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Peer Play in Transformation: From Playground “Tag” to Internet “Challenge”

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Abstract

This article presents an analysis of the specific nature of internet challenges (known as “challenges”) popular among children and adolescents, viewed in the context of traditional peer play. These activities are treated as a new element of contemporary children’s culture and are thus perceived as a consequence of the transformation of peer play. The research problems focused on identifying the characteristics of traditional peer play present in internet challenges, and the new elements introduced by digital play compared to playground games. Using netnography as the data collection method, internet challenges published on the popular youth application TikTok were identified and observed. Thematic analysis allowed for the extraction of elements of continuity preserved in the “challenges,” such as: collectivity and cooperation, fun and laughter, ritual and symbolism, competition and test of strength, and creativity and creation. Among the distinguishing features of internet play, the following were noted: digital perpetuation and visibility, public and global dimension, radicalisation of forms and content, performativity, and the logic of platforms.

Keywords: peer play, internet challenges, transformation of play, children’s culture, digital childhood

Introduction – Peer Play as a “Living” Cultural Practice

Play is an activity that is intrinsic to human life. It constitutes a characteristic feature of the human species and is not limited to the activities of individuals or

groups. It is thus constitutive of all forms of human culture (Karpatschhof, 2013). It is most fully realised during childhood. Like childhood itself, it is dynamic, as it strictly corresponds to the historical time in which it operates, is socially responsive, and results from the child's activity. As Jolanta Zwiernik writes, play thus constitutes an essential medium mediating between the child's inner world – including their knowledge, emotions, fears, and areas of particular interest – and the external reality in which the child functions as an active participant and a keen observer. The external world simultaneously becomes a source of inspiration and an object of symbolic processing within collective play practices (2009, 122). Play, being a form of interaction between the child and the environment, can therefore be interpreted in the spirit of Transactional Analysis – as a process of exchanging meanings, emotions, and experiences between participants in the children's world, where the child not only reacts to external stimuli but also co-creates them.

Despite the numerous scholarly works created so far dedicated to the specificity of play, it constantly transcends subsequent definitional frameworks. According to Johan Huizinga, the difficulty in subjecting it to logical interpretation stems from the very essence of play, which serves nothing so much as giving pleasure (Huizinga, 1987). Nevertheless, contemporary discourses attempt to capture the specificity of play to deepen studies on the child and childhood. Thus, play is emphasised as a specific kind of cultural practice filling the child's daily life (Zwiernik, 2009), in which children realise themselves as active social actors (Markowska-Manista, 2022, p. 57). In contrast to play directed by adults, during peer play, children independently create and modify its course, making it an important field for learning autonomy and responsibility. Play is thus – alongside components such as children's language, rituals, superstitions, and children's material creations – an essential element of children's culture (Corsaro, 2009; Nowicka, 2014; Dziekońska, 2020a). It is not merely a reflection of adult culture – although it draws from it and influences it – but constitutes an original, autonomous activity in which children actively create their own meanings and norms (Corsaro & Everitt, 2023).

In the traditional understanding, play often has a symbolic-ritualistic nature and is rooted in the relationship with the environment, relying on movement (e.g., popular games such as “tag,” “hide-and-seek,” or imitative games). In the era of the technological revolution and “networked playgrounds,” physical activity during play assumes a digital dimension (Dziekońska, 2020b). Equally important is the identity aspect of play, which, more than any other activity, creates an opportunity to discover social preferences within oneself and experience oneself as an individual within a group (Waloszek, 2009, p. 337). This occurs through the joint negotiation of roles, rules, and principles, engaging in cooperation, competition, conflict resolution, or shaping social norms. Unlike other ac-

tivities characteristic of childhood, play, as a “living” cultural practice, does not submit to criteria and rules imposed from the adult world. On the contrary, it is distinguished by authenticity, freedom from rules, and reliance on imagination (Markowska-Manista, 2022, p. 51). Perhaps this is why it is so often treated in common discourse as “doing nothing,” its significance diminished compared to activities such as school learning or organised classes, and its developmental and cultural value for childhood is trivialised (Waloszek, 2009, p. 331).

What particularly distinguishes peer play is its dynamism and absorbency. As a tool for children's expression, play is not static or uniform; rather, it evolves with the advancing social, technological, and cultural changes that build the children's shared social world (Kalliala, 2005). The play created by children today is different from that undertaken by adults during their childhood, because play always reflects the individual's experiences. We thus observe that this activity is transforming, and the boundaries between what is physical and digital are blurring. Consequently, it is natural that the term play is currently used in a broader sense, encompassing both traditional movement games realised in physical spaces, such as playgrounds, pitches, or parks, and children's activities in the digital environment (Dziekońska, 2023).

“Internet Challenge” – A New Face of Peer Play

Contemporary children and adolescents are immersed in the digital world and increasingly meet their emotional and social needs within it. Consequently, they seek opportunities online for play, joint activity, self-expression, and gaining recognition, thereby creating a new, previously unknown face of children's culture (Dziekońska, 2020a). One format that appears to be an element of this today is the so-called internet challenge (pol. *wyzwania internetowe*, commonly referred to as “challenges”). These are highly popular among children and teenagers, in turn arousing interest – and often concern – among childhood researchers.

The essence of an internet challenge is to perform a specific task, record it, and publish it on social media with an appropriate “hashtag,” and then encourage others to repeat the activity. The popularity of a given “challenge” depends on how many users undertake it and the scale of its spread across the network (Hilton et al., 2021). Some published challenges are harmless, amusing forms of entertainment, such as tasks involving styling oneself as famous people, popular dance routines garnering millions of views, or challenges with a social and charitable dimension (Ministerstwo Cyfryzacji, 2023). It is worth noting that the first challenges that appeared online in 2014 had this nature. They involved pouring ice-cold water over oneself to raise awareness of the disease ALS – amyotrophic

lateral sclerosis (Fazio et al., 2023). The Ice Bucket Challenge served as an impetus for the creation of new forms of play, which, over time, began to take on an increasingly spectacular, risky, or borderline nature. Particularly dangerous challenges appeared online, involving: experimenting with various substances – e.g., nutmeg, cinnamon, Benadryl, deodorant, laundry pods – and observing the body's reaction; rubbing the body with an eraser, causing a burn; self-asphyxiation; or self-immolation (Astorri et al., 2022; Dacka, 2024). Recently, a challenge involving placing dangerous objects, including metal items, inside sweets and handing them out to children during Halloween also sparked considerable global controversy (BezpieczneDziecko.org., 2024).

For many children and adolescents, participating in internet challenges is a way to gain recognition within the peer group, achieve popularity, but also to provide entertainment, experience emotions, and transgress everyday limitations. For adults, this is often merely a waste of children's free time, a source of anxiety about safety, and the result of the internet's negative impact on the functioning of the younger generation. However, observing the popularity of internet challenges among children and adolescents suggests that they have, to some extent, become an “extension” of pre-digital era games, in which participants sometimes engaged in equally risky behaviours, testing the limits of their own capabilities, as well as the boundaries set by adults. Peer jokes, tricks, borderline behaviours, rituals, sayings, or rhymes filled with sexual content and common names for human excrement or body parts constitute a distinctive feature of children's culture. I thus view children's involvement in this type of activity as an important educational aspect, requiring both an understanding of the essence of the challenges, a comprehension of children's motivations, and a reflection on the adult attitude towards the transformation in the digital landscape of childhood. Mariatta Kalliala, in her book *Play culture in a changing world*, encourages adults to try to understand the authenticity and variability of play, and to appreciate its value in human life (2005). It seems that the analysis of the transformation of play provides an opportunity to not only better understand the current cultural practices undertaken by children but also to grasp the processes of re-defining childhood and the child-world relationship.

Research Methodology

The subject of the research described in this article is internet challenges (the so-called “challenges”) popular among children and adolescents. I treat these activities as a new element of contemporary children's culture and, therefore, perceive them as a consequence of the transformation of peer play. The starting point is the assumption that, despite the change of medium – from the

physical space of the playground to the digital space of social platforms – play remains an important tool for building identity, group belonging, and testing social boundaries and norms by children and adolescents.

The aim of the research is thus to analyse the specific nature of internet challenges popular among children and adolescents in the context of traditional peer play undertaken in the offline environment. From the perspective of Transactional Analysis, it is assumed that every activity of children on the internet is a socio-symbolic transaction, in which there is an exchange of messages, emotions, and roles between the participants in the play, as well as between children and the digital environment, which co-determines the manner of their action and self-experience.

The research problems focused on the following questions:

1. Which characteristics of traditional peer play are present in internet challenges?
2. What new elements do digital challenges introduce compared to playground games?

The research was conducted using a qualitative strategy, which allowed access to the research material, its saturation, and then the analysis that identified the key features of the internet challenges popular among children. To gather the research material, I applied netnography (Kozinets, 2015), which involved the observation and identification of internet challenges popular among children and adolescents. Data collection was carried out in the spring of 2025 on TikTok, one of the most popular mobile applications among children and adolescents in recent times (Bigaj et al., 2025). The material gathering process involved entering keywords into the application's search engine, such as: "challenge," "kids challenge," "challenge viral tiktok," and others. This allowed access to the main data in the form of short videos presenting internet challenges involving children. Ancillary data such as the number of comments published under the videos, as well as "hashtags," the number of likes, and the number of views, were also monitored and mainly served to select the videos for further analysis. All data was public, meaning every logged-in application user had access to it. This allowed for ethical monitoring of the content.

Videos were selected based on several criteria:

- Age of challenge participants (the dominant age group was children and adolescents);
- Popularity of challenges (number of views/likes);
- Thematic focus of challenges (videos of a playful, social, or risky nature created by children);
- Publication date of challenges (current videos, published after 2020).

Data was collected until saturation was reached – a situation where subsequent identified challenges were repetitive and no longer introduced new information

concerning the phenomena studied. The final set of research material included 76 videos, of which 31 were dance-related (e.g., choreographic routines set to popular music tracks); 19 showed situations where a more or less demanding action had to be performed (e.g., bottle-flipping games, stick jumping, pouring water with eyes closed); 18 concerned humorous and situational challenges (e.g., “try not to laugh” games, tortilla slap challenge); and 8 remaining videos had artistic features related to drawing, putting on make-up, or hairstyling.

I subjected all videos to a thematic analysis, proceeding according to the following stages (Braun & Clarke, 2022):

1. Data Coding: Identifying patterns, motifs, and recurring themes in the challenges.
2. Categorisation and Theme Definition: Grouping the codes into main thematic categories.
3. Final Report Preparation: Comparing the identified themes with the main characteristics of traditional peer play described in the theoretical part of the article.

Research Findings and Discussion

During the monitoring of internet challenges involving children and adolescents, the initially striking observation is the extremely high popularity of this type of activity among the younger generation. This is evident from both the number of published videos and the number of comments and likes left by observers (often reaching several hundred thousand, or even several million likes).

Dance challenges were the most popular, providing examples of play based on rhythm, movement, and collective action. In these types of videos, children presented choreographic routines, often performed in pairs or groups (individual performances were rarer), which reinforced the element of community and the sense of co-creation and doing something together. The choreographies most often referred to popular trends, which seems to confirm the strong influence of the logic of platforms on the course of play.

The next category, skill-based challenges, exhibited characteristics of competition. Participants attempted to complete a specific task requiring concentration, dexterity, or courage – such as maintaining balance on a spinning playground wheel, or jumping over a stick according to the answers given to questions asked by the person leading the game. In many videos, children treated failures during the task with humour. I did not observe frustration or anger due to the difficulty of completing the task, which allows these challenges to be interpreted as a test of strength and simultaneously a playful way of testing limitations.

The third group of challenges, those of a humorous and situational nature, revealed a particular role for laughter and absurdity. Participants in these videos often used props (e.g., water, a bottle, a tortilla), referencing the tradition of children's pranks and jokes. Situational humour, based on exaggeration and unexpected effects, served the function of integrating the group and reducing tension.

The last identified category of videos – artistic challenges (drawing, make-up, or hairstyling) – showed challenges as a form of expression and self-affirmation. In these, children showcased their manual, aesthetic, and creative skills, utilising the visual effects and musical backgrounds available in the TikTok application. These realisations particularly suggest that play in the digital environment also becomes a space for identity creation and self-presentation, where the child simultaneously acts as a creator and recipient.

In the subsequent analysis, I focused on identifying the elements of continuity connecting traditional forms of peer play with challenges popular in the digital space, and the new features of internet challenges largely resulting from the digital context.

Characteristics of Traditional Peer Play Present in Internet Challenges

In seeking the answer to the first research question, I identified five main thematic categories that link traditional forms of play with internet challenges: collectivity and cooperation; ritual and symbolism; competition and test of strength; creativity and creation; and laughter and entertainment.

Collectivity and Cooperation

Peer play has always served a communal function, enabling children and adolescents to engage in group activities and do something together. Communality of action is inherent in the period of childhood (Appelt, 2005, pp. 284–285). In the digital space, this function is taken over by internet challenges, where participants act collaboratively – they perform a task together: dancing to popular music tracks, presenting movement routines, or conducting a “friendship test” (answering questions to check how well they know their friends). These types of interactions are particularly important in the process of building social bonds and shaping group identity. It is worth adding, however, that communality in the digital age is not only physical or emotional in nature. Children engage in joint activities also to gain popularity online. Collective actions that promote increased reach include inviting other users and co-creating content to reach an unknown part of the community, publishing common “hashtags,” mutually sharing their videos, or commenting on them.

Ritual and Symbolism

Traditional peer play, such as “hide-and-seek” or “tag,” exhibited a ritualistic nature and required participants to adhere to specific rules and take on defined roles. Games permeated with magical practices, superstitions, and various beliefs have long been an element of children's folklore (Simonides, 1976, p. 192). Similar features can be observed in internet challenges, which are also based on repeatable patterns and refer to the children's symbolic world. Challenges such as “The Floor is Lava” are based on a shared cultural code and require participants to adopt certain game assumptions that are understood and respected by the entire group. In internet challenges, symbolism is also manifested in attributing fabulous or magical characteristics to certain objects and places, e.g., the floor in the aforementioned game is perceived as a kind of abyss that signifies defeat for the participants.

Competition and Test of Strength

In both traditional games and digital challenges, competition and rivalry hold an important place. Tug-of-war, jumping over obstacles, or running races from the past now have their counterparts in the form of “challenges” that test children's physical fitness, reflexes, or psychological resilience. An example is the challenge of jumping over a stick or rope placed on the floor depending on the answer to a closed “yes/no” question (one side means “yes,” the other side means “no”), without making a mistake and jumping to the wrong side. Examples of internet challenges based on a test of strength also include games such as “Try Not to Laugh,” where participants are tasked with maintaining a straight face for as long as possible while another person tries to make them laugh, or the “Bottle Flip Challenge,” which involves tossing a bottle of drink so that it lands upright. Otherwise, the person who failed must perform a penalty task.

Creativity and Creation

Peer play is a space for creativity. Children create their own worlds built from specific rules, beliefs, ways of thinking (symbolic creations), as well as play objects (material creations) (Corsaro, 2009, p. 301 et seq.). In the digital version, children's creativity is visible, for example, in drawing challenges (children draw an eye, for instance, in an artistic way), hairdressing challenges (children create attractive hairstyles and present them in a video), or invented choreographies for popular songs. Despite the digital medium, participants continue to express themselves through creative actions, often combining manual, visual, and performative skills. Performing their own identities – through movement, gesture, styling, and even music selection – becomes an essential element of digital challenges. Children not only show what they

can do but also who they are or who they would like to be. This is a form of self-expression that combines play with the need for self-affirmation in the eyes of peers and the broader internet audience.

Joy and Humour as a Form of Joint Play

In both traditional and digital forms of play, laughter and entertainment play a crucial role. In traditional children's folklore, scatological and macabre anecdotes, as well as various parodies mocking almost everything and everyone, were very popular (Simonides, 1976, p. 97 et seq.). The situation is no different today. Children undertake challenges not only to test themselves but above all to have fun and laugh. Challenges involving hitting each other in the face with tortillas or pouring water over oneself refer to situational humour and absurdity, being a contemporary form of old-fashioned pranks and playground jokes. Laughter here serves the function of group integration, tension reduction, and the strengthening of peer relationships.

New Elements of Internet Challenges

Contemporary internet challenges connect with traditional peer play in terms of collectivity, ritual, competition, and humour, among others. Simultaneously, the specific nature of the digital space in which children operate contributes to changes in the forms of children's activity. The new elements that can thus be observed in contemporary peer play on the internet include: digital perpetuation and social visibility, public and global dimension, radicalisation of forms and content, performativity, and the logic of platforms.

Digital Perpetuation and Social Visibility

In contrast to the ephemeral nature of traditional playground games, internet challenges are documented and disseminated online. Videos published on the TikTok application, on one hand, create an archive of children's activity, but they also become subjects of evaluation. Consequently, contemporary internet challenges aim not only to provide entertainment but also to gain online recognition. Social visibility is provided by the "likes" left under published videos, comments, and shares to a wider audience. In the case of some videos, these reach as many as a million likes. An example is the – seemingly simple – challenge of passing the whole body through rolled-up towels held in the hands of two girls, such that both people freely hold their towel at the end and are not constrained by the other person (the video gained 1.2 million likes and 8,737 comments).

It can therefore be assumed that the digital perpetuation of children's activity online determines the specificity of the play. Firstly, it introduces elements of self-presentation and public performance, which were previously limited to a peer group of a few people, but now cross local boundaries (internet challenges are often observed by thousands of users, both known and unknown). Secondly, the recording of internet challenges ensures that they permanently leave their trace in the internet space, in contrast to the fleeting nature of play-ground games.

Public and Global Dimension

Traditional games were primarily local in nature. Children's games echoed the sounds of the village playground or the hubbub of city streets and estates where children played (Cieślowski, 1986, pp. 46–47). Internet challenges, on the other hand, are a form of global play. Children from various countries can perform the same tasks and use the same sounds and “hashtags.” An example is the globally popular “24 Hours Challenge,” which involves performing one activity for 24 hours or staying in one place for a day. Among the collected videos, there were many examples where children undertook this challenge, such as spending 24 hours in one room with siblings and only eating yellow-coloured food during that time, or reading books together with a friend for a full day. The unification of play thus carries new social consequences. On one hand, it allows for a sense of belonging to a global peer community and the blurring of inequalities between children. On the other hand, it can generate pressure to compare oneself with other online participants, and also lead to the erasure of local features of play that made it a repository of cultural knowledge about a given community.

Radicalisation of Forms and Content

Digital challenges – although often playful – appear to be more radical than their analogue forms. Examples of extreme challenge forms, such as those involving the consumption of dangerous substances or testing pain, indicate a shift in safety boundaries. Radicalisation is also manifested in the shifting boundaries of decency and aesthetics – participants in “challenges” often use shocking, obscene, or socially transgressive language to attract attention. An example is a challenge where the penalty for failing to complete a task is scratching one's intimate areas. The participants in the video do this without any embarrassment, despite it being recorded and publicly shared with a wide audience. Increasingly common are challenges that violate private space (e.g., recording unaware people) or are physically invasive (e.g., slapping a co-participant in the face with a tortilla). This phenomenon is intensified by the fact that platform users learn algorithmic effectiveness, based on the dependency: the greater the

surprise, controversy, or “shock effect,” the greater the chance for “viral success.” Radicalisation, therefore, concerns not only the content but also the strategies of children's actions in the digital space, who – it seems – treat play as a form of social experimentation with the limits of permissibility.

Challenges of a Performative Nature

Internet challenges are inherently spectacular. Their goal is not just internal group entertainment but also visual attractiveness for a wide audience. They thus introduce the element of performativity. This manifests itself in children not only participating in the play but also enacting certain roles, preparing enactments, and employing directorial techniques. An example is challenges involving the joint performance of a dance by a group of peers, which must have been previously rehearsed. This is a form of activity close to a performance, requiring planning and conscious image management. Simple, quite intuitive video editing tools available in the TikTok application facilitate this. They enable even the youngest users to create visually appealing content that can further attract attention and encourage participation in challenges.

The Logic of Platforms

Contemporary forms of children's play in the digital space are strongly shaped by the operating mechanisms of social platforms, such as TikTok. The logic of platforms includes algorithmic content amplification, an orientation towards visibility and popularity, and a continuous need for timeliness and reactivity. Internet challenges are often constructed with the aim of capturing audience attention and fitting into current trends. An example is the challenge involving pouring water into a cup while blindfolded, which, despite its simplicity, ensures high viewership due to its reactivity and potential for rapid duplication. Children learn not only how to play but also how to “perform” themselves in a way that increases their visibility in the digital space. Play ceases to be spontaneous interaction and becomes a strategy for digital self-presentation and a struggle for attention. Such conditioning can cause tension and thus a change in the function of play: shifting from a space of relaxation and imagination towards an activity subordinated to the rules of a digital game for reach. In this sense, the logic of platforms can influence not only the form of the challenges but also how children perceive themselves and their place in the peer community. The analysed phenomenon can also be interpreted as a network of transactions between the child, peers, and technology, in which each of these elements influences the others. The child, by using the logic of platforms, simultaneously co-creates it – they assimilate norms while also generating new ways of communication and expression.

Conclusions and Summary

The changes observed within contemporary childhood affect almost all areas of modern children's lives. They are visible in the areas of establishing and maintaining relationships, communication, learning, and understanding the surrounding world. They also concern the fundamental category of childhood, which is play. Despite the transformations in childhood, play appears to remain the foundation of the initial period of human life. Children's immersion in the online world does not diminish the role of play in their lives; it only influences its specificity.

The results of the conducted research suggest that children invariably demonstrate a need to be together and do things jointly, they want to play and laugh, even in ways that adults might not understand, they want to test their own capabilities and the limits of the surrounding world, and to act in a creative and inventive manner. However, it is important to emphasise that children, as representatives of the digital generation who have functioned in a continuously internet-connected world since birth, are also active transformers of play. By participating in digital culture, they adapt play to the logic of internet platforms in order to become creators online, gain popularity, and achieve recognition in the eyes of others. They, therefore, often radicalise their activity online, succumb to trends, and frequently become participants in a digitally perpetuated spectacle.

From a Transactional Analysis perspective, these transformations show play as a process of mutual learning and interaction between children and the digital world – the child here is not merely a recipient but an active participant in an exchange where new meanings, norms, and forms of expression are created.

The analysis indicates that contemporary internet challenges constitute a space for learning social roles, where children negotiate their position in the group, test the boundaries of acceptance, and learn to respond to evaluation. In the context of Transactional Analysis, play online can be considered an emotional transaction in which children exchange emotions, recognition, and visibility over the internet. This aspect – which seems to be rarely observed in the discourse on threats – allows “challenges” to be viewed not only as risky behaviours but also as a form of symbolic communication and expression. These conclusions can serve as a starting point for designing educational actions focused not on prohibitions, but on developing children's reflective participation in digital culture and strengthening their competencies regarding safe media use.

In conclusion, it is worthwhile to reflect on the consequences of the changes in the area of play to present a fuller spectrum of the phenomenon and to deepen the understanding of how the transformation of peer play might affect the functioning of children and adolescents. In the final section,

I have therefore attempted to map the potential problematic areas, as well as the possible developmental benefits, resulting from children's participation in internet challenges.

Among the concerning consequences that warrant attention are:

- Risky Behaviours – Challenges can lead to physical injuries (e.g., jumps, choking) or psychological threats (anxiety, humiliation).
- Peer Pressure – Fear of rejection or of being “out of trend” can compel children to participate in activities against their own will.
- Inappropriate Content – Digital platforms do not always filter content – children may encounter vulgarity, erotica, or violence.
- Excessive Need for Recognition – Children learn that the value of their activity depends on likes, reach, and visibility – which can lead to dependence on approval.
- Loss of Privacy – Public sharing of everyday life content (home, school) increases the risk of abuse and exposes them to the judgment of strangers.

However, children's participation in digital activities can also bring positive consequences:

- Challenges as an Element of Children's Culture – Internet challenges have become a permanent element of contemporary children's culture. They are the way the young generation participates in the social world, comments on reality, and builds its own rituals and norms.
- Strengthening Social Bonds – Joint challenges build a sense of community, equality, and participation – even remotely.
- Development of Creativity – Creating challenges, choreographies, or narratives is an exercise in imagination, planning, and creative expression.
- Learning Responsibility – The awareness that content remains online “forever” encourages reflection on what and how is published.
- Digital Self-Awareness – By observing the reactions of others and analysing the consequences of actions, children can learn to predict the consequences of their own decisions.

The conducted analysis allows for a better understanding of how children use social media to maintain play practices, and how play in the digital environment becomes a form of social communication in which contemporary children create their own children's culture. Simultaneously, the categories identified and the suggested consequences are merely a voice in the discussion aimed at deepening the understanding of internet challenges not only as a new phenomenon but also as a continuation of old forms of play in a new environment. Expanding the research to include new areas (exploring other internet spaces – not just the TikTok application – where children undertake internet challenges) or employing different research methods that allow for listening to the voices of children and adolescents themselves (incorporating focus group or individual in-

interviews with children) might provide an opportunity to deepen the analysis and offer new interpretations. Nevertheless, it seems important to make efforts to understand contemporary forms of peer play to provide educators and parents with tools for a conscious approach to children's digital activity and engagement in the process of digital education, and for formulating effective educational strategies.

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Zabawa rówieśnicza w transformacji: od podwórkowego „berka” do internetowego „challenge’u”

Streszczenie

W artykule przedstawiono analizę specyfiki wyzwań internetowych (tzw. „challenge’y”) popularnych wśród dzieci i młodzieży w kontekście tradycyjnych zabaw rówieśniczych. Aktywności te

traktuje się jako nowy element współczesnej kultury dziecięcej i tym samym postrzega jako następstwo transformacji zabawy rówieśniczej. Problemy badawcze skoncentrowano na określeniu cech tradycyjnych zabaw rówieśniczych obecnych w wyzwaniach internetowych oraz nowych elementów wprowadzanych przez zabawy cyfrowe w porównaniu do zabaw podwórkowych. Posługując się netnografią jako metodą gromadzenia danych, dokonano identyfikacji i obserwacji wyzwań internetowych publikowanych w popularnej wśród dzieci i młodzieży aplikacji TikTok. Analiza tematyczna pozwoliła wyłonić elementy ciągłości zachowane w „challenge’ach”, takie jak: kolektywność i współpraca, rozrywka i śmiech, rytualność i symboliczność, rywalizacja i próba sił oraz twórczość i kreacja. Wśród cech wyróżniających zabawy internetowe dostrzeżono: cyfrowe uwiecznienie i widoczność, wymiar publiczny i globalny, radykalizacja form i treści, performatywność oraz logikę platform.

Słowa kluczowe: zabawa rówieśnicza, wyzwania internetowe, transformacja zabawy, kultura dziecięca, dzieciństwo cyfrowe.