Abstract
The transition between arithmetic and algebra is an interesting and long-standing research topic in Mathematics Education. In this sense, the analysis of the arithmetical or algebraic character of certain problems arises as a relevant issue in order to design teaching sequences that help to expedite that transition. In this work we present a historical analysis of a family of problems as a tool to perform that kind of analysis and we exemplify it with the paradigmatic case of tap problems.

Keywords
Arithmetic, algebra, tap problems, historical analysis, history of mathematics.

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