

Contents

Contributors xi

About this book: A brief overview

T. Nunes and P. Bryant xiii

PART I MATHEMATICS AND INTELLIGENCE 1

1 The nature of mathematical concepts

Gérard Vergnaud 5

Introduction 5

The theory of conceptual fields 9

Elementary algebra and formal calculations 25

Tool-concepts and object-concepts 26

Conclusion 27

2 Systems of signs and mathematical reasoning

Terezinha Nunes 29

Why do we need the idea of mediated action when
discussing mathematical knowledge? 29

Variations in systems of signs and their impact on
children's reasoning 32

The connection between systems of signs and
different practices in mathematics 40

Lessons from the analysis of mediated activity
for the mathematics classroom 42

PART II THE DEVELOPMENT OF MATHEMATICAL UNDERSTANDINGS 45

3 Mathematical understanding in the nursery school years

<i>Peter Bryant</i>	53
Do children have genuine mathematical experiences in the pre-school period?	53
Counting	54
Sharing and one-to-one correspondence	60
Sharing and division	63
Adding and subtracting	65
Conclusions	67

4 Word problems: A vehicle for promoting authentic mathematical understanding and problem solving in the primary school?

<i>L. Verschaffel and E. De Corte</i>	69
Introduction	69
Classifications of word problems	70
Representing arithmetic word problems	76
Selecting and executing the arithmetic actions	83
Interpreting and verifying the answer	93
Conclusions and future perspectives	94
Acknowledgements	97

5 Children's understandings of turn and angle

<i>Sandra Magina and Celia Hoyles</i>	99
General framework of the study	99
Children's conception of angle	100
Introduction to the study	101
Activities with cardboard watches	103
Results from the prediction activities	108
Results from the tasks of comparing times	111
Conclusions	113

6 Knowing about proportions in different contexts

<i>Janice A. Singer, Amy S. Kohn and Lauren B. Resnick</i>	115
Introduction	115
Protoquantitative reasoning	118
First steps to quantification: Protoratios	126
True ratios: Scalar and functional reasoning	128
Concluding discussion	130
Acknowledgements	132

7 Mathematical concepts at the secondary school level:**The learning of algebra and functions**

<i>Carolyn Kieran</i>	133
Distinguishing between algebra and functions	133
Algebra	137
Functions	150
Conclusions	156
Acknowledgements	158

PART III SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON MATHEMATICS LEARNING 159**8 Happy birthday to you: Early mathematical thinking of Asian, South American, and US children**

<i>Herbert P. Ginsburg, Y. Elsie Choy, Luz Stella Lopez, Rebecca Netley and Chi Chao-Yuan</i>	163
Introduction	163
The present study	171
Method	171
Results	176
Discussion	196
Conclusions	200
Acknowledgements	201
Appendix: Birthday party game	202

9 Learning arithmetic with an abacus

<i>Giyoo Hatano</i>	209
How an abacus is used and learned	210
Becoming a master in mental abacus operation: A case of routine expertise	214
The abacus makes a difference in arithmetic	224
Implications for mathematics instruction	229
Acknowledgements	231

10 What children and teachers count as mathematics

<i>Guida de Abreu, Alan J. Bishop and Geraldo Pompeu Jr.</i>	233
Introduction	233
Cognition, beliefs, and attitudes	235
What children count as mathematics	237
Educational approaches to cultural conflict	253
The teachers' perspective	255
Concluding remarks	263
Acknowledgements	264

11 Social Interactions and Mathematics Learning	
<i>M.L. Schubauer-Leoni and A.-N. Perret-Clermont</i>	265
A first study: Piagetian vs. school tasks	265
The meaning attributed to the object in terms of the questioning context	270
Moving from a bipolar to a tripolar model of knowledge construction	271
The emergence of the notion of a “didactic contract”	272
The study of the didactic contract via the teacher	273
The study of the didactic contract via the pupil	275
The didactic contract and the institutional meta-contract	276
The organized breaking of the didactic contract	277
A psychosocial theory of social interactions and a didactic theory of didactic interactions	278
An example of research into didactic interactions	280
Epilogue	282
Acknowledgement	283
PART IV CONSTRUCTING KNOWLEDGE IN THE CLASSROOM	285
12 Meaning mathematically with computers	
<i>Richard Noss</i>	289
Introduction	289
Mathematical meaning	290
Formalisation	292
Generalisation	298
Abstraction	303
Towards a theoretical framework	309
Note	314
13 Mediating between concrete and abstract	
<i>Koeno Gravemeijer</i>	315
Introduction	315
Long division with manipulatives	316
Realistic mathematics education	320
Key principles of realistic mathematics education	328
Discussion	342
14 Charming fractions or fractions being charmed?	
<i>L. Streefland</i>	347
Introduction and overview	347
A bird’s-eye view on fractions	349
Some chocolate bars for some children	351
Where do we go from here? A dilemma	352
Table arrangements	353
Dealing with the course of fair sharing	358
On the way to formal operations	361
Discussion	370

15 Didactic engineering*Régine Douady* 373

Introduction 373

A. Mathematical knowledge in the didactic relation 374

B. Examples of didactical engineering 378

Conclusion 400

References 403**Author index** 433**Subject index** 439