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Young children's emotional acts while engaged in mathematical problem solving.

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Summary: The analysis reported in this chapter focuses on a second-grade classroom in which the children typically displayed positive emotional acts as they attempted to solve personally challenging mathematics problems. We argue that, within the microculture established in a particular classroom, certain emotional acts but not others are appropriate in situations such as solving challenging mathematical tasks. The emotional acts that are warranted in particular situations can differ significantly from one classroom to another depending on the nature of the social norms that have been established. We illustrate how the negotiation of social norms that contrasted sharply with those established in most US mathematics classroom made possible the children's generally positive responses to mathematical problem solving. In the final section of the chapter, we discuss the implications for the development of productive classroom learning environments in which debilitating emotions such as frustration while solving mathematical problems are not warranted.

Classification: C20 C30 C50 C70 D50

Keywords: emotional acts; beliefs; social context; social norms; classroom social interaction; obligations and expectations

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