

Maria Samborska

Engaging underachieving students in mathematical thinking. An example of a supplementary math course for middle school students

Students' low achievement in mathematics is a matter of many teachers' and researchers' concern. In Polish schools, the most common way to help those who struggle with mathematics is organising remedial classes, which are usually very similar to regular lessons. What is often missed in such an approach is the students' attitude towards mathematics, which is an important variable that affects learning and achievement.

In my talk, I will present an experimental supplementary math course for middle school students which was designed as an alternative to traditional remedial classes. The main goal was to create an environment in which students can enjoy mathematics and change their negative attitude towards this subject. I will present the results of a pilot study conducted in the academic year 2014/15 on a group of middle school students. I will show samples of pupils' work and comment on their performance, as well as the feedback received from them.

Keywords: low achievement in learning mathematics, intervention mathematics course, middle school