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VEm
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youtu.be/we1zbAh-fxg

Hello, people!

We are gathered here, at this very important moment, to speak to VEm Brasil.

VEm Brasil is, effectively, a milestone, not only for ethnomathematics, but a milestone in general for education, because it represents, first, the recognition that ethnomathematics is moving forward. Ethnomathematics is working, it is being used and worked on all around the world, and VEm Brasil is a proof of that. We have people participating there in the four corners of the world, from everywhere. So, ethnomathematics continues to grow and is here to stay and to evolve and to expand its entire reach as the formation for a happy future.

The second aspect, which I highlight as important for VEm Brasil, is the wide use of technology. It would be impossible to make a VEm Brasil if we did not have this technology resource, digital, information, communication etc. This new technology allows us to get closer and be able to be together with the whole world, all of us are participants. It would be difficult to do an international conference as comprehensive as VEm Brasil if we did not have all these technological resources. So, I repeat two things I highlight: first, the importance of the theme, which is ethnomathematics, and second, the importance of holding this event.

It is obvious that this idea can be adopted in all sectors of knowledge, it can go to the arts, to sports, to education in general and it should help that we have everyone participating in the same human species, humanity, which locates in several places. It is possible - and we hope, and it is our wish - that this leads to a true concept of humanity. The same species that is trying to deal with conditions that are beyond our control, meteorological, environmental, geological cycles and, now, with viruses, this COVID-19 pandemic.

Viruses have been around since life arose. They always try to locate themselves in more complex organisms and transfer from more complex organisms, from one individual to another. So, it is not new! The point is that these viruses have become active, more aggressive, and the transfer from one complex organism to another is facilitated, because we all live together and very close, which makes it is easier for the virus to pass from one to the other if we are close.

Presentation by Ubiratan D'Ambrosio

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transcription translation: English

One proposal is what is being done today in all countries, some with some resistance: is this isolation, so that we find ourselves less time with others, so that we do not have agglomerations, so that we do not give opportunity for this virus to pass with ease from one individual to another. It is a type of activity to make the virus unable to perform its function, which is to pass from one organism to another.

In this, of course, there is a paradox. We talk about humanity and the concept of humanity says: all of us being together, all of us embracing, all of us living together in important meetings, family, sports, the arts and in a series of things. All of this requires proximity and the virus tells us: "oh, good! Proximity is favorable for me". And we have to fight the virus, avoiding proximity. This creates a paradox that is very difficult to resolve. How are we going to do it?

We are doing it now, thanks to the means of technology, which allows us to be together despite being distant. Fortunately, the viruses that enter the computer are not the COVID-19 viruses, yet they have not learned to enter the computer, so let's hope they can't. We succeeded because, of all living species, we are the one with much greater capacity to create, to do new things, to explore new things. How do we do that? Based on what? Based on knowledge from various areas, various types of knowledge, and all of history shows us that what is fundamental in all manifestations of knowledge is knowledge of a mathematical nature.

We learned to observe, to compare, to classify, to organize and, from there, mathematical knowledge arises. It is obvious that if we start observing, we will observe what is close by, which is our natural environment, which is our cultural and social environment. From there, we make comparisons, classifications, ordinations, measurements, quantifications, inferences. This is the basis of mathematical knowledge.

Anywhere in the world, in any culture, all manifestations, which we call mathematics, have this trajectory: observe, compare, classify, order, measure, quantify, draw conclusions (this is inference. This always appears, in all cultures. Therefore, it is not possible, I think it is unthinkable, when you think of humanity, to exclusively privilege a piece of this planet, which was around the Mediterranean Basin and which has expanded throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas and for the whole world, but it is the one that has expanded.

And those who were there already, what about those? They are ethnomathematics. They cannot be ignored, because they are part of the history of that entire group, which has historically been located, it is not known when, and, geographically, in certain places on this planet. They are just as valid, just as important as the one that started in the Mediterranean region. This, which originated in the Mediterranean region, developed in a certain direction, that direction is scientific knowledge. Wonderful! And this scientific knowledge, this nature, the possibility that gives a wider, faster displacement, etc., has expanded throughout the world. That knowledge, which was in each place, remains. And when that knowledge, which comes from outside and arrives in a certain place, which is called, in the case of mathematics, academic mathematics, it cannot drown, eliminate, reject what was already there. And that is the main idea of ethnomathematics.

This main idea of ethnomathematics is that it asks us to look at all natural, social, cultural environments, which is what I call in all ethno, to know how, in each of these ethnos, the techniques of observation, to compare, to classify, to order developed, that is, matema. And the techniques, which were developed in the different ethnos, are what we call tics, or techniques (instead of talking about techniques, I speak an abbreviation, something simpler): mathematical tactics in that specific ethno. This comes from the history of this group, from the origins of this group and it has been the basic element for them to have evolved throughout history and to keep moving forward through history, and it is there, it remains. Now, with the arrival of the other ethno, the group that was the one that expanded and conquered the world, is different.

Everyone is different. The difference does not mean eliminating the other. The difference means that the two are integrated and produce something integrated and better. This is the great realization of VEm Brasil: promoting this meeting, which should result in something better. We are going to overcome this great crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, and we hope to have a better world, a happier Humanity.

Thank you very much, people!

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