An inferential view on concept formation.


Summary: This paper focuses on an inferential view on introducing new concepts in mathematics classrooms. A theoretical framework is presented which helps to analyse and reflect on the processes of teaching and learning mathematical concepts. The framework is based on the philosophies by Ludwig Wittgenstein and Robert Brandom. Wittgenstein’s language-game metaphor and especially its core, the primacy of the use of words, provide insight into the processes of giving meaning to words. Concerning the inferentialism by Brandom, the use of words in inferences can be regarded as an indicator of the understanding of a concept. The theoretical considerations are exemplified by the interpretation of a scene of real classroom communication.

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