



## Interactive Educational Units in Mathematics Education

by

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The document:

#### MATHEMATICS EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: A REALITY TO BE TRANSFORMED,

contains some important conclusions of which I want to point out two:

1) The role of mathematicians in education has been small or nonexistent.

2) Mathematicians can play a *greater* role in teacher training, provided that care is taken in their approach.

I don't agree entirely with the first one, but I do agree strongly with the second one, especially if we replace *greater* for *better*.





1) The role of mathematicians in education has been small or non-existent.

Unfortunately this is not completely true.

We must remember the shameful episode of the *New Math* in the 60s and 70s. It had some devastating effects in Math Education around the World, from which many countries have not yet fully recovered.

This is an example of how we, professional mathematicians, can do a lot of harm when we are carless and irresponsible.

As a result of this sad experience, mathematicians have been alienated from education since the seventies. And yes, they have had very little influence in Math Education ever since.





2) Mathematicians can play a *better* role in teacher education and training, provided that care is taken in their approach.

Yes, they can and they should, but we must emphasize the

#### care

I believe we should limit ourselves to providing mathematical content and resources and some help in the mathematical aspects of teacher training. What we can do is help them understand better what they must teach.

We should *not* tell teachers how to teach.





The document also contains some recommended steps to follow, one of which is:

• Using information and communication technologies (ICT) to make more resources available for teachers and students.

Notice that in the document there are several specific actions proposed but no one related to this recommended step.

My purpose in this presentation is to make a concrete proposal for applying ICT's in Math teacher training.





There are many ways to use ICT's in education, and particularly in Math education. The one I have explored during more than 20 years is the use of

# **Interactive Educational Units**

I'll show some examples, explain my involvement in this subject, and make a direct proposal.

First one example for all to enjoy...





#### Construcción de la trayectoria dadas la posición y la velocidad





#### Una construcción de la elipse

Con centro en un punto M, trazamos una circunferencia de radio R. Sea F un punto cualquiera del interior de la circunferencia, distinto de M. Construyamos la elipse con focos M y F, tal que la suma de las distancias de sus puntos a los focos sea igual a R

- $f = |\overline{MP}|$ , es decir, la distancia entre los focos
- m un punto cualquiera de la elipse.
- P el punto de intersección de la recta por M y m, con la circunferencia de radio R,







#### Construcción de la trayectoria dadas la posición y la velocidad





#### Una construcción de la elipse

Con centro en un punto M, trazamos una circunferencia de radio R. Sea F un punto cualquiera del interior de la circunferencia, distinto de M. Construyamos la elipse con focos M y F, tal que la suma de las distancias de sus puntos a los focos sea igual a R

- $f = |\overline{MF}|$ , es decir, la distancia entre los focos
- m un punto cualquiera de la elipse.
- P el punto de intersección de la recta por M y m, con la circunferencia de radio R,



Limpiar





#### Construcción de la trayectoria dadas la posición y la velocidad





Limpiar





#### Construcción de la trayectoria dadas la posición y la velocidad

#### Sean:

- f = |MF|, es decir, la distancia entre los focos de la elipse,
- m un punto cualquiera de la elipse,

 $\overline{r} = \overline{Mm} \ \forall \ r = |\overline{Mm}|.$ 

P el punto de intersección de la recta por M y m, con la circunferencia de radio R,

 $\overline{q} = \overline{FP} \vee q = |\overline{FP}|$ 

θ el ángulo formado por r y v.

Entonces:

Texto



$$q^{2} = \frac{(R^{2} - f^{2})(R - r)}{r}$$
(1)

У

$$r q sen \theta = \frac{R^2 - f^2}{2}$$
 (2)



Hodógrafa

Animar







I believe the use of Technology in the classroom and for independent study, opens an important oportunity for mathematicians to help improve Mathematics education, by participating in the elaboration of high quality interactive units or lessons that can be used by teachers and students.

Teachers may clarify their concepts and deepen their understanding of the subject.

Students may use them for independent study and practice and as a form of having some contact with the way mathematicians think and explain their subject matter.





There are many ways to use ICT's in education, and particularly in Math education. The one I have explored during more than 20 years is the use of

# **Interactive Educational Units**

I'll show some examples, explain my involvement and experience in this area, and make a concret proposal.





## How can Technology help to improve Math Education?

Atraction and Motivation
Concept formation and formalization

Exercises
Autoevaluation
Problem solving

Concentration on specific aspects

Exploring mathematical objects
Mathematical simulations

Illustrations of theorems and proofs

We will see some examples of how this is done.





## Atraction and Motivation

El Capitán Bravura es un héroe de cómic en apuros. Su autor ha olvidado las normas de ortografía de la b y la v y no puede utilizar sus poderes. ¡Ayúdale!

¿Qué v oy a hacer? Ya no puedo in vocar mi poder de in visi bilidad, no puedo volar, ni in ventar nue bos artilugios para luchar contra mis ad bersarios. Me he con bertido en alguien bulnera ble. ¿Es el final del Capitán Vra vura?

¿Cómo sería la vida del Capitán Bravura sin dudas ortográficas?

Comprobar





## Interactive Units in Math Education Atraction and Motivation



Jordi y Maribel no logran entender por qué obtienen diferentes resultados. Observa sus operaciones y ayúdales a resolver este problema.





Interactive Units in Math Education Atraction and Motivation



Jordi y Maribel no logran entender por qué obtienen diferentes resultados. Observa sus operaciones y ayúdales a resolver este problema.





## Interactive Units in Math Education Atraction and Motivation



Jordi y Maribel no logran entender por qué obtienen diferentes resultados. Observa sus operaciones y ayúdales a resolver este problema.







Interactive Units in Math Education Concept formation and formalization

Ayúdale a Maribel a encontrar el orden correcto para resolver las operaciones y obtener el resultado indicado





![](_page_18_Picture_1.jpeg)

Ayúdale a Maribel a encontrar el orden correcto para resolver las operaciones y obtener el resultado indicado

![](_page_18_Figure_3.jpeg)

¿Hiciste primero las multiplicaciones y divisiones y luego las sumas y restas?¿Hiciste las operaciones de izquierda a derecha?

Otro ejemplo

Otro orden

Resumen

![](_page_19_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_19_Picture_1.jpeg)

![](_page_19_Picture_2.jpeg)

Ayúdale a Maribel a encontrar el orden correcto para resolver las operaciones y obtener el resultado indicado

![](_page_19_Figure_4.jpeg)

![](_page_20_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_20_Picture_1.jpeg)

Ayúdale a Maribel a encontrar el orden correcto para resolver las operaciones y obtener el resultado indicado

Interactive Units in Math Education

Concept formation and formalization

La jerarquía de operaciones son reglas que nos dicen en qué orden deben hacerse las operaciones para obtener con seguridad el resultado correcto.

Forma la regla de acuerdo a lo que exploraste.

Ì	Las multiplicaciones	<mark>∽ y</mark> di∨isiones	🝷 se hacen antes	
	<mark>que las</mark> sumas	<mark>⊸ ylas</mark> restas	◄.	
		Verificar		
	tro ejemplo	Otro orden	Resumen	

![](_page_21_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_21_Picture_1.jpeg)

Interactive Units in Math Education Concept formation and formalization

Ayúdale a Maribel a encontrar el orden correcto para resolver las operaciones y obtener el resultado indicado

![](_page_21_Figure_4.jpeg)

![](_page_22_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_22_Picture_2.jpeg)

![](_page_22_Figure_4.jpeg)

![](_page_23_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_23_Picture_2.jpeg)

![](_page_23_Figure_4.jpeg)

![](_page_24_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_24_Picture_2.jpeg)

![](_page_24_Figure_4.jpeg)

![](_page_25_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_25_Picture_2.jpeg)

![](_page_25_Figure_4.jpeg)

![](_page_26_Picture_0.jpeg)

## Interactive Units in Math Education Autoevaluation

![](_page_26_Picture_2.jpeg)

Resuelve los siguientes ejercicios, respetando la jerarquía de las operaciones, al terminar presiona el botón Verificar

 Realiza las operaciones indicadas en la expresión respetando la jerarquía de las operaciones.

7 - 3 ÷ 1 × 2 = 8   
9 - 8 ÷ 4 + 6 = 13   
3 × 7 - 4 + 2 = 19 
$$\checkmark$$

2) Selecciona los operadores necesarios para que el resultado sea el valor indicado.

![](_page_26_Figure_7.jpeg)

![](_page_27_Picture_0.jpeg)

## Interactive Units in Math Education Autoevaluation

![](_page_27_Picture_2.jpeg)

Resuelve los siguientes ejercicios, respetando la jerarquía de las operaciones, al terminar presiona el botón Verificar

 Realiza las operaciones indicadas en la expresión respetando la jerarquía de las operaciones.

$$9 \times 9 - 3 + 4 = 82$$
  
 $5 + 3 \div 1 \times 9 = 32$   
 $9 \times 7 - 4 + 1 = 60$ 

2) Selecciona los operadores necesarios para que el resultado sea el valor indicado.

![](_page_27_Figure_7.jpeg)

![](_page_28_Picture_0.jpeg)

## **Problem solving**

![](_page_28_Picture_3.jpeg)

![](_page_28_Figure_4.jpeg)

Para calcular el área del triángulo de lados 10, 8 y 7 se puede proceder de varias maneras. Pero la que requiere de matemáticas más simples y menos cálculos es ésta:

Partimos el triángulo por su altura *h* perpendicular al lado que mide 10. Sea *x* el cateto adyacente a la hipotenusa que mide 7. Esto nos da dos triángulos rectángulos, uno con

![](_page_29_Picture_0.jpeg)

Interactive Units in Math Education Problem solving

![](_page_29_Picture_2.jpeg)

![](_page_29_Figure_3.jpeg)

 $x^{2} + h^{2} = 7^{2}$  $(10-x)^{2} + h^{2} = 8^{2}$ 

![](_page_30_Picture_0.jpeg)

Interactive Units in Math Education Problem solving

![](_page_30_Picture_2.jpeg)

![](_page_30_Figure_3.jpeg)

 $100 - 20x = 8^2 - 7^2$ 

![](_page_31_Figure_0.jpeg)

![](_page_32_Picture_0.jpeg)

## Interactive Units in Math Education Concentration on specific aspects

![](_page_32_Picture_2.jpeg)

![](_page_32_Figure_3.jpeg)

![](_page_33_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_33_Picture_2.jpeg)

## **Exploring Mathematical Objects**

![](_page_33_Figure_4.jpeg)

![](_page_34_Figure_0.jpeg)

![](_page_35_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_35_Picture_2.jpeg)

## **Exploring Mathematical Objects**

![](_page_35_Figure_4.jpeg)

![](_page_36_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_36_Picture_2.jpeg)

**Exploring Mathematical Objects** 

![](_page_36_Figure_4.jpeg)

![](_page_37_Picture_0.jpeg)

Interactive Units in Math Education Mathematical Simulations

![](_page_37_Picture_2.jpeg)

![](_page_37_Figure_3.jpeg)

![](_page_38_Picture_0.jpeg)

Interactive Units in Math Education Mathematical Simulations

![](_page_38_Picture_2.jpeg)

#### dST= 149.3256 dTL= 0.3883

![](_page_38_Figure_4.jpeg)

![](_page_39_Picture_0.jpeg)

Interactive Units in Math Education Mathematical Simulations

![](_page_39_Picture_2.jpeg)

![](_page_39_Figure_3.jpeg)

![](_page_40_Picture_0.jpeg)

Interactive Units in Math Education Illustrating theorem proofs

![](_page_40_Picture_2.jpeg)

La ley de las proporciones. Eudoxio, en Elementos de Euclides, Libro V.

Geometría

 $5 AX \leq AP < 6 AX \quad 5 AY \leq AQ < 6 AY$  $8 AX \leq AB < 8 AX \quad 8 AY \leq AC < 8 AY$ 

![](_page_40_Figure_6.jpeg)

#### Teorema

Si **ABC** y **APQ** son triángulos semejantes, entonces

$$\frac{AP}{AB} = \frac{AQ}{AC}$$

#### Demostración

Sea *n* un entero positivo y *X* un punto sobre *AB*, tales que *AB* = *n AX*. Sea Y el punto sobre *AC* tal que *AXY* es semajante a *ABC*. Sea *m* otro entero positivo tal que

 $m AX \leq AP \leq (m+1) AX$ 

Entonces

$$\frac{m}{n} = \frac{mAX}{nAX} \le \frac{AP}{AB} < \frac{(m+1)AX}{nAX} = \frac{m+1}{n}$$

Análogamante,

$$\frac{m}{n} = \frac{mAY}{nAY} \le \frac{AQ}{AC} < \frac{(m+1)AX}{nAX} = \frac{m+1}{n}$$

![](_page_40_Picture_17.jpeg)

![](_page_40_Picture_18.jpeg)

![](_page_40_Picture_19.jpeg)

![](_page_41_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_41_Picture_2.jpeg)

All these examples were developed with Descartes. What is Descartes?

**Proyecto Descartes** 

is about Developing interactive Educational Units in Mathematics

It started in 1998 in the Spanish Ministry of Education and has continued alive until now.

Teachers develop the interactive units, which are published on-line for the use of everybody.

![](_page_42_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_42_Picture_2.jpeg)

The web address of Proyecto Descartes is:

http://recursostic.educacion.es/descartes/web/index.html

The project is based in an authoring tool or set of tools refered to as *applet Descartes*, *nippe Descartes* or simply *Descartes* 

Descartes is open source. The tool, the Technical Documentation and the Java source code may be downloaded from the same address.

![](_page_43_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_43_Picture_2.jpeg)

The most recent developments can be downloaded and tested in beta versions, from:

http://arquimedes.matem.unam.mx

This site contains most of the examples shown above.

![](_page_44_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_44_Picture_2.jpeg)

For thirteen years now Proyecto Descartes has produced hundreds of Interactive Educational Units in Math. The authors are teachers who are active as such in Spanish high schools (12 to 17 years old students). The site receives around a million visits per month.

There are many reports of actual use of these materials that can be consulted on the web page of the project. In particular Proyecto EDA (Experimentación Didáctica en el Aula)

http://recursostic.educacion.es/eda/web/

![](_page_45_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_45_Picture_2.jpeg)

In some countries of Latin America, especially in Mexico, similar resources have been developed, notably in the *Enciclomedia* and the *Telesecundaria* projects.

However in these cases the authors have been mostly professional developing teams, instead of teachers., with some exceptions: See Calculus DGEE.

Some of these materials have been tested in specialized labs and their effects on the cognitive process in teachers and students have been analysed.

![](_page_46_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_46_Picture_2.jpeg)

There are already clear indications of some positive effects to be expected when using these resources, and on how they should be designed and developed in order to obtain better results.

Contains many detailed reports from teachers that have used these resources in class.

The main findings are:

1) Most students prefer learning with the resources than in class

- 2) There is a slight improvement in student performance
- 3) Conflictive students get hooked on them more than others
- 4) The best students don't like this very much

![](_page_47_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_47_Picture_2.jpeg)

The best results are with teachers that get involved in developing materials with Descartes. In general they become fans of the tool and are very enthusiastic and productive. Also, they obtain a deeper understanding of the subject and in general it seems they become better teachers.

The resources they produce tend to be very imaginative, well adapted to the academic level they address, and not very "flashy". They make the point and offer interactive reinforcing of the concepts. I think they are in general quite good.

A word of caution: Spanish Mathematics high school teachers in general have a College degree, mostly in Math.

![](_page_48_Picture_0.jpeg)

Interactive Units in Math Education 3D constructions

![](_page_48_Picture_2.jpeg)

![](_page_48_Figure_3.jpeg)

![](_page_49_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_49_Picture_2.jpeg)

Our experience in Mexico in trying to adapt Proyecto Descartes has not been very succesful. Why?

We have found few junior high school teachers proficient enough in Math to develop their own resources. High school teachers don't have the time because they have a steep academic load and this represents a lot of work.

So... it seems that the best candidates for doing this sort of thing in Mexico (and pressumably in other LAC) are we, the professional mathematicians.

And this is my proposal that we do it and publish the resources in a collaborative web site. We organize an editorial board for these materials, with referees, and make it into a prestigious activity that has a clear social purpose.

![](_page_50_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_50_Picture_2.jpeg)

If we do this as an international effort we might obtain financial support to offer teachers and students a good academic advisory service We can act put hundreds of high quality resources on-line, which they could use as a reference or for direct study.

Notice that P.U.E.M.A.C., Proyecto Universitario de Enseñanza de las Matemáticas Asistida por Computadora, organized by Dr. José Antonio De La Peña, is a kind of antecesor to this proposal. However it has been limited to the mathematicians of the Institute of Mathematics of UNAM.

At present there are other similar initiatives, but one is needed that gathers and organizes the work of LAC mathematicians around this subject.

![](_page_51_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_51_Picture_2.jpeg)

So, the **proposal** consists of the following three points:

•To form a group of professional mathematicians and teachers, interested in producing high quality interactive educational units.

•To create and maintain a public web site, where all these resources are to be published.

•To organize a mixed editorial board, of Teachers and Mathematicians, that will make sure the published resources have the necessary quality, both in the mathematical and the educational sense.

![](_page_52_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_52_Picture_2.jpeg)

The End