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‘Number in cultures’ as a playful outdoor activity: making space for critical mathematics education in the early years.


Summary: The chapter discusses an attempt to design and implement a playful outdoor activity for a culturally diverse group of young children that emphasizes a critical perspective on mathematical learning. Critical mathematics education is taken here to embrace identity and learning as interrelated processes that are not simply analytical categories but deeply rooted in collective action and human subjectivity. Based on this premise, “Number in Cultures” can be conceived as a counter event that constitutes an open space for young children and adults to play, explore and question issues concerning the cultural underpinnings of number and its relatedness to their lives. Specifically, it has aimed to create awareness around diversity in number-words and number-symbols rooted in the context of Greek, Arabic and Romany languages and cultures. Number in cultures has been implemented as part of a playground workshop where Roma children could potentially become active participants along with adults and children of a non-Roma background.

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