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Types of Humour Categories Used to Generate and Maintain Interest in Mathematics Among Secondary School Students in South Sudan's Displaced and Re-settled Communities

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Abstract

While there has been appreciable consensus among humour researchers as well as classroom teachers that the use of humour in the classroom setting can be an effective teaching tool, there is still, however, a dearth of literature available that classroom practitioners could use as a guide in actual practice. Most of the literature currently available tends to address the potential use of classroom humour in general, and does not go into the specifics of exactly "what types of humour forms" are effective. This article addresses this question in the context of a secondary school mathematics classroom in South Sudan's displaced and re-settled communities, where the lesson plans used in the intervention were infused and laced with instructional humour–humour related to the mathematics concepts being discussed–for the purpose of generating and maintaining student interest in mathematics. Using a researcher constructed observation sheet (RCOS) as the research instrument for capturing the desired qualitative data, five specific literature recommended humour types or categories (namely: mathematical *jokes*, *puns*, *riddles*, *related stories* and *funny-multiple choice items*) were used and identified as the ones that generated and maintained interest among the South Sudanese secondary school students. Classroom teachers who would like to use classroom humour for the purpose of motivating and inspiring their students may find the information contained in this article useful, as a practical-reference classroom guide.

Keywords: types of humour, classroom humour, mathematical humour, interest in mathematics

1. Introduction and Background

During a recent study that compared the interest-generating effects of two different instructional approaches in a secondary school classroom setting (Tap, Mtetwa, & Vere, 2019, 2020), a research question was posed: What kinds of humour forms generate and maintain interest for South Sudanese secondary school students living in displaced and re-settled communities? Before addressing this question in detail, a brief exploration and overview of relevant, existing literature about the appropriate and effective use of humour in the classroom setting is necessary.

There are as many humour types out there in various classroom settings as there are corresponding contextual situations where they apply appropriately and effectively (Gadanidis, Gadanidis, & Huang, 2005; Garner, 2006; Grawe, 2016). So far, successful attempts have been made to identify and classify the various types of humour used by teachers in classroom settings and at least thirteen (13) distinct categories of humour have been identified, all derived from teachers' various humorous behaviours in the classroom setting (Banas, Rodriguez, & Liu, 2011; Weimer, 2013; Chesser, 2013). These thirteen (13) or so can be scaled down to five (5) manageable-operational types or categories, namely: (1) related humour (humour related to course content), (2) unrelated humour (humour not related to course content), (3) self-disparaging humour (teacher targeting self with humour), (4) offensive humour (humour that is rude, sarcastic, stereotypical, or sexual in nature) and (5) other–disparaging humour that belittles others such as students, political figures, or fellow teachers (Wanzer & Frymier, 1999; Wanzer, Frymier, Wojtaszczyk, & Smith, 2006; Wanzer, Frymier, & Irwin, 2010). These five (5) types can be further classified into two (2) convenient general categories (Wanzer et al., 2006; Dieter, 2000; Banas et al., 2011; Weimer, 2013), namely: (a) the appropriate or positive types; and (b) the inappropriate or negative types of humour (Fitriah, 2012).

Instead of just discussing humour use in the classroom setting in its generality as is often the case with many prior

studies, this study, however, is more specific in nature as it focuses strictly on the practical use of literature based humour types that are recommended for a mathematics classroom setting (Godbey, 1997; Gadanidis et al., 2005; Warwick, 2009; Durik, Matarazzo, & Delayey, 2010). Hence, mathematics related humour categories such as jokes (j), puns (p), riddles (r), related-stories (s) and funny-multiple choice items (mc) were used for this intervention (Tap et al., 2019, 2020).

Generally, appropriate or positive types of humour that are recommended in the literature for classroom use include the following categories: Funny stories (which could be related or unrelated to the content), humorous comments, self-disparaging or self-depreciating humour, natural and spontaneous humour (e.g., humour that is unplanned, unintended, unrehearsed, unexpected or unanticipated), jokes, riddles, puns, funny props, visual illustrations (e.g., cartoons) and other unnamed categories (Godbey, 1997; Steele, 1998; James, 2001; Wanzer et al., 2006; Kuipers, 2009; Gadanidis et al., 2005). The un-recommended, also known as the inappropriate or negative types, which are strongly not recommendable for classroom use include any type of humour whose intention is to manipulate, ridicule, humiliate, stereotype, denigrate, dehumanise, be sarcastic (mean or rude), put down or mock others. Also, in the same category, is any humour which could be perceived as offensive, especially with regard to race, religion or sex (Wanzer et al., 2006; Fitriah, 2012; Dieter, 2000; Friedman & Friedman, 2019; Sidelinger & Tatum, 2019; Lamminpaa & Vesterinen, 2018; Wardman, 2020).

Among the recommended appropriate types of humour, jokes are a fairly high-risk form of humour. The risk here relates to the chances of bombing, failing or not coming off as funny, in front of students and having to deal with all of the accompanying embarrassment or humiliation (Dieter, 2000). In such cases Dieter (2000) suggests that the end result of bombing or a failed joke (failed humour attempt), which is often reflected in total silence in a classroom, is almost the same as if no attempt had been made to use humour at all. This implies that a failed joke may or may not be better than no joke at all and therefore some degree of care and judgment is required when using any type of humour (Chesser, 2013; Dieter, 2000; Wanzer & Frymier, 1999). Even a teacher who can't tell a joke can, however, still consider using alternative forms of humour such as funny quotes from famous and influential people, funny multiple-choice questions made by teachers and/or other alternative non-verbal or visual forms such as cartoons (Godbey, 1997; Chesser, 2013). This is because students tend to prefer teachers who show that they indeed have a sense of humour than those who do not or even try. Also, students often rate a teacher's sense of humour as one of the top qualities of an effective teacher, among other qualities such knowledge of and passion for subject matter (Dieter, 2000).

And even in the case of general public opinion such as in dating games or business, a sense of humour is rated high up along with intelligence, good looks or beauty, as one of the qualities a person would look for in a partner (Wanzer et al., 2010). In addition, a sense of humour counts as a virtue in contemporary societies and therefore a desirable leadership quality or trait. Hill (1998), as cited by Dieter (2000), suggests that a sense of humour may be the most important thing we ever teach to our students. Hill (1998), according to Dieter (2000), argues that if teachers can teach and encourage a student to have a sense of humor about even the very serious things in life, they are teaching much more than facts or figures. By teaching students "to be able to laugh at themselves, teachers are showing students how to cope in the real world, which is one of the most important survival skills we have" (Dieter, 2000, p. 27). Concurring with Hill (1998) about the sense of humour is Cornett (1986) who claims that humour is perhaps the single most important powerful teaching tool for classroom teachers.

For more practical examples of humour in the classroom, the readers may refer to both Gadanidis et al. (2005) and Dieter (2000) "Ten Non-joke Examples of Humor," which are alternative forms of humour that can be used in the mathematics classroom setting. According to Dieter (2000) and (Gadanidis et al. (2005) who practice and teach with humour as a teaching tool, there are several other forms of humour, often more implicit or subtle than jokes, which often have lower bomb or 'failed attempt' risk associated with them. Having practiced and appreciated the use of humour as an effective pedagogical toolkit for teaching, both Dieter (2000) and Gadanidis et al. (2005) concluded that the appropriate use of humour in the classroom should not be viewed or perceived as demeaning to the teaching profession, and in fact, is known–through students opinion surveys–to increase a teacher's likability and credibility, and to boost his/her professional image and even teaching effectiveness. While teaching is supposed to be serious business, it is also true that one can at the same time be discussing something very serious and still be funny or laughing. In addition, there are documented benefits of using humour in the classroom, such as reducing classroom tension, anxiety and helping to relax the learning environment. Given the negativity often associated with the mathematics learning environment, the use of humour in mathematics classroom may be what is needed in making students acquire the short-term instant gratification or positive emotional feelings in terms of attitudes, beliefs and values toward mathematics. Therefore, the appropriate use of humour in the classroom should not be viewed as a distracting from the serious-teaching business (Goodboy, Booth-Betterfield, Bolkan, & Griffin, 2015; Bolkan, Griffin, & Goodboy, 2018).

The purpose of this article is to report on the specific types of humour used to generate and maintain interest in

mathematics for South Sudanese secondary school students residing in displaced and re-settled communities. It is hoped that ideas in this paper can be of interest to classroom teachers (especially mathematics teachers) who may want to use humour for the purpose of motivating and inspiring their students in the classroom setting.

2. Methodology

Because the posed research question required specific identification or clarification of humour forms used during the intervention, it was suitably tackled through direct observation using an instrument referred to as the researcher constructed observation sheet (RCOS).

The RCOS contained a range of humour forms used in the classroom by the researcher and research assistant who acted as a co-teacher to identify the types of humour forms and the corresponding indicators of interest they generated (student's interest level codes). Both the research assistant and researcher were capable of delivering and observing both methods of instruction used and compared their independent observations during the teaching experiment. The length of the observation was the entire school term of twelve weeks, and every lesson administered was observed.

Each lesson had a lesson plan template laid out clearly in detail (see the Appendix) and the lesson plan was always accompanied by a researcher constructed mathematical-related humour template from which identified instructional humour related to the content material was administered. A set of various humour forms such as mathematical *jokes*, *puns*, *riddles*, related *stories* plus other contextualised but twisted familiar mathematical concepts, principles or ideas, were used during the intervention.

There was regular recording of students' reactions, utterances or indicators of interest such as students' smiling, laughing, hand clapping. This record was put on an observational sheet (RCOS) prepared by the teacher-researcher assisted by a research assistant, who also acted as a co-teacher and an observer. The daily recording was done by both the co-teacher and the teacher-researcher, who did most of the teaching. In the selection of the co-teacher, the teacher-researcher made sure the research assistant was a competent, committed, well-trained mathematics teacher, and that the assistant was adequately resourced and familiarised with the identified collection of prepared humorous materials, most of which were derived from the authorised curriculum taught at the schools chosen for the intervention.

Table 1. How RCOS was designed to Identify and Assess Interest Levels Codes

Research Question (R.Q.)	Instrument	Structure	Purpose	Administration	Analysis
R.Q: What kinds of humour forms generate interest in mathematics for secondary school students in South Sudan re-settled communities?	Researcher Constructed Observation Sheet (RCOS) with a range of humour forms	Contains a range of appropriate and inappropriate classroom humour forms, types or categories	Record student expressions of interest or lack of it	Every lesson of the experimental class, and may also be administered to control group as a placebo to prevent the students from figuring out which group they are assigned	Identify humor forms and associated approximate interest levels they generated

Table 1 above shows the partial structure of the instrument (RCOS) designed to provide data for answering the research question. The instrument was used in capturing data on types of humour used and the corresponding interest levels generated among South Sudanese secondary school students living in re-settled communities. The RCOS instrument was used by the researcher and research assistant to record students' reactions, utterances or any other observable behaviours (including signs of heightened interest, or any lack of it) during lessons. The researcher and research assistant sometimes switched roles in order to check on the extent to which the new method of instruction could be easily administered and implemented by any classroom teacher (Tap et al., 2019, 2020). Students' reactions as indicators (evidence) of interest included, but were not limited to those associated with desirable classroom positive characteristics such as approval or happiness. Such reactions were taken to include any show or evidence of excitement, smiling, laughing, hand clapping, cheering, positive remarks, body language/movements and any other positive indications of an overall relaxed-positive classroom mood.

Similarly, examples of indicators of lack of interest or other undesirable outcomes were taken to include signs of disapproval, sadness, anger or anguish, shame or guilt, helplessness or vulnerability, embarrassment, disappointment and/or frustration. Other examples include yelling out loud, showing a puzzled look, total classroom silence, walking out in an apparent protest or any other forms of observable disruptive behaviour. All these could be regarded as indications of an overall negative classroom mood or an unpleasant experience such as an anxiety or tension pervading the entire classroom. During each lesson, the lesson observer and the teacher also looked out for any other possible

indicators of lack of interest that may not have been anticipated. The teacher and co-teacher, both of whom were well trained mathematics teachers, familiarised themselves with the research instrument and went through a thorough orientation prior to using the RCOS instrument. This included developing a firm grasp and understanding of what actually constitutes appropriate and effective classroom humour, instructional humour as well as the acceptable formal definition of instructional humour, which is often defined to be anything related to the topic under discussion that is considered and perceived by students to be funny, amusing, thrilling or exciting (Dieter, 2000); or the quality that makes "something laughable or amusing" (Steele, 1998, p. 11).

After the daily data collection process using RCOS, the data were first organised and analysed using thematic analysis (e.g., positive versus negative reactions or pleasant versus unpleasant experience). The data was then enumerated or quantified using student's interest level codes in order to identify types of humour forms that seemed to appeal to students and the associated interest levels they may have generated. The students' reactions or utterances were coded, enumerated and quantified by assigning numerical values–ranging from one to five (1-5)–to students' responses (Tap et al., 2019), which reflected students' levels of interest as follows: *Strongly Disinterested/Negative* (1), *Disinterested/Negative* (2), *Neutral* (3), *Interested/Positive* (4) and *Strongly Interested/Positive* (5). The recorded data included the students' reactions and both the recorder and teacher's reflective comments, which were discussed at the end of each observed lesson. The discussions took the form of post lesson reflective dialogue, so as to capture the overall general classroom mood for each session while memories were still fresh. The records and the post lesson discussions were used to gauge the extent to which the general classroom mood was positive or negative, pleasant or unpleasant, relaxed or tense and/or any other related observable classroom behaviours or characteristics, on a daily basis.

3. Findings

Table 2. Summary of the Results from RCOS showing Breakdown-Percentages of Humour Categories

Context of Humour (Lessons)	**Humour Types (Categories) Used: Jokes (j), puns (p), riddles (r), stories (s) and top five reasons or multiple choice (mc) type items**	**Students' Responses, Reactions or Utterances and the Corresponding Interest Level Indicators or Codes**	**Remarks-Reflective Comments by Lesson's Observer and the Corresponding Interest Level Indicators**
An approximate total interest level percentages generated by the types of humour or categories used		*102/120 ~ 85%*	101/120 ~ 84%
An overall enumerated, estimated, or approximated average interest level generated		**85%**	
Humour types breakdown into five humour forms or categories:	Jokes (**j**): 5/24	21/25 ~ 84%	
	Puns (**p**): 9/24	43/45 ~ 96%	
	Riddles (**r**): 5/24	22/25 ~ 88%	
	Stories (**s**): 3/24	14/15 ~ 93%	
	Top Five Reasons list or Multiple Choice (**mc**) Type Items: 2/24	7/10 ~ 70%	
An overall estimated total average interest level percentage generated by humour forms, types or categories		**86%**	

4. Discussion

The overall average interest rating using RCOS was found to be high, at 86% (Table 2, Row 5). This seems to suggest

that the contextualised-appropriate humour forms used in the study were effective in generating interest in the mathematics lessons taught. To specifically answer the research question in detail, however, the sub-types of humour used during the main study were identified and classified into five (5) major categories (Wanzer et al., 2006; Dieter, 2000), namely *jokes* (j), *puns* (p), *riddles* (r), *stories* (s) and *top five* reasons list or *multiple choice* (mc) type items. These five (5) categories are not too distinct as they appear to overlap in some cases (e.g., the noted similarities between mathematical *puns* and *riddles*). These categories are the types of humour used strictly both during the main study as well as the pilot phase (Tap et al., 2019, 2020). All the five categories seemed to equally appeal to South Sudanese secondary school students living in displaced and re-settled communities. Going by the specific percentages they generated rather than the overall average, the types of related mathematical humour that seemed to be the most popular among the South Sudanese secondary school students living in displaced and re-settled communities are, in descending order, mathematical *puns* (p) at 96% followed by related *stories* (s) at 93%, the mathematical *riddles* (r) and *jokes* (j) at 88% and 84% respectively and *multiple choice* (mc) type items or *top five* reasons list at 70%, with an overall average-percentage of 86% (Table 2, row 5). Thus, even the *top five* reasons list or *multiple choice* type items at 70% interest rate generated is still a higher level of interest-percentage than or compared to the medium-neutral level of interest at 60% cut off, according to students' opinions interest level scale (Tap et al., 2019). Hence, it appears that all the five (5) typical categories or forms of humour used during the study fared well in terms of the approximate high average interest rate they generated during the teaching experiment.

During the teaching experiment (intervention), students tended to be loud and noisy (e.g., laughing, cheering, arguing or debating) as they engaged and actively participated in their learning process. However distractive it might appear, this classroom noisy atmosphere was essential as students were engaged through active participation in their learning process and is in line with what Heuett (2017) forecasts as an inevitable incoming "classroom of the future" (p. 890), where the lecture styled-traditional mathematics classroom setting is flipped, an instructional approach in which the learning environment is transformed into an exploratory, dynamic and interactive atmosphere where the teacher guides students as they discuss, problem solve, and apply concepts while engaging creatively in subject matter such as mathematics. Although admittedly a little bit disruptive, the classroom noise (e.g., students laughing or cheering) during the intervention is an indication that students are excited, motivated, inspired and enjoying their learning experience in the more often than not feared, dreaded and silent mathematics classroom setting (Weber, 2016; Grawe, 2016).

5. Conclusion

The types of humour that seem to be the most appealing and have the capacity to generate and maintain interest in learning mathematics among South Sudanese secondary school students living in displaced and re-settled communities fall into five (5) types or categories of humour that were contextualised into lesson plans (Table 2). They are, namely: mathematical *puns* (96%), mathematics related *stories* (93%), *riddles* (88%), *jokes* (84%) and *top five* reasons list or *multiple*-choice type items (70%). These five (5) humour types which sometimes overlap (e.g., there was little distinction between mathematical *puns* and *riddles*) were opportunistically infused and laced into mathematics concepts being taught or discussed during the intervention (Appendix). In preparation for the intervention, the teacher had been motivated to use humour in teaching and learning and had, to this end, explored, identified and adapted mathematics related humour forms from variety of sources such as the World Wide Web, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, talk shows, comedy shows and even some weird social gathering places such as night clubs or bars.

A humour-relaxed learning environment provides students with much needed short term instant gratification (such as situational interest or enjoyment). Seemingly playing at the centre of this dynamic interaction (humour-relaxed learning environment) are four main variables central to humour use such as: the *humour types* selected and used by the teacher to arouse students' interest (with effects such as enjoyment, excitement, engagement, motivation, inspiration and overall satisfaction); *learners*' proactive participation in learning mathematics; and the teacher's personality-teaching *traits*, characteristics or teacher's teaching qualities comprised of teacher's classroom *immediacy*, instructional *quality* and overall communication *competence*.

Using humour in practice in the classroom is not as difficult as it may first appear to be and it is something any mathematics teacher (either in South Sudan, Zimbabwe or elsewhere), equipped with appropriate acquired teacher's teaching traits, characteristics or teaching qualities (such as teacher's communication *competence*, instructional *qualities* and classroom *immediacy*), should be able to do as long as the teacher is adequately motivated and keeps an open mind when exploring various humour sources available on the Internet and elsewhere, and adequately prepares for lessons ahead of time (Appendix).

While classroom humour such as mathematical humour can be used as a teacher's creative-effective teaching tool for the purpose of motivating, inspiring and helping students to develop and acquire a positive attitude toward mathematics, care needs to be always taken by teachers, especially mathematics teachers, to ensure that classroom humour does not

serve the purpose of disguising what might be regarded as a superficial grasp of mathematics; but rather for attending to deeper-insightful and interesting mathematical approach (Gadanidis et al., 2005; Warwick, 2009; Durik et al., 2010; Weber, 2016; Tap et al., 2019, 2020).

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Appendix

A Sample of a Detailed-narrative Description of an H-SIA Lesson Plan Infused and Laced with Instructional Humour– Humour Related to the Topic of Discussion**:** Identified, prepared and infused or laced into this sample lesson are at least 3-4 instances of instructional humour related to the topic of discussion and the mode of delivery (H-SIA daily lesson plan) is outlined. Although the humour frequency may not be as important, efficient, and effective as the quality of humour itself (Banas et al., 2011; Weimer, 2013), the recommended frequency during the lesson should follow the following placement pattern: One at the beginning of a lesson, another two or more somewhere in the middle of a lesson and the last instant of humour should be placed somewhere toward or at the end of the lesson. Any other additional remaining planned humour instances can always be used as reserve when necessary: A quality humour is always simple, beautiful and thoughtful.

Materials/Equipment needed for the Lesson: chalks, blackboard, an eraser or when available, an overhead projector or even a laptop

References/Sources: Various secondary school mathematics textbooks, electronic resources, Internet or World Wide Web

Concept Development or Method of Development: Suppose the topic of the discussion for the day is the system of linear equations (first degree) also called simultaneous equations, the form $y = mx + b$, where m is a slope of a line and b is its y-intercept. Here, the slope (m) can first be introduced arithmetically as a ratio of rise/run, up/across or fall/run, dive/across if the slope is falling, using numbers and the idea of a right triangle as a visual aid.

Humour (H2) After students are comfortable with calculating ratios, applying the concept of long division, the following extraordinary claim (a twist) can be made: A rise of twenty five units in length over a run of five units long, 25/5, is not really equal to 5, it is instead equals to 14! The claim can be backed up with demonstration of the idea on the board using a pseudo proof with addition and multiplication arguments, which indeed argues that 25/5 = 14. Students can be asked, if that is the case, then why arithmetic is not performed this way?

A similar joke that would work here is the concept of an IQ myth, which is derived from the arithmetic formula long division algorithm: Dividend/Divisor = Quotient + Reminder/Divisor. This formula argues that the idea of an IQ, intelligence quotient, is just an obsession with myth because it leaves out the rest of other equally important variables, such as the dividend, divisor and remainder, all of which make up parts of the whole equation or the formula for division algorithm. The underlying message in this joke is that any hardworking student shouldn't be concerned about the so called IQ labels since there is no substitute for hard work.

After students are introduced and have practiced with the definition of slope algebraically as the change in y coordinates divided by the change in x coordinates, $m = \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1}$, which expresses the slope as a function of x and y; or the whole equation as a function of x, isolating y as a dependent variable, $y = mx + b$, a joke related to the definition of function can be cracked.

Humour (H3): Which of the following defines a function or which one is a function of the other, a father and a son or a son and a father? A well-defined function is always the one that shows a one-to-one correspondence relationship (e.g., $y = x$), one that can be made one-to-one by restricting its domain (e.g., $y = x^2$) or one in which the dependent variable (y) can be shared, e.g., $y = 1$ for all x, although this definition of function is acceptable, it is does not define a one-to-one function and hence its inverse doesn't exist. An acceptable definition of a function would be where the dependent variable may be shared ($y = 1$ for all x), but not the other way around such as in the case of sharing the independent variable ($x = 1$ for all y): the case where $y = 1$ for all x versus $x = 1$ for all y.

Classroom Tasks (Activities): (1) Given a slope and a point or two different points on a line, write the equation of a line, (2) given the equation of the line, $y = mx + b$, show the slope (m) of the line remains constant or unchanged throughout, (3) given that the freezing point of water is either zero degree Celsius or 32 degree Fahrenheit and boiling point of water is either 100 Celsius or 212 Fahrenheit, derive a formula relating the two temperatures, write each temperature explicitly as a function of the other, (4) suppose you drive the first half of your journey at a speed of 60 km per hour and drive the remaining second at a leisurely speed of 30 km per hour, what is then your average speed and (5) more classroom practice on solving the system of equations graphically, using substitution method or elimination.

Humour (H4): When a family friend asked the music legend Gordon Koang Douth how old he and his sister were, he answered in the following fashion: If I were $3/5$ as old as I am and Nyariek were only $3/4$ as old as she is, together

we would be three years older than I am alone. But if I were only $2/5$ as old as I am and Nyariek were half old as old as she is, together we would be three years younger than I am alone. How old is Koang and his sister?

Take Home Tasks (Activities): Go and explore different types of jobs out there. Among those different jobs, choose two jobs that interest you most and which you would like to pursue as your future career or profession. After that you can do some research by interviewing some people so as to figure out how much money is earned in each of the jobs you have chosen. Model each salary with an equation and compare them. Then decide which of the two jobs you would choose as a profession and justify your choice.

Humour (H5): Since most of you are still unemployed, you may sometimes be curious or wonder how a workplace organizational and hierarchy structure looks like? Well, here is a glimpse of it: A workplace environment or hierarchy structure is comparable to a tree full of monkeys all sitting on different branches at different levels. The monkeys on top look down and see a tree full of terribly and miserably smiling faces. Meanwhile, the monkeys on the bottom look up and see nothing up there but scary assholes.

While this joke may be edgy or even slightly out of line, it mirrors and reflects exactly the fact that the country, at the time of the study, was deeply divided into three ethnically based-socio-economic classes, namely the upper, middle and lower classes. The big fish-big bloated bellies upper class (political and military leaders) take all the money, does none of the work. The middle class do all the work, pays all the taxes. The poor are there just to scare the hell out of the middle class since they keep showing up at the middle class doors knocking and looking for those "jobs," jobs such as garbage collections or cleaning some dirty toilets.

Humour (H6): So who is in Charge at the Workplace: the Story of the Body Parts or Functions?

One day the different parts of the body were having an argument to see which should be in charge.

The brain said, "I do all the thinking so I am the most important and I should be in charge."

The eyes said, "I see everything and I let the rest of you know where we are. So I am the most important and I should be in charge."

The hands said, "Without me we wouldn't be able to pick anything up or move anything. So I am the most important and I should be in charge."

The stomach said, "I turn the food we eat into energy for the rest of you. Without me, we would starve. So I am the most important and I should be in charge."

The legs said, "Without me, we wouldn't be able to move anywhere. So I am the most important and I should be in charge."

The rectum (the asshole) said, "I think I should be in charge." All the rest of the parts laughed and said "you, the ass?" You don't do anything at all! You are not important and you couldn't be in charge. So the ass got angry and it closed up…

And in few days or so, the legs were all wobbly, the stomach was all bloated, the hands were all shaky, the eyes were all watery, and the brain was all cloudy and dizzy!

Alternatively stated, the body parts laughed at the rectum and insulted him and so, within seconds, the rectum shutdown tightly. Within few days, the brain had a terrible headache, the stomach was bloated, the legs got wobbly, the eyes got watery, and the blood got toxic. Then they were all forced to accept that indeed the rectum, a perceived asshole, should be in charge.

Moral of the story: The asshole is always in charge and should be the boss at the workplace!

Lesson Connection or Concepts Extension: The next topic of discussion will be the second degree equations, the type $y = ax^2 + bx + c$, and notice the last part of this equation is just what we have studied in form of $mx + b = y$. With the second degree equation, also called quadratic equation, you could imagine that your salary, which has been slowly growing linearly as $bx + c$ where c is your starting salary, is now growing faster as x^2. Now, adding up all the expressions for the growth, we get a function of x or $y = ax^2 + bx + c$, which we will study next time.

Lesson Recap or Round up Summary at the end of the Day's Classroom Activities: A round-up, recap or the end of the day lesson activities…

Humour (H7): As you apply for a job any time in the near future, never forget to write a cover letter, an application letter which highlights your qualifications and the reasons why you think you deserve the job more than anyone else. Here is an example of a cover letter:

Subject: A humorous application for employment

Dear sir (s),

I refer to the recent death of the accountant at your office and hereby apply for the job as a replacement of the dead accountant.

Each time I apply for employment, I get a reply that there is no vacancy. But this time, in this case, I caught you red handed and you have no excuse because while I was on my way to my home town for the holidays, I heard the good news about his death. So I quickly rushed back to attend the funeral so as to be sure the he was truly dead before applying.

Attached to the letter is a copy of my C.V. and his obituary photo as a proof of his death. You can't lie to me this time around and so you must give me the job. I am looking forward to hear from you soon and thank you very much for consideration.

A discussion question to students: If you were the employer, would you give this guy the job? If so why or why not?

Post Lesson Reflective Questions for Discussion (15 minutes long or 30 minutes for double period): The following questions were used as a guide for discussion during the post lesson reflective dialogue. The questions were completed and recorded during the live lesson by the observer and were concluded later with group discussion by both the teacher-researcher and collaborative-teacher or research assistant.

A. What went really well about this lesson?.....
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B. What could have been done differently?.....
.....
.....

C. How or in what way will the next lesson be improved?.....
.....
.....

While the H-SIA method provides students with short-term instant gratification (enjoyment), it also allows both the students and teacher to be active participants in the learning process because the method often pauses deliberately to allow students time to reflect, share their views, thoughts or opinions about how to solve particular problems while encouraging and requiring the teacher to step in any time whenever the students are stuck during the problem solving process. The frequent pauses, reflection or redundancy allows for a relaxed-extended-methodical critical thinking rather than an abrupt-quick impulsive thinking, which can be regarded as nothing more than a superficial approach to mathematical concepts or discourse.