appeared also among non-native speakers in the present research.

In ELF interactions, English is used as a language of communication among speakers who do not share the same mother tongue. However, its function goes beyond that. Participants in casual conversations complain, gossip, curse, joke, laugh, cry etc. together and, by doing that, they establish rapport with one another. ELF interactants do the same with only difference (but not a hindrance) that they do so in a language other than their mother tongue.