

HUMOUR AND PLEASURE IN MATHEMATICS TEACHING PRACTICE

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A child has a duty to study beginning from 7-year-old age. If in the primary school teaching is largely based on the game, then in high school, game context becomes minimized or disappears. In pupils' mind an image of mathematics as a very important and useful school subject is generated. We think, according to Björkqvist (2008), that the experience of intellectual pleasure might be an obvious goal of school mathematics. And what is more, if pupils are happy and amused, they are much more likely to be motivated to learn and to retain information. Research has established that one's affective state has an effect on cognitive processes (see e.g. Hannula, 2006). How should these results be used in routine teaching? Should the teachers focus on creating an entertaining show for their pupils? Or would teachers change their lessons into therapy sessions? This research falls within didactical engineering or design research paradigm. It is a case of educational process improvement by bringing about new forms of teaching in order to study them. A teaching approach that comprises using of humour is being studied. And it appears to be the affective factor in math thinking development, as well as the pleasure associated with problem solving is being discussed.

We explore: *How can the processes related to creating a mathematics teaching practice that integrates learning, pleasure and humour be characterised?*

We present two facets of humor: in the form of cognitive play and teacher's style of behavior. According to Martin (2007, p. 109), the incongruity of humour can be seen as a manifestation of a play with ideas, where words and concepts are used in a ways that are surprising, unusual, and incongruous, activating schemas with which they are not normally associated. This play brings the intellectual pleasure to pupils, who take part in it. Teacher's style of behavior in our educational approach is aimed to pupil's "achievement". The teacher raises a problem to the pupils that they solve in a manner consistent with their level of competence. Thus a teacher provides the necessary conditions for their problem solving. If we use humour, then created comic situation is characterized by novelty, which allows us to make the problem more meaningful. It attracts the pupil's attention. As a result, the motivation of the imagination evoked by surprise takes place. If at the lesson we use intellectual games, which are directed on overcoming the intellectual passivity, a habit to think and solve the problems develops. The situation of creative thinking at the lesson, promoting a combination of emotions and intelligence is created. Mathematical problem solving at the lessons requires an input of energy during a prolonged period of time, and pleasure sustains that effort (Björkqvist, 2008). We strongly believe that to achieve the pupils' engagement with maths it is possible to develop suitable (open and multilevel) math's problems with attractive humorous flavoring.

Key words: affect, humour, pleasure, problem solving

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